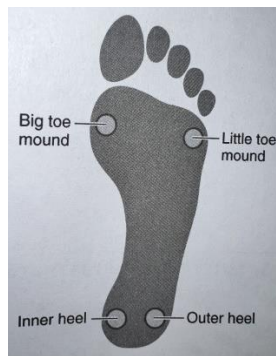
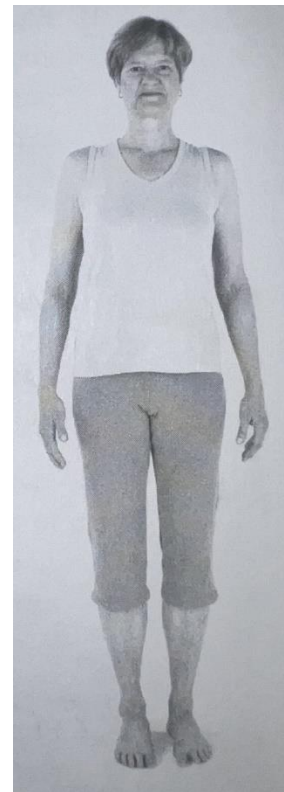


MOUNTAIN POSE

1. Stand with your feet hip-width apart and parallel, legs straight, arms hanging at your sides.
2. Balance the weight as evenly as you can between the four corners of your feet: the inner heel, the mound of the big toe, the little toe mound, and the outer heel.

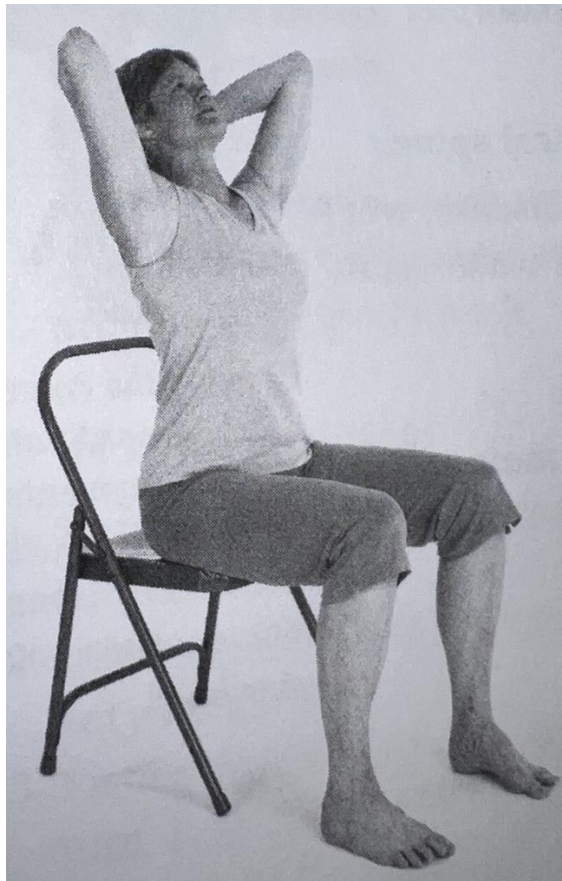


3. Lift the inner arches by raising your toes, then retain the arch lift as you lower your toes.
4. Take a breath to enliven your body.
5. Firm your leg muscles and bring the tops of your thighs back until they are over your ankles. You are pushing your hips back behind you, but actually this does not distort your posture.
6. Widen your hips and thighs by abducting them away from each other without changing your feet or lower legs.
7. Keep your thighs back and your pelvis wide, then curl your tailbone down to lengthen your spine.
8. Firm and lift your lower abdominal muscles.
9. Stretch upward from your pelvis through your torso and neck, so that your whole spine is long. If your lower back feels too arched, pull back through the sides of your waist.
10. Use the muscles between your shoulder blades to gently draw your shoulders back.
11. Balance your head lightly over the top of your spine. Look straight ahead. Let your arms hang by your sides. Be fully present in all parts of your body; create both a solid foundation and an upward expansion. How long you hold the pose is up to you.



