

# YOGA RELAXATION - 27 DEC 2018

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## *Poses, Modifications, and Alternative Poses*

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## ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT

This class provides options for both the floor and chair.

The poses comprise kneeling poses, side bends, twists, and potentially strong abdominal poses.

This document outlines cautions for the health conditions listed in the following table.

Health condition	See cautions for ...
Abdominal problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Single leg cycling (<i>page 6</i>)</li> <li>▪ Cat (<i>page 8</i>)</li> </ul>
Arthritis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Seated twist – static version (<i>page 16</i>)</li> </ul>
Back problems	All poses
Eye conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Settling &amp; rest poses: <i>shavasana</i> / sitting in a chair (<i>page 3</i>)</li> <li>▪ Cat (<i>page 8</i>)</li> <li>▪ Extended pose of the child (floor only) (<i>page 11</i>)</li> </ul>
HBP, Vertigo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Single leg cycling (<i>page 6</i>)</li> <li>▪ Cat (<i>page 8</i>)</li> <li>▪ Extended pose of the child (floor only) (<i>page 11</i>)</li> </ul>
Knee problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cat (<i>page 8</i>)</li> <li>▪ Extended pose of the child (floor only) (<i>page 11</i>)</li> <li>▪ Seated side bend (<i>page 13</i>)</li> <li>▪ Seated twist – dynamic version (<i>page 15</i>)</li> <li>▪ Seated twist – static version (<i>page 16</i>)</li> <li>▪ Shrugs (<i>page 17</i>)</li> </ul>
Neck problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Settling &amp; rest poses: <i>shavasana</i> / sitting in a chair (<i>page 3</i>)</li> <li>▪ Starfish stretches(<i>page 5</i>)</li> <li>▪ Cat (<i>page 8</i>)</li> </ul>
Osteoporosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cat (<i>page 8</i>)</li> <li>▪ Seated side bend (<i>page 13</i>)</li> <li>▪ Seated twist – dynamic version (<i>page 15</i>)</li> <li>▪ Seated twist – static version (<i>page 16</i>)</li> </ul>
Pregnancy	All poses except Seated side bend ( <i>page 13</i> ) and Shrugs ( <i>page 17</i> )
Shoulder problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Starfish stretches(<i>page 5</i>)</li> <li>▪ Cat (<i>page 8</i>)</li> <li>▪ Seated side bend (<i>page 13</i>)</li> <li>▪ Seated twist – dynamic version (<i>page 15</i>)</li> <li>▪ Seated twist – static version (<i>page 16</i>)</li> <li>▪ Shrugs (<i>page 17</i>)</li> </ul>
Wrist problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cat (<i>page 8</i>)</li> </ul>

If you are unsure whether a pose is appropriate for you, contact your general practitioner or specialist.

## SETTLING & REST POSES: *SHAVASANA* / SITTING IN A CHAIR

	Laying on floor	Sitting in a chair
<b>Cautions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eye conditions: Place a cushion under the head to slightly raise the head and flex the neck.</li> <li>▪ Back problems: Bend the knees and let the knees fall into the centre, or use cushions and blankets to support the body, or choose an alternative pose</li> <li>▪ Neck problems: Keep the neck long. Place a cushion under the head, particularly if you're rounded in the upper back and over-extending through the neck, or choose an alternative pose</li> <li>▪ Pregnancy: If you're in or approaching your third trimester, choose a pose laying on your side or seated on the floor or in a chair</li> </ul>	<i>None</i>

***Shavasana* /  
Seated in  
chair**



	Laying on floor	Sitting in a chair
<b>Modifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bend the knees and let the knees fall into the centre</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sit on cushions or blanket on the chair, especially if the seat of the chair dips a little</li> <li>▪ Place a pillow or blanket behind you to support your back.</li> <li>▪ Place a rolled up mat or blanket under the feet to support them</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use cushions and blankets under the thighs</li> </ul> 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Use cushion or blanket under the head</li> </ul> 	
<b>Alternative poses</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Flapping fish pose</li> </ul>  <p>Use cushions or blankets to support the body, if needed.</p> 	<i>None</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A comfortable seated position on the floor or in a chair</li> </ul>	

