
Mindful movement/yoga practice

Copies of this can be provided as a handout.

For this practice, the group leader can lead the participants through various movements of the group leader's choice, such as yoga exercises or various stretching exercises. Or the group leader can return to mindful walking.

Keep in mind to invite participants to stay present in their body while doing this practice and always remember to breathe.

The instruction is:

Bringing awareness to the sensations in the body and noticing when the mind has wandered and then gently bringing the attention back to sensations in the body.

The intention here is greater awareness of and groundedness in the body, while noticing what is happening in the mind.

Seated Mountain

Sit upright on the edge of the chair. Place your palms on your thighs. Stare straight ahead and ensure that the crown of the head points toward the ceiling. Keep your shoulders down and back in a relaxed position. This pose aids in focusing and improves the alignment of the spine. This is a calming pose and helps in breath awareness.



Arm warm-up

Stretch your arms outward. Hold. Slowly bring your arms up, inhaling. On the exhale, bring the arms back to an extended position. Repeat this movement 7 times slowly. Stay with the breath with each movement. This is a warm up exercise for the upper body.



Neck rolls

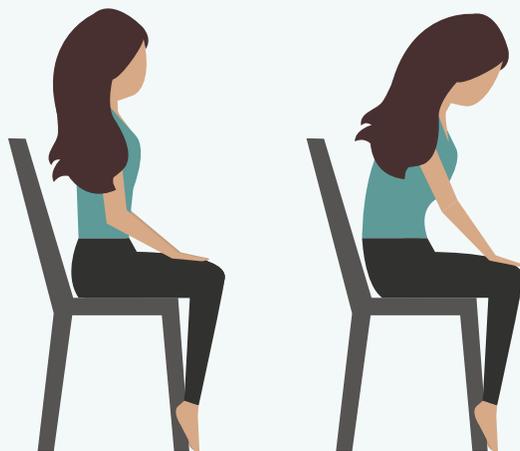
The start position for the neck roll is with the head straight and gaze forward. Before beginning the movement, notice any tension that may be present in the muscles and top of the shoulders. Inhale as you move your head gently to the left.

Pay attention to how your neck feels during this movement. Exhale as you roll your head back to neutral position. Inhale and gently roll your head to the other side. Exhale and return to neutral. Repeat this movement 5 times on each side. This movement keeps muscles flexible and aids in pain relief.



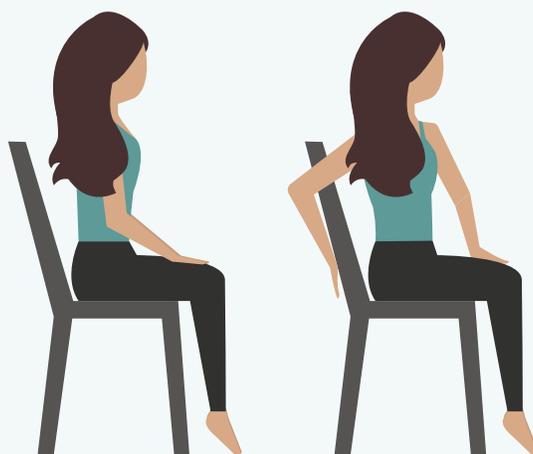
Cat/Cow in chair

Start by sitting near the front of the chair seat and place hands on the knees. Try to straighten the arms. As you inhale, start to move the pelvis and hips forward so your weight comes more to the front edge of the sitting bones. Exhale and come back to a neutral position. Repeat 5 times moving fluidly with each breath. This position supports spinal mobility.



Seated twist

Sit in the chair with your spine tall and straight. Inhale and as you exhale, twist to one side from the bottom of your spine (more from your abdomen, less from your back) grabbing the armrest or back of the chair. Be gentle and only go to your comfort level. Notice your breathing here as you hold this position for a few seconds and slowly come back to your original position. Repeat on the other side. Repeat the movement at least 3 times on each side.



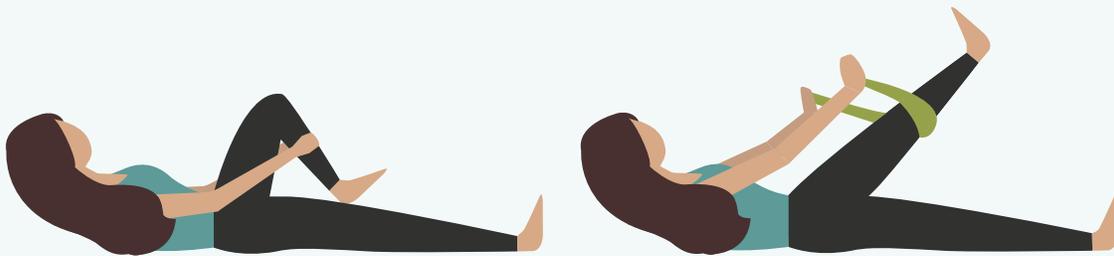
Knee hug

Bend both knees towards your chest and place your hands around your knees or shins. Take a deep breath in and gently squeeze your things closer to the chest. Hold for 20–30 seconds and repeat twice. This posture releases tight muscles around the hips and lower back.



Leg stretch

Lying flat on your back on the ground, start by hugging your right knee in towards your chest. Release the knee and then with your leg outstretched, as in the diagram, place a strap (or tie or towel) under the lower leg, as shown in the diagram. Holding on to the strap with both hands, gently stretch the legs straight up as far as you can without discomfort. You will notice a gentle stretching sensation along your right leg, particularly the hamstrings. Hold this position for a few seconds while remembering to breathe. Lower the right leg and then repeat on the left leg. Do this exercise at least twice on each side. This position stretches the hamstring muscles.



Pelvic tilts/Bridge pose

Lying flat on the floor with arms on the side. You can place a blanket under shoulders to protect the neck. Bend your knees so that your feet are now flat on the ground as in the diagram. Keep your arms beside your body, palms facing down. Inhaling, slowly lift your back off the floor, gently roll in the shoulders, supporting your weight with your shoulders, arms and feet. Keep breathing easily. Exhale as you gently release the pose. Repeat this movement 7 times slowly. This posture is beneficial for strengthening the back and stretches the chest, neck and spine.



Corpse pose/Resting pose

Lie flat on your back, letting the arms and legs drop open as feels right. You can place a blanket or cushion under or over your body as is comfortable. Close the eyes and take slow deep breaths through the nose. All your whole body to become soft, letting it relax onto the floor. As the body relaxes, feel the whole body rising and falling with each breath. Scan the body from the toes to the top of the head and consciously relax and release any tension. Let your body move into a deeper state of relaxation. Try to stay in this position for at least 10 minutes.

To release, slowly deepen the breath, wiggle the toes and fingers, reach the arms overhead and stretch out the entire body. Exhale, bend the knees into the chest and roll over to one side, into fetal position. Slowly, inhale up to a seated position.

This pose is essential to any yoga practice, rejuvenating the body and mind while reducing tension and stress.