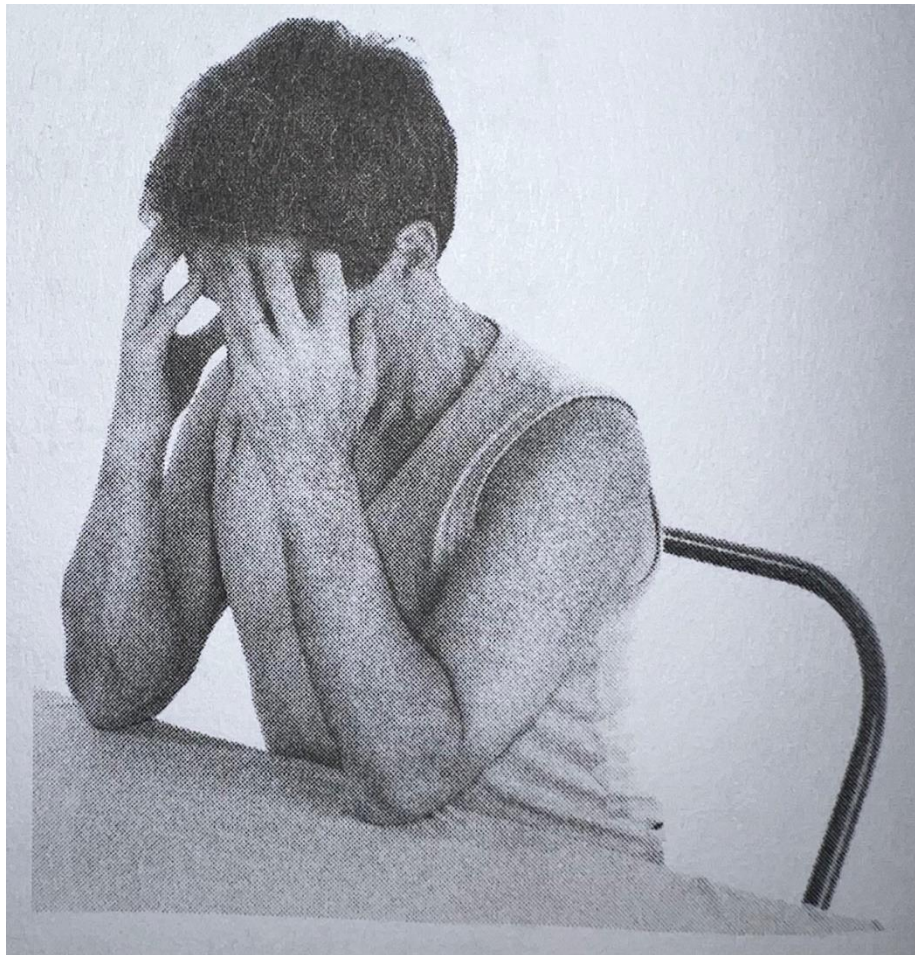
COSMIC HEAD REST

1. Sit in a chair and adjust your thighs back and apart. This will help you to sit tall. Interlace your fingers behind your neck.
2. Keeping your upper back firm, tilt your head backward into your hands. Loop up at a comfortable angle.
3. Balance these two goals:
 - a. Move back through the sides of your upper neck and ears.
 - b. Keep the front throat open and long.
4. Stretch up through the crown of your head. Root down through your pelvis and legs.
5. Do not forget to breathe while you hold the pose!
6. Return to center and release your hands down.



THE THINKER (REVERSE COSMIC HEAD REST)

1. Sit tall, shoulder back. Rest your elbows on the table.
2. Inhale and lengthen your neck and head up.
3. Exhale and bend your head forward just a little; press your forehead into your hands.
4. Continue for a few breaths, then bring your head up.