## STARFISH STRETCHES

	Laying on floor	Sitting in a chair
<b>Cautions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eye conditions: Place a cushion under the head to slightly raise the head and flex the neck.</li> <li>▪ Back problems: Bend the knees and place the feet on the floor.</li> <li>▪ Neck problems: Keep the neck long. Place a cushion under the head, particularly if you're rounded in the upper back and over-extending through the neck.</li> <li>▪ Shoulder problems: Leave the arms by the side or only take them as high as comfortable.</li> <li>▪ Pregnancy: If you're in or approaching your third trimester, do this pose from a chair.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Shoulder problems: When stretching only take the arms out to where it is comfortable.</li> </ul>
<b>The pose</b>		
<b>Modifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bend the knees and place the feet flat on the floor. Only take the arms out to where it feels comfortable.</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Only take arms as high as it feel comfortable.</li> <li>▪ If it is uncomfortable stretching a limb, skip the stretch for that limb!</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If it is uncomfortable stretching a limb, skip the stretch for that limb!</li> </ul>	

## SINGLE LEG CYCLING

	Laying on floor	Sitting in a chair
<b>Cautions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eye conditions: Place a cushion under the head to slightly raise the head and flex the neck.</li> <li>▪ Back problems: Bend the non-active leg (the one you're not using to cycle) and place the foot on the floor.</li> <li>▪ Neck problems: Keep the neck long. Place a cushion under the head, particularly if you're rounded in the upper back and over-extending through the neck, or choose an alternative pose.</li> <li>▪ Pregnancy: If you're in or approaching your third trimester, do this pose lying on your side or standing. If you lie on your side, the top leg is the leg you 'cycle' with.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Back problems: Do this pose standing up or choose an alternative pose.</li> </ul>
<b>The pose</b>		
<b>Modifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Bend the non-active leg and place the foot flat on the floor.</li> </ul>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If lying on your back is uncomfortable, perform this movement lying on your side, seated in a chair, or standing up.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Instead of sitting in a chair, stand by the chair and use the chair for balance.</li> </ul>

	Laying on floor	Sitting in a chair
<b>Alternative pose</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knee bend:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Inhale: Slide the foot along the floor towards your buttocks, bending the knee.</li> <li>b) Exhale: Slide the foot back out, straightening the leg.</li> </ol> </li> <li>▪ Knee bend and extension into air:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Inhale: Bring the knee into the chest.</li> <li>b) Exhale: Straighten leg into air.</li> <li>c) Inhale: Bend the knee into the chest.</li> <li>d) Exhale: Straighten along the floor.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knee bend and extension:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Inhale: Raise the knee towards the chest.</li> <li>b) Exhale: Extend leg out in front.</li> <li>c) Inhale: Bend the knee.</li> <li>d) Exhale: Lower foot back onto the floor.</li> </ol> </li> </ul>
<b>Making it stronger</b>	<p><b>Caution:</b> These poses are <b>not</b> recommended if you are pregnant or have the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High blood pressure or heart conditions</li> <li>• Eye conditions such as glaucoma or recent cataract surgery where you want to avoid increased pressure in the head</li> <li>• Back or abdominal problems, or prolapse</li> </ul> <p>Stronger poses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alternate leg cycling Start with both knees into the chest and then alternate legs as you cycle: first one leg and then the other. If this feel comfortable, start with both legs extended up in the air or hovering just above the ground, and alternate the legs as you cycle.</li> <li>▪ Double leg cycling Imagine your legs are one leg. Squeeze them together and keep them together as you bring them towards the chest, extend them and lower and raise them.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Caution:</b> This pose is <b>not</b> recommended if you are pregnant or have the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High blood pressure or heart conditions</li> <li>• Back or abdominal problems, or prolapse</li> </ul> <p>Stronger pose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Double leg cycling Imagine your legs are one leg. Squeeze them together and keep them together as you bring them towards the chest, extend them in front and lower and raise them.</li> </ul>

