



RISINGLIGHT  
YOGA



# Prenatal Yoga

for Mom & Baby

# Prenatal Yoga for Mom & Baby

Yoga is the Sanskrit word for 'Union' and creates the perfect space to develop a union within ourselves to Baby. Prenatal Yoga powerfully contributes to the total wellness of Mom and Baby during pregnancy. It is a practice that enables us to connect with the bright light of Baby within us and to begin a relationship with Baby that will last throughout motherhood. It builds strength in the body, clarity of thought, and creates internal peace and awareness. Some of the many physical benefits that practicing prenatal yoga can give Moms is building strength and stamina for labour, deepening our breath, awareness of Baby, reduces risk of preterm labour, reduces high blood pressure, reduces risk of gestational diabetes, improved joint flexibility and movement, and allows Mom to cultivate peaceful mental clarity.

## Benefits of Prenatal Yoga:

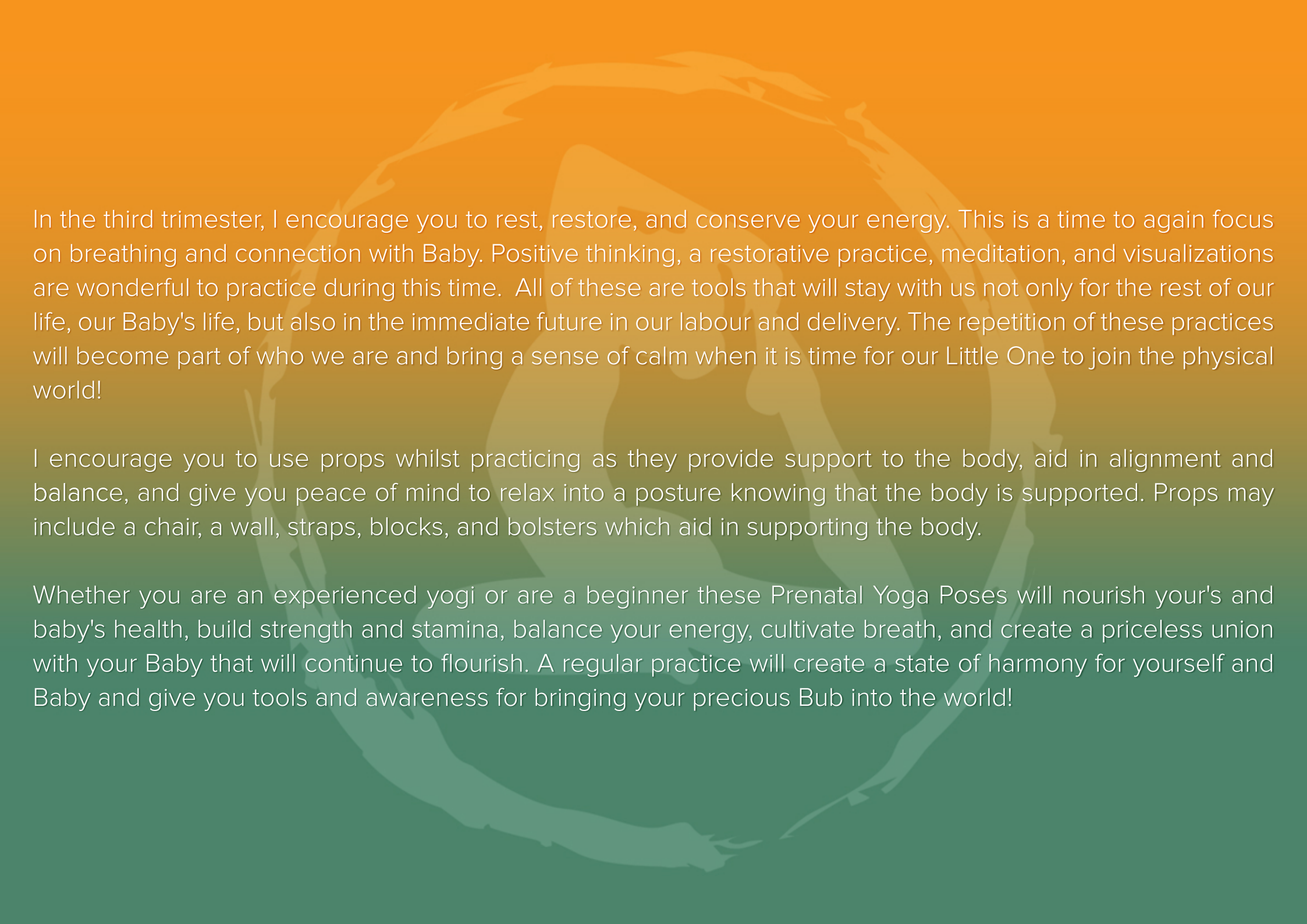
- ✔ Increases Total Wellness for Mom & Baby
- ✔ Movement & Exercise
- ✔ Building Strength & Stamina for Labour
- ✔ Building Breath Awareness
- ✔ Develops Internal Peace & Mental Clarity
- ✔ Flexibility
- ✔ Reflection & Connection with Baby
- ✔ Strengthens Immune System



Please be mindful of your body. We all have different conditions and abilities within our body. If you have physical limitations and concerns with moving through yoga postures, please consider first taking a prenatal yoga class, restorative yoga class, or yoga therapy class under the guidance of a qualified yoga teacher. Your body and Baby is changing rapidly through the different stages of pregnancy. During pregnancy the hormone relaxin is released in the body, which helps to stretch and lengthen your ligaments to help release and open the body for labour. It is important to remember this during your practice and any form of exercise. No need to push yourself, simply listen to your body, be kind to your body, and let your body be your guide.