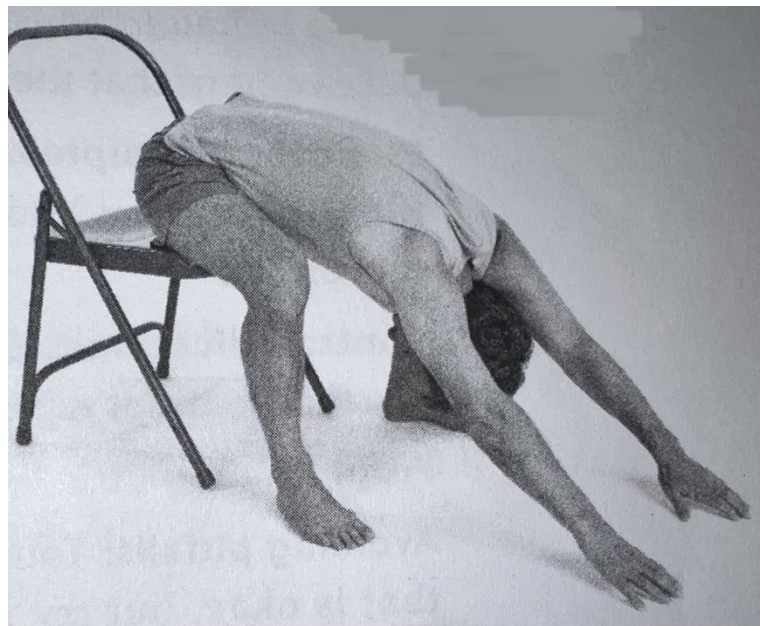
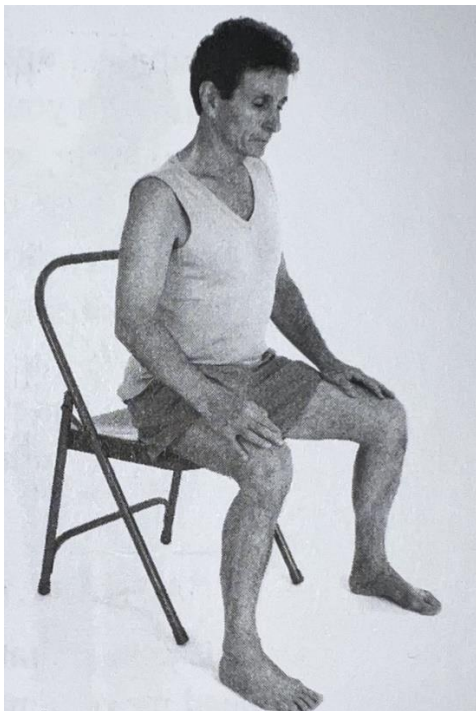
CHAIR TWIST

1. Sit sideways in a firm chair without arms, with your right side close to the chair back. Set your legs hip-width apart and parallel, with your knees vertically over your ankles.
2. Firm your leg muscles, manually widen your buttocks and upper thighs, then sit tall with awareness of your spine as your central core.
3. Reach your tailbone lightly downward and lift your lower belly to lengthen and stabilize the lower spine.
4. Inhale, lengthen through your whole torso, and retract your shoulder blades together behind you so that the actions of your arms will affect your torso and spine.
5. Exhale, turn to the right, and take hold of the chair in a way that helps you turn more deeply.
6. Coordinate your actions with your breath, inhaling as you lengthen your spine and exhaling as you turn farther. Use the rhythm of your breath to coax more movement through your body.
7. To keep your hips and pelvis aligned, pull your left thigh back into the hip socket. This will counteract the normal tendency for the pelvis to turn with the spine. The more strongly you use your arms, the more important it is to retract the shoulders and upper arms to distribute the force of the twist.
8. Return to the center. Prepare to twist to the left by turning to the other side of the chair.