	On the floor	Sitting in a chair
<b>Cautions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Abdominal problems: Avoid forceful contraction of the abdomen when rounding the back</li> <li>▪ Back problems, osteoporosis: Consider the seated or standing versions of the cat to reduce the amount of flexion in the spine.</li> <li>▪ High blood pressure, vertigo, eye conditions: Be careful when moving the head. For very high blood pressure, don't drop the head down when rounding the back.</li> <li>▪ Knee problems: Use cushions or blankets as padding</li> <li>▪ Neck problems: Move with awareness, and avoid over-extending the neck (ie. taking it back too far). If needed, minimise the movement and keep the neck long.</li> <li>▪ Pregnancy:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid forceful contraction of the abdomen when rounding the back</li> <li>• This pose is <b>not</b> suitable if you are in your third trimester of pregnancy</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Shoulder problems: Come into a kneeling position or a seated position on the floor or chair</li> <li>▪ Wrist problems: Try modifications for the wrists or come into a kneeling position or a seated position on the floor or chair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Abdominal problems: Avoid forceful contraction of the abdomen when rounding the back</li> <li>▪ Back problems, osteoporosis: If you've been advised to avoid flexion in the spine, sit with spine extended and open the chest.</li> <li>▪ Neck problems: Move with awareness, and avoid over-extending the neck (ie. taking it back too far). If needed, minimise the movement and keep the neck long.</li> <li>▪ Pregnancy:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid forceful contraction of the abdomen when rounding the back</li> <li>• This pose is <b>not</b> suitable if you are in your third trimester of pregnancy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

On the floor

Sitting in a chair

The pose



**Modifications**

- Use rolled up mat, cushions or folded blanket as padding for the knees
- Modifications for wrists:
  - Move hands forward to reduce pressure on wrists



- Place padding under the palms of the hands



- Make fists and come onto the knuckles, palms facing towards each other



**Alternative poses**

**On the floor**

Cat performed whilst kneeling or seated on the floor, or seated in a chair.

**Sitting in a chair**

Spinal extension:

1. Bring hands behind you for support.
2. Lift up, lengthening through the spine.
3. Gently lift breastbone towards sky and roll shoulders back to open through chest.
4. Hold for as long as comfortable, and then come back to your comfortable seated position.



**EXTENDED POSE OF THE CHILD (FLOOR ONLY)**

**Cautions**

- Eye conditions: Rest elbows on the ground and cup chin in hands
- High blood pressure, vertigo: Resting the forehead on fists
- Knee problems: Use cushions or blankets as
- Pregnancy:
  - Avoid placing pressure on the abdominal area
  - Consider a seated wide-legged forward bend

**The pose**



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**Modifications**

- Use rolled up mat, cushions or folded blanket as padding for the knees
- Bring toes together and take knees out wide



- Make fists and rest forehead on fists



- Cup chin in hands and rest on elbows

**Alternative pose**

- Seated wide-legged forward bend or another comfortable seated position



## SEATED SIDE BEND

	Sitting on the floor	Sitting in a chair
<b>Cautions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Back problems: Sit on a cushion or blanket to lift the hips to help the pelvis to tilt forward and the spine to lengthen.</li><li>▪ Knee problems: Use blankets or cushions to support the knees, or choose another seated position that is comfortable for you.</li><li>▪ Osteoporosis: Think about lengthening through the spine and stretching the side instead of bending and placing pressure on the spine.</li><li>▪ Shoulder problems: Choose the arm position that is comfortable for you. Avoid putting your weight onto the supporting arm.</li><li>▪ Vertigo: Move slowly between side bend and upright positions.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Osteoporosis: Think about lengthening through the spine and stretching the side instead of bending and placing pressure on the spine.</li><li>• Shoulder problems: Choose the arm position that is comfortable for you.</li><li>• Vertigo: Move slowly between side bend and upright positions.</li></ul>
<b>Seated side bend</b>	 A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white tank top and white pants, is sitting on a purple mat on the floor. She is leaning her torso to her right side, with her right arm extended down towards the floor and her left arm resting on her right knee. Her head is tilted to the right, and her eyes are closed.	 A woman with long dark hair, wearing a white tank top and white pants, is sitting on a wooden chair. She is leaning her torso to her right side, with her right arm resting on the chair seat and her left arm resting on her right knee. Her head is tilted to the right, and her eyes are closed.

