
Yoga for first trimester (1-3 months)

Ardha Thithili (Half butterfly pose)



HOW TO DO?

Sit with legs outstretched. Bend the right leg and place the right foot as far up on the left thigh as possible. Place the right hand on top of the bent right knee. Hold the toes of the right foot with the left hand. While breathing in, gently move the right knee up towards the chest. Breathing out, gently push the knee down and try to touch the floor. The trunk should not move. Movement of leg should be achieved by the exertion of the right arm. Repeat with left leg. Slowly practice about 10 up and down movements with each leg. Do not strain.

- **Benefits:** It is an excellent practice for loosening of hip and knee joints, which shall enable faster delivery. Practicing full butterfly pose, relieves tension from inner thigh muscles. Removes tiredness from legs.



Bridge pose



HOW TO DO?

Lie flat on back. Bend knees, place soles of feet flat on the floor with the heels touching the buttocks. Feet and knees may be hip width apart. Grasp ankles with hands. Raise buttocks and arch back backward. Try to raise the chest and navel as high as possible, without moving feet or shoulders. In final position, the body is supported by the head, neck, shoulders, arms and feet. Hold pose as long as it is comfortable. Release ankles and relax.

- **Benefits:** Realigns the spine and relieves backache. It massages and stretches the colon and abdominal organs, improving digestion. Tones female reproductive organs and especially recommended for women who tend to miscarry. Should not be done in advanced stages of pregnancy. Under expert guidance, it has been successfully used to turn the baby when it is a breech presentation.



Kashta Takshan Asan (Chopping Wood Pose)



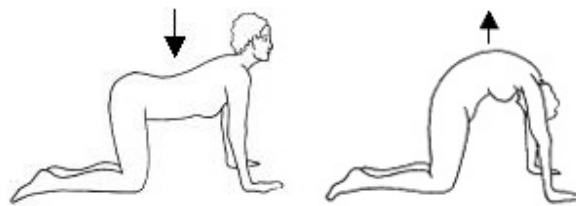
HOW TO DO?

Sit in squatting pose with feet flat on the ground and one and a half feet apart. Clasp fingers of hand and place them on the floor between the feet. Straighten the arms and keep them straight throughout the practice. Elbows should be inside the knees. Imagine the action of chopping wood. Raise arms as high as possible, behind the head, stretching the spine upward. Look up towards the hands. Make a downward stroke. Expel the breath making a "Ha" sound and removing all air from the lungs. Hands should return towards the feet. This is one round. Practice 5-10 rounds.

- Benefits: It loosens the pelvic girdle and tones the pelvic muscles.

Yoga for second trimester (4 – 6 months)

Marjariasana (Cat pose)



HOW TO DO?

Sit with buttocks on the heels (Vajrasana). Raise the buttocks and stand on the knees. Lean forward and place the hands flat on the floor. This is the starting position. Inhale while raising the head and depressing the spine so that the back becomes concave. Exhale, while lowering the head and stretching the spine upward. At the end of the exhalation contract the abdomen and pull in the buttocks. Head will be now between the arms, facing the thighs. This is one round. It may be done for 5-10 times. Be careful not to strain yourself.

- **Benefits:** This asana improves flexibility of the neck, shoulders and spine. Tones female reproductive system. Can be safely practiced during first 6 months of pregnancy.



Tadasana (Palm tree pose)



HOW TO DO?

Stand with feet together and arms on the side. Raise arms over the head, interlock fingers and then turn the palms upward. Place hands over the head. Inhale and stretch the arms, shoulders and chest upwards. Raise heels to come up on the toes. Stretch whole body from top to bottom. Lower heels while exhaling and bring hands on top of the head. Relax for few seconds and repeat whole round 5-10 times.

- **Benefits:** Helps develop physical and mental balance. Entire spine is stretched and loosened, helping to clear congestion of the spinal nerves. Also stretches rectos abdominal muscles keeping them nerves toned.

Meru Akarshanasan (Spinal Bending pose)



HOW TO DO?

Lie on right side with left leg on right leg. Bend right arm. Placing the elbow on the floor. Support head on right palm. Place left arm on left thigh. Raise the left leg as high as possible, slide the left hand to the foot and grasp the big toe. Repeat on other side.

- Benefits: Relaxes the hamstring, inner thigh and abdominal muscles and stretches the muscles of the sides of the body rendering them stronger and flexible

Yoga for third trimester (6 – 9 months)

Supta Udarakarshanasana (Sleeping abdominal stretch pose)



HOW TO DO?

Lie in the back. Interlock fingers of both hands and place hands beneath the head. Bend knees, keeping the soles of feet on the floor. At the same time move the head towards the left, giving uniform twisting stretch to the entire spine. Repeat on the other side by bending legs towards left, and head towards right.

- **Benefits:** Removes constipation and improves digestion. Relieves stiffness and strain of the spine caused due to prolonged sitting.

Shoulder rotation



HOW TO DO?

Single Arm - Place the right fingertips up on the right shoulder. Slowly rotate the arm and shoulder joint around as if drawing a large circle with the tip of the elbow. Extend the movement to rotate fully into the shoulder joint. Do 5 times one way and then reverse the direction for 5 circles. Repeated on the left side.



Double Arm - Raise the arms up, fingers on both shoulders. Slowly rotate both arms together in large circles. Try to stretch the elbows as far back as possible, and try to touch them together at the front. Go 5 times in one direction and then 5 times reverse.

Breathe Inhale when opening the chest as the elbows go backwards, exhale when the elbows move towards touching at the front.

- Benefits: Improves circulation and flexibility in the shoulders and upper back. Releases tensions from around the heart and lungs. Encourages better breathing. Especially effective for release of neck tension if followed by the neck series.

**For mothers-to-be, practice throughout pregnancy and post-nasally as this exercise helps to stimulate proper function of the mammary glands.*



Ankle crank



HOW TO DO?

Bend the right leg up and place the foot overhanging the left knee. Hold the right toes with the left hand. Steady the right ankle with the right hand. Crank the right ankle around in a large circle, exploring to the very perimeters of movement. Do 10 rotations in each direction and then 10 rotations in each direction with the other ankle.

- **Benefits:** Good for stiffness and poor circulation in the feet. Helps extend setting time in meditation postures.