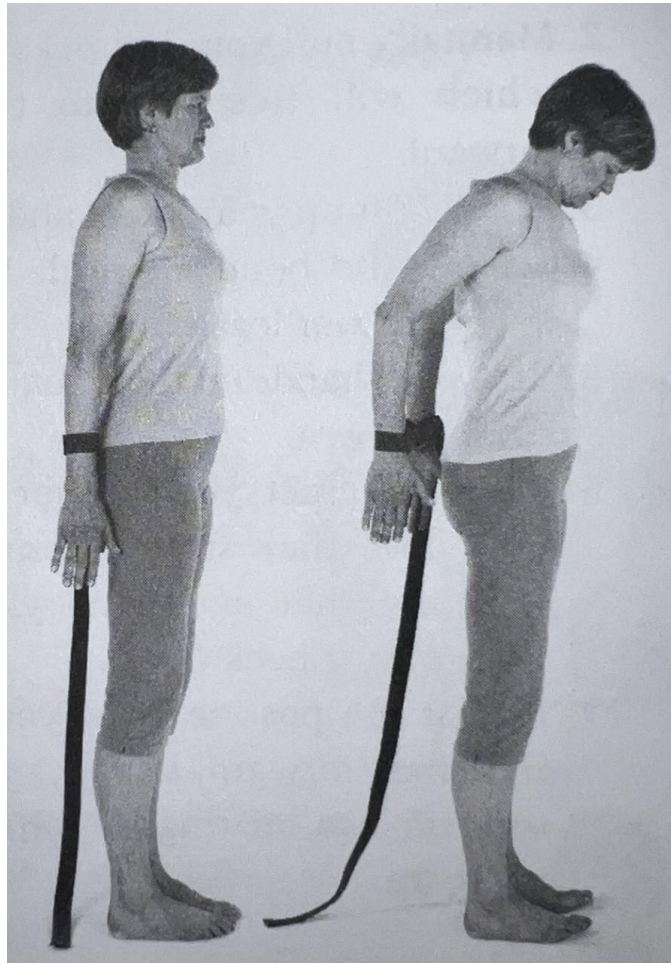
SEATED PARTIAL INVERSION

1. Sit on the front edge of your chair with your legs wide apart.
2. Manually pull your buttocks back and apart, which will free you to tilt your pelvis forward.
3. Inhale; lift up your spine and chest.
4. Exhale and bend forward. Fold your torso between your legs.
5. Rest your hands on the floor. Hang your head straight down.
6. Lightly retract your upper arms into the shoulders, then stretch your arms forward. Maintain that action as you continue to release your neck down.
7. To exit the pose, extend your head and chest forward, support yourself with elbows on thighs, inhale, and swing up.