### Sitting on the floor

### Sitting in a chair

#### Modifications

- Sit on a cushion or blanket to help raise the hips and allow the knees to relax and the back to lengthen



- Sit on cushions or blanket on the chair, especially if the seat of the chair dips a little

- If sitting cross-legged or with soles of feet together, place cushions under the knees to support them



## SEATED TWIST – DYNAMIC VERSION

	Sitting on the floor	Sitting in a chair
<b>Cautions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Back problems: Sit on a cushion or blanket to lift the hips to help the pelvis to tilt forward and the spine to lengthen.</li> <li>▪ Knee problems: Use blankets or cushions to support the knees, or choose another seated position that is comfortable for you.</li> <li>▪ Osteoporosis: Make the twist nice and loose, don't twist so far that you feel the twist into the spine.</li> <li>▪ Pregnancy: This pose is <b>not</b> recommended for women in their first trimester.</li> <li>▪ Shoulder problems: Choose the arm position that is comfortable for you.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Osteoporosis: Make the twist nice and loose, don't twist so far that you feel the twist into the spine.</li> <li>▪ Pregnancy: This pose is <b>not</b> recommended for women in their first trimester.</li> <li>▪ Shoulder problems: Choose the arm position that is comfortable for you.</li> </ul>
<b>Seated twist (dynamic)</b>		
<b>Modifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sit on a cushion or blanket to help raise the hips and allow the knees to relax and the back to lengthen</li> <li>▪ If sitting cross-legged or with soles of feet together, place cushions under the knees to support them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sit on cushions or blanket on the chair, especially if the seat of the chair dips a little</li> <li>▪ Keep the hands relaxed by the side instead of placing them on the hips or shoulders, or behind the head</li> </ul>

## SEATED TWIST – STATIC VERSION

	Sitting on the floor	Sitting in a chair
<b>Cautions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Arthritis: Come out of the pose if holding the pose is uncomfortable. Consider doing another round of the dynamic twists.</li> <li>▪ Back problems:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sit on a cushion or blanket to lift the hips to help the pelvis to tilt forward and the spine to lengthen.</li> <li>• Only turn as far as comfortable.</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ Knee problems: Use blankets or cushions to support the knees, or choose another seated position that is comfortable for you.</li> <li>▪ Osteoporosis: Make the twist nice and loose, don't twist so far that you feel the twist into the spine.</li> <li>▪ Pregnancy:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This pose is <b>not</b> recommended for women in their first trimester.</li> <li>• For those in their second and third trimesters, make the twist nice and loose, don't twist deeply into the abdomen.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Arthritis: Come out of the pose if holding the pose is uncomfortable. Consider doing another round of the dynamic twists.</li> <li>▪ Back problems, osteoporosis: Make the twist nice and loose, don't twist so far that you feel the twist into the spine.</li> <li>▪ Pregnancy:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This pose is <b>not</b> recommended for women in their first trimester.</li> <li>• For those in their second and third trimesters, make the twist nice and loose, don't twist deeply into the abdomen.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Seated twist (static)</b>		
<b>Modifications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sit on a cushion or blanket to help raise the hips and allow the knees to relax and the back to lengthen</li> <li>▪ If sitting cross-legged or with soles of feet together, place cushions under the knees to support them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sit on cushions or blanket on the chair, especially if the seat of the chair dips a little</li> </ul>

## SHRUGS

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### Cautions

- Back, knee problems: If sitting on the floor:
    - Sit on a cushion or blanket to lift the hips to help the pelvis to tilt forward and the spine to lengthen.
    - Use blankets or cushions to support the knees, or choose another seated position that is comfortable for you.
  - Shoulder problems: If shrugging the shoulders causes discomfort, skip this pose.
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### Shrugs

