

SIXTEEN POINTS OF ANANDA MARGA

A complete guide to physical health, moral conduct, and spiritual elevation

1. Washing with Water (After Urination & Defecation)

After urination, wash the urinary organ with cool water. After defecation, wash yourself with cool water too: wash the whole rear area. Water is more hygienic than paper, eliminates uric acid residue, prevents infections and kidney stones, and cools the lower cakras. Always carry a small water bottle with you for this purpose when away from home.

2. Foreskin (Circumcision / Hygiene)

Men should be circumcised or keep the foreskin pulled back. This prevents bacterial buildup, reduces the risk of cancer of the cervix and penis, lowers excess sexual stimulation, and helps keep the mind calm and focused.

3. Joint Hair (Care & Oiling)

The hair under the arms and at the genitals regulates body heat and has a beneficial effect on the glands. It should be cleaned, oiled (coconut oil is best), and combed daily — not removed, as this disrupts glandular function.

4. Langota / Underwear

Men should wear a firm, supportive underwear (langota). It protects the genital organ, prevents hydrocele, reduces unnecessary sexual excitement, and gives psychological confidence and mental firmness during asanas and daily life.

5. Vyápaka Shaoca / Half-Bath

Do before meditation, asanas, meals, and sleep. Pour cool water over lower legs, lower arms, neck, ears, and nose. Splash water into the open eyes at least 12 times — this triggers the 'diver's reflex': heart rate slows, blood pressure drops, and the body enters a calm, relaxed state ideal for meditation and asana practice. Also clean the throat by inserting the middle finger to expel accumulated mucus. Refreshes the entire nervous system.

6. Bath (Full Bath with Cold Water)

Bathe daily with cold water in a sitting/squatting position: first pour over the navel, then the lower back, then from the head down the spine. After bathing: recite the Pitr Yajna mantra facing the sun or any other light source, then comb the joint hair (armpits and genitals) and apply coconut oil or another cooling oil.

7. Food – Sattvik Diet

Eat sattvik foods: fruits, vegetables, grains, beans, milk, mild spices, honey. Limit rajasik foods: coffee, tea, chocolate, cocoa, hot spices, carbonated drinks, medicines. Avoid tamasik foods: meat, fish, eggs, mushrooms, onions, garlic, alcohol, drugs — they harm body and disturb mind. Eat no more than 4 times per day, no more than 4 items per meal, and avoid snacking between meals.

8. Upavása / Fasting

Fast on Ekadashi days (11th day after full and new moon) from sunrise to sunrise without water if possible. To break the fast, first drink lemon water with salt to cleanse and re-activate the entire digestive system. Then eat easy-to-digest foods such as ripe banana or yogurt.

9. Sádhaná / Meditation

Meditate twice daily — at sunrise and sunset — for at least 20 minutes, always before eating, not after. Practice all meditation lessons received from your Acarya at least 2 times per day. Do asanas twice daily. Regular sadhana refines the mind, generates alpha brain waves, and is the fastest path to Supreme Consciousness.

10. Íśtá – Personal Object of Devotion

Íśtá is your personal object of devotion — the form of the Supreme given to you at initiation by your Acarya, upon which you concentrate during meditation. Maintain non-compromising strictness and unwavering faith in your Íśtá. Never change or abandon it — loyalty to one's Íśtá accelerates spiritual progress and deepens the bond with the Supreme.

11. Ádarsha – Ideology

Keep non-compromising strictness and faith in one's ideology. The universal ideology of Ananda Marga is: 'Realization of self and service to humanity.' A clear ideology ensures all actions serve a higher collective and spiritual purpose.

12. Conduct Rules (Yama & Niyama)

Yama (social ethics): Ahimsa (non-violence), Satya (truthfulness), Asteya (non-stealing), Brahmacharya (continence), Aparigraha (non-accumulation). Niyama (personal discipline): Shaucha (cleanliness of body & mind), Santosa (contentment), Tapah (service & austerity), Svadhyaya (self-study), Ishvara Pranidhana (surrender to the Supreme). Follow rules laid down in Caryacarya, Parts 1 & 2.

13. Supreme Command

All Ananda Margiis must: meditate twice daily, live by moral principles, and actively help guide others on the path of righteousness. Following the Supreme Command ensures individual progress benefits the whole of society.

14. Dharmacakra / Group Meditation

Attend weekly collective meditation (Dharmacakra). Group meditation amplifies the spiritual vibration, strengthens the community, deepens individual practice, and helps spread a wave of positivity and peace to the surrounding society.

15. Oaths of Initiation

Remember and renew the oaths taken at the time of initiation every day before leaving one's bed. This daily reaffirmation of commitment keeps the spiritual aspirant aligned with their highest purpose and ideals throughout the day.

16. C.S.D.K.

Conduct Rules — follow social codes from Caryacarya. Seminar — attend seminars to improve spiritual and social knowledge. Duty — take up a duty in serving humanity. Kiirtan — practice kiirtan (devotional chanting) and dances: lalita mármika (the devotional dance of kiirtan), kaośikii (heals the body and mind) and táńdava (for men — builds courage and strength).

"In order to march ahead on the road of human welfare, we will have to strengthen ourselves in all the arena of life. The complete seeds of welfare in all the spheres — physical, mental, moral, social and spiritual — are embedded in the sixteen points. Hence be firm on the sixteen points." Ánanda Váńii, Ánanda Púńrímá 1976