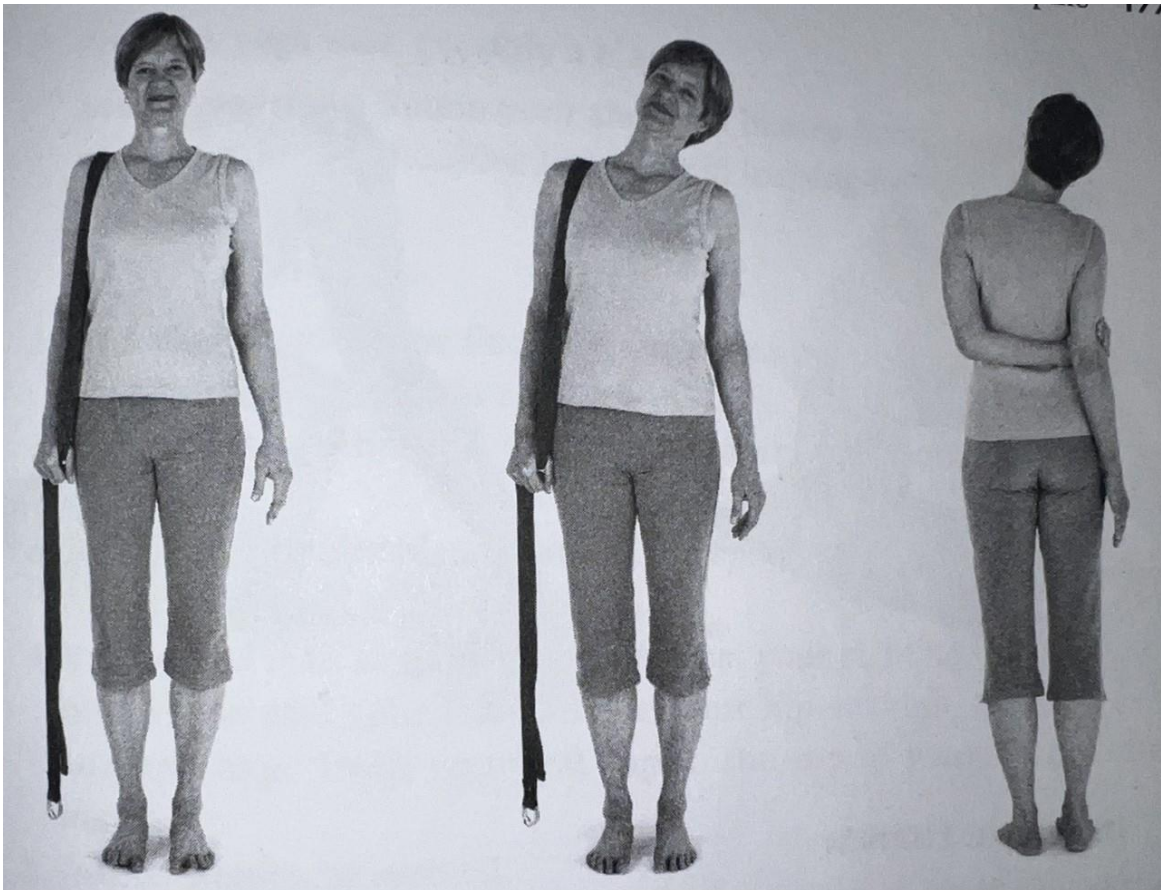
SHOULDERS BACK HEAD FORWARD

1. Stand with a belt looped around your wrists with your arms behind you.
2. Inhale and lift your inner body up, making the sides of your body very long.
3. Firm your shoulder blades into your back to support this tall posture. Pull your upper arms back.
4. Press your arms out against the belt.
5. Inhale again; lengthen up through your neck.
6. Exhaling, move your head forward and down toward your chest until you feel a good pull on the back of your neck.
7. Stay for several breaths, then inhale and raise your head.
8. Release your arms from the belt.



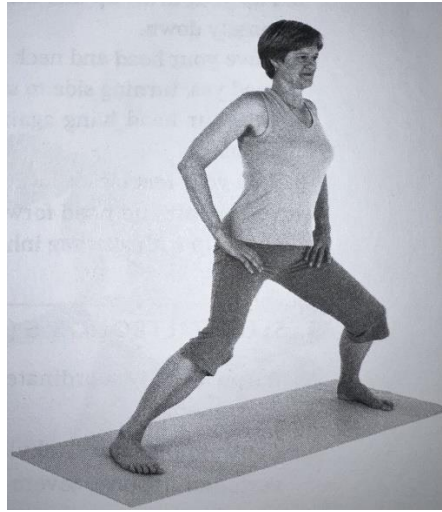
“ACHA”

1. Stand tall. Hang a belt over your right shoulder. Hold the ends with your right hand.
2. Inhale. Lift your inner body up.
3. Firm your shoulder blades onto your back to support this tall posture.
4. Inhale again and softly lengthen up through your neck. Lift the front and back equally.
5. Exhaling, tilt your head to the left side.
6. Pull on the belt with your right hand to isolate the stretch in your neck.

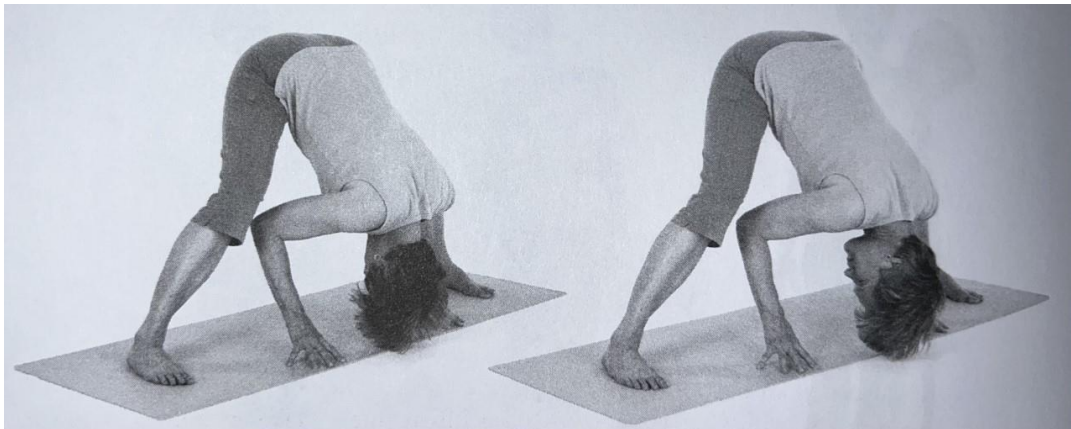


7. Hold this for a few seconds, then return to center and repeat on the other side.
8. For greater intensity, reach behind and catch the arm on the side to which your head is tilting, to keep the shoulders horizontal.

PRASAROTA PADOTTANASANA WITH BENT KNEES

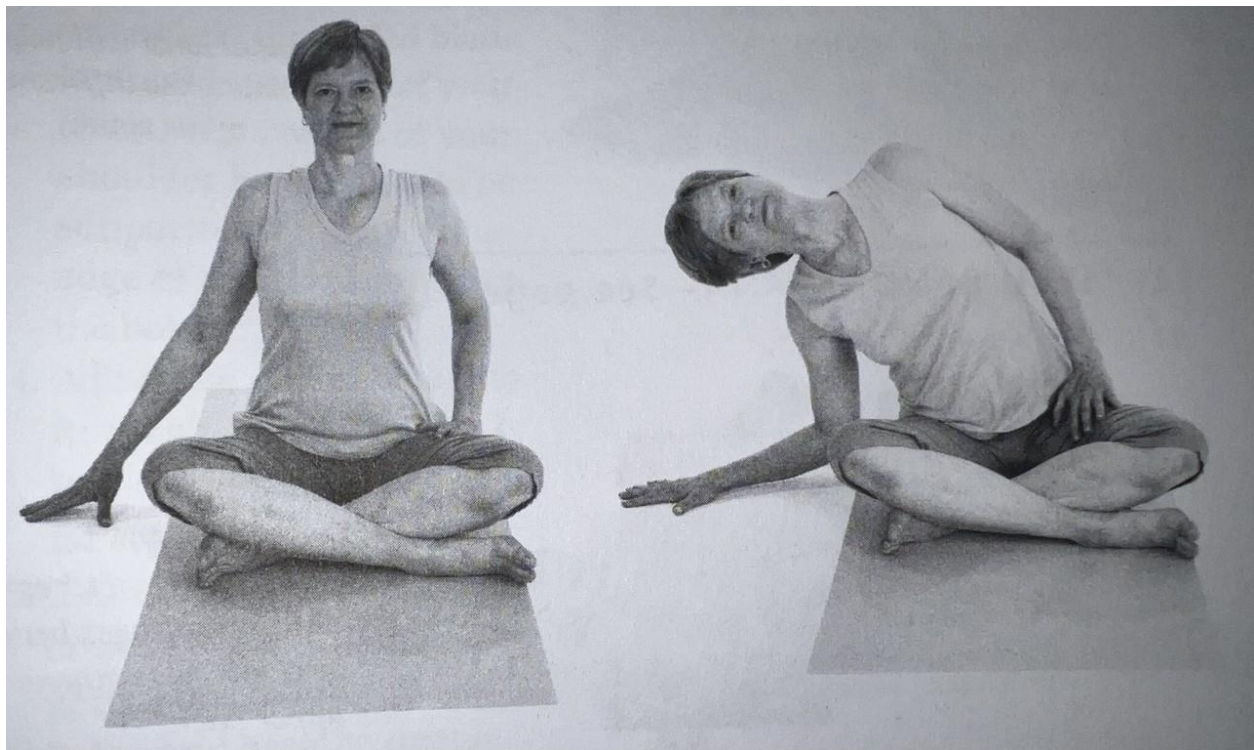


1. Place your legs wide apart and parallel. Bring your hands to your hips.
2. Bend your knees and lift up through your spine as you inhale.
3. Exhale and bend forward, tilting from the hips as much as possible.
4. Touch the floor or blocks lightly with your hands.
5. Pull your arms up into the shoulder sockets, but let your head hang loosely down.
6. Move your head and neck cautiously in all directions—nodding your head yes, turning side to side, and shaking your head no.
7. Let your head hang again in center for a few breaths, releasing down.
8. Step your feet closer together. Root down through your legs, stretch your chest and head forward, place your hands on your hips, and come up with a strong inhalation.

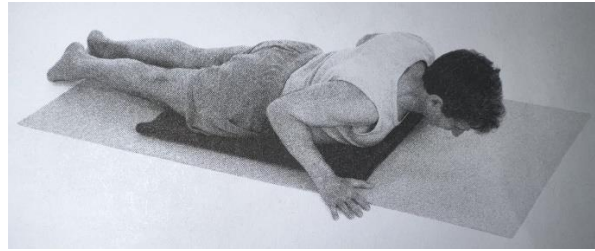


SLOW METRONOME (SITTING SPINAL TILT)

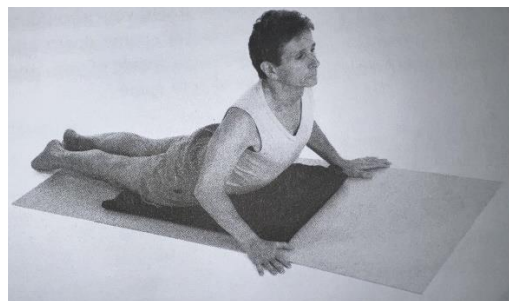
1. Sit cross-legged on the floor. If your knees are higher than your hips, sit up on a folded blanket or pad.
2. Inhale; lift up through your whole spine and torso.
3. Pull your shoulder blades toward the spine and slightly down, lifting the front of your chest up.
4. Exhale and lean to the right as you rest your right hand on the floor beside you and your left hand on your hip or thigh. Make an even curved shape from your left hip to the top of your head. Soften inside.
5. Inhale. Return to vertical.
6. Exhale and bend to the left side as you place your left palm on the floor beside you.
7. Repeat as above several more times to each side. Movements should be as fluid and naturally expressive as possible. Accept whatever range is comfortable for you.



BHUJANGASANA (COBRA)



1. Lie on your stomach with a blanket placed under you for comfort.
2. Lift one leg up an inch and pull it back. Repeat with the other leg. This creates a good length in the lower back.
3. Briefly turn the front of your legs in toward the midline, so that the heels, thighs, and pelvis widen in the back.
4. Pull your tailbone toward your heels and toward the floor. This stabilizes your lower back, enabling you to stretch forward more strongly. The legs will rotate back to center so that the backs of the knees face straight up.
5. Lift up onto your forearms briefly to pull your upper body forward away from your legs.
6. Lie back down and put your hands to the sides of your chest, with your fingers pointing a bit and your forehead on the floor.
7. Lift your shoulders away from the floor, keeping them square across.
8. Inhale; lengthen forward through your whole torso. Expand from the inside.
9. Contract your upper back muscles and move the shoulder blades in toward the spine.
10. Curl up with your head and chest, keeping your shoulders back.
11. Press carefully down through your arms to lift more, but keep your arms bent and the upper arms and shoulders back.
12. Keep your pelvis on the floor while maintaining these actions. Use your breath to expand forward from the inside.
13. Stay up for several breaths, then soften and release down.

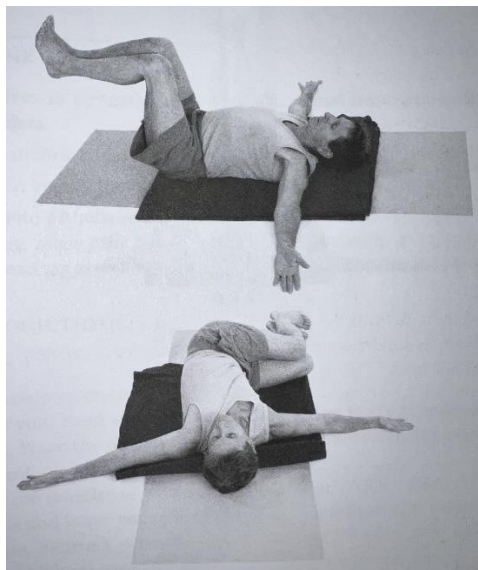


RECLINING TWIST

NEEDS: mat/yoga mat, blanket optional for comfort

PLEASE NOTE: Make sure to keep your back flat on the floor! Most people can't do it.

1. Lie on your back with your arms spread wide at shoulder height, palms up, and knees bent.
2. With knees bent, raise your thighs toward vertical, with the shins horizontal.
3. Firm your arm muscles, retract the upper arms back into the shoulders, and press the arms down onto the floor. The shoulders are the stable part of this pose while your legs and hips move.

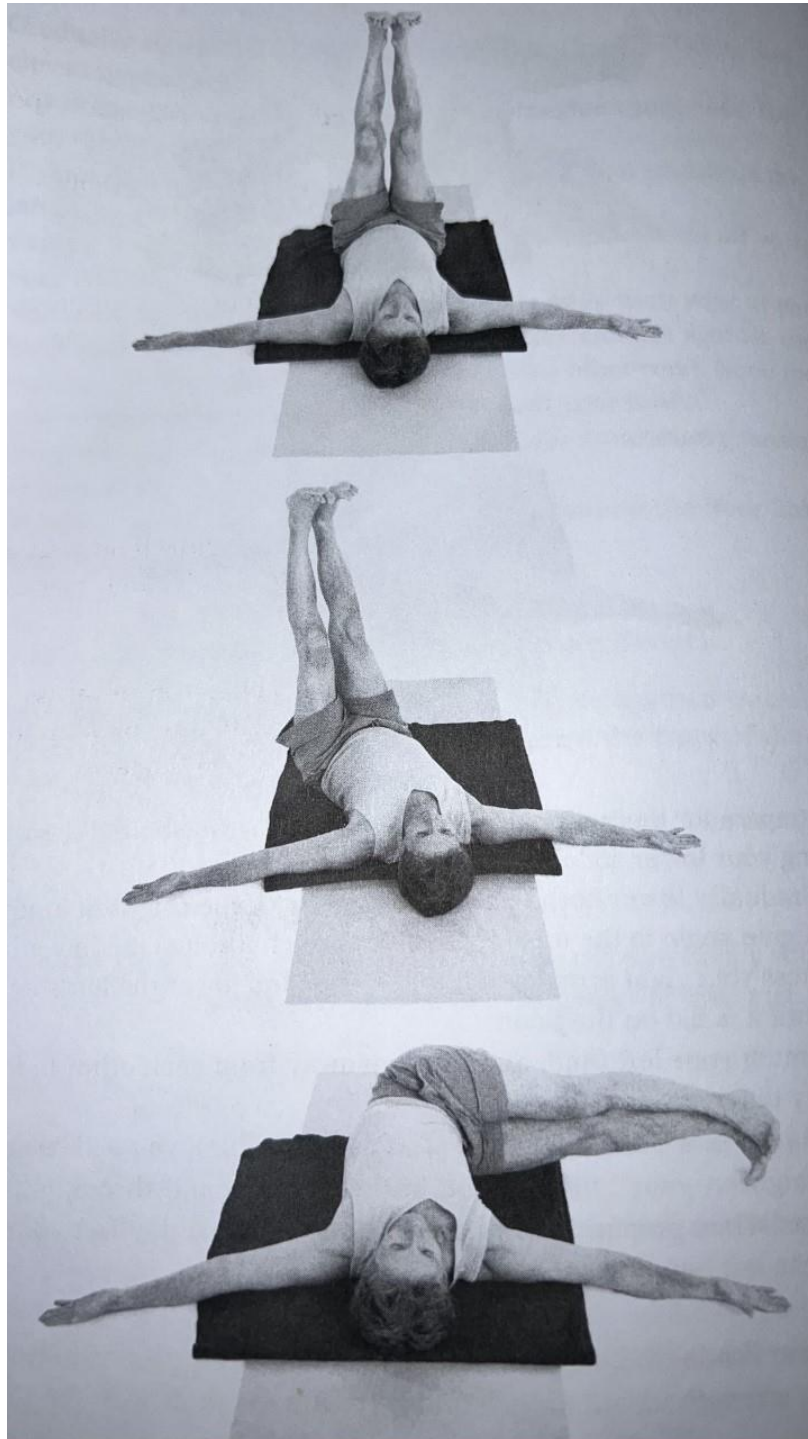


4. Prepare for the twist by first widening your sitting bones, then firming your lower abdomen.
5. Gradually lower both legs to the right, with the thighs at a ninety-degree angle to the torso if possible. Stretch through the lower back.
6. Press your right arm down into the floor and lower the left shoulder until it is flat on the floor.
7. Stretch your left thigh and left arm away from each other to intensify the twist.
8. As you get more comfortable (and more flexible), you will be able to straighten your knees in the initial position and throughout this pose. When preparing to twist with the legs straight, offset your hips to the left before twisting to the right.



CONNECTICUT BACK CENTER

Comprehensive Spinal Care



Source: Fishman MD, Loren and Saltonstall, Ellen, MA 2008 *Yoga for Arthritis* W. W. Norton & Company, Ltd.

MOUNTAIN BROOK

1. Fold one blanket into a long rectangle and place it on your mat where your upper chest will be when you lie down on your back.
2. Leaving a space for your shoulders to rest, place another blanket down toward the top of your mat. Make a long roll with the side of it to provide support for your neck. What is left after making this roll will pad your head on the floor. The size of the roll should be determined by level of comfort under the curve of your neck. Place the bolster across the mat where your knees will be.
3. Lie down on your back, with the bolster under your knees and the folded blanket under the back of your chest. The bottom of your shoulder blades should be supported by the distant edge of the blanket nearer the bolster.
4. Adjust the other blanket to fit snugly under your neck. It should support the natural arch there.
5. Extend your arms out at a comfortable angle from your sides, palms up.
6. Relax and breathe deeply.
7. If any part of your body is uncomfortable, roll to the side, sit up, and adjust the props.
8. Stay in the position for five to fifteen minutes. Enjoy the support of the props and the heaviness of your body.
9. When you are ready to get up, roll to the side and slowly sit up.