The first trimester can often be the most challenging and can be difficult with incorporating any physical practice. There were some days when I just needed to rest and conserve all my energy to get through the day. In the first 12 weeks it is essential to be gentle with yourself and mindful of where your body is at each time that you set aside time to practice. Our bodies are changing, Baby is developing quickly, and it is a great time to become more in tune with ourselves and creating a state of mindfulness. During pregnancy Baby will tune into our thoughts, emotions, and physical state and we can work on creating a harmonious state for ourselves and our Little One. Building a restorative and regular practice will give you layer upon layer of stability and a foundation of strength and inner peace throughout your pregnancy.

In the second trimester, you will hopefully feel more energy and feel up for a physical practice. Most will hopefully be able to wave good bye to morning sickness, nausea, and fatigue. If you are feeling better (and I hope that you are!) this is a time to continue to develop strength, mindfulness, and a connection with Baby. Enjoy movement with breath, opening your heart, opening your hips, engaging your pelvic floor, and building strength in the thighs and legs for birth. This is usually the time when you can become most physical in preparation for Little One's arrival. I absolutely loved feeling my Little One gently moving with me and I felt so connected and in love with her! I hope that you have those priceless moments with your Bub too!



In the third trimester, I encourage you to rest, restore, and conserve your energy. This is a time to again focus on breathing and connection with Baby. Positive thinking, a restorative practice, meditation, and visualizations are wonderful to practice during this time. All of these are tools that will stay with us not only for the rest of our life, our Baby's life, but also in the immediate future in our labour and delivery. The repetition of these practices will become part of who we are and bring a sense of calm when it is time for our Little One to join the physical world!

I encourage you to use props whilst practicing as they provide support to the body, aid in alignment and balance, and give you peace of mind to relax into a posture knowing that the body is supported. Props may include a chair, a wall, straps, blocks, and bolsters which aid in supporting the body.

Whether you are an experienced yogi or are a beginner these Prenatal Yoga Poses will nourish your's and baby's health, build strength and stamina, balance your energy, cultivate breath, and create a priceless union with your Baby that will continue to flourish. A regular practice will create a state of harmony for yourself and Baby and give you tools and awareness for bringing your precious Bub into the world!



# Setting the Space for Yoga at Home

I recommend finding a clean, bright, and open space in your home to practice in. It helps to use the same space on a regular basis as it will give a consistency to your practice and a great energy to the space. Playing soft and gentle music really helps me to sink into my practice and helps me drift throughout the poses without too many distracting thoughts from the mind. Light a candle if you wish and set up your yoga mat and yoga props.

## Props may include:

- ✔️ Yoga Mat
- ✔️ Yoga Bolster - you may use a pillow if you wish
- ✔️ Blanket - helps in providing support
- ✔️ Wall - aids in support in yoga poses
- ✔️ Chair - aids in support in yoga poses

## Breath

Throughout your prenatal yoga practice begin to focus on your breath and close your mouth, breathing through the nose. Focus on deep in-hales and nourishing exhales which will aid in calming the body and leave you feeling refreshed. With every breath, breathe for Baby. Once you are set up in your posture, always come back to the breath for you and Baby.

## Set an Intention with your Practice

During the many weeks ahead, I invite love, nourishment, and strength into my physical body.

I invite my heart to open, peace to flow in my mind, and build a strong connection with Baby.

I am sensitive to my needs and feel empowered as I move through with my breath and respect my changing body.

As I wrap my arms around my belly I will find stillness and share in the sweet joy of your movements and becoming a Mother.

# 11 Yoga Poses



01

## Balāsana

(Wide Legged Child's Pose)

Beautiful resting position, aids in stretching the groin and great flexion in the hip joints, stretches and releases the lower back. It brings a sense of peace and is a wonderful pose to include during contractions in labour. It reminds you to rest and reconnect with breath and Baby.

*\*Please be mindful of the knees*

### Instruction

- ✓ Sitting towards the back of your mat, big toes touching together, open your knees apart to the outer edges of your mat.
- ✓ Rest your buttocks on your heels (if needed please use your blanket between your buttocks and calf muscles for support).
- ✓ Inhale looking forward and opening the chest, Exhale keeping your buttocks on your heels and walk your hands forward, hinging from the hips and rest your chest and head towards the floor.
- ✓ Remembering to breath, gently roll the forehead from side to side on the mat.
- ✓ To release, inhale looking forward and exhale walking the hands back by your side and sitting upright.



# 11 Yoga Poses



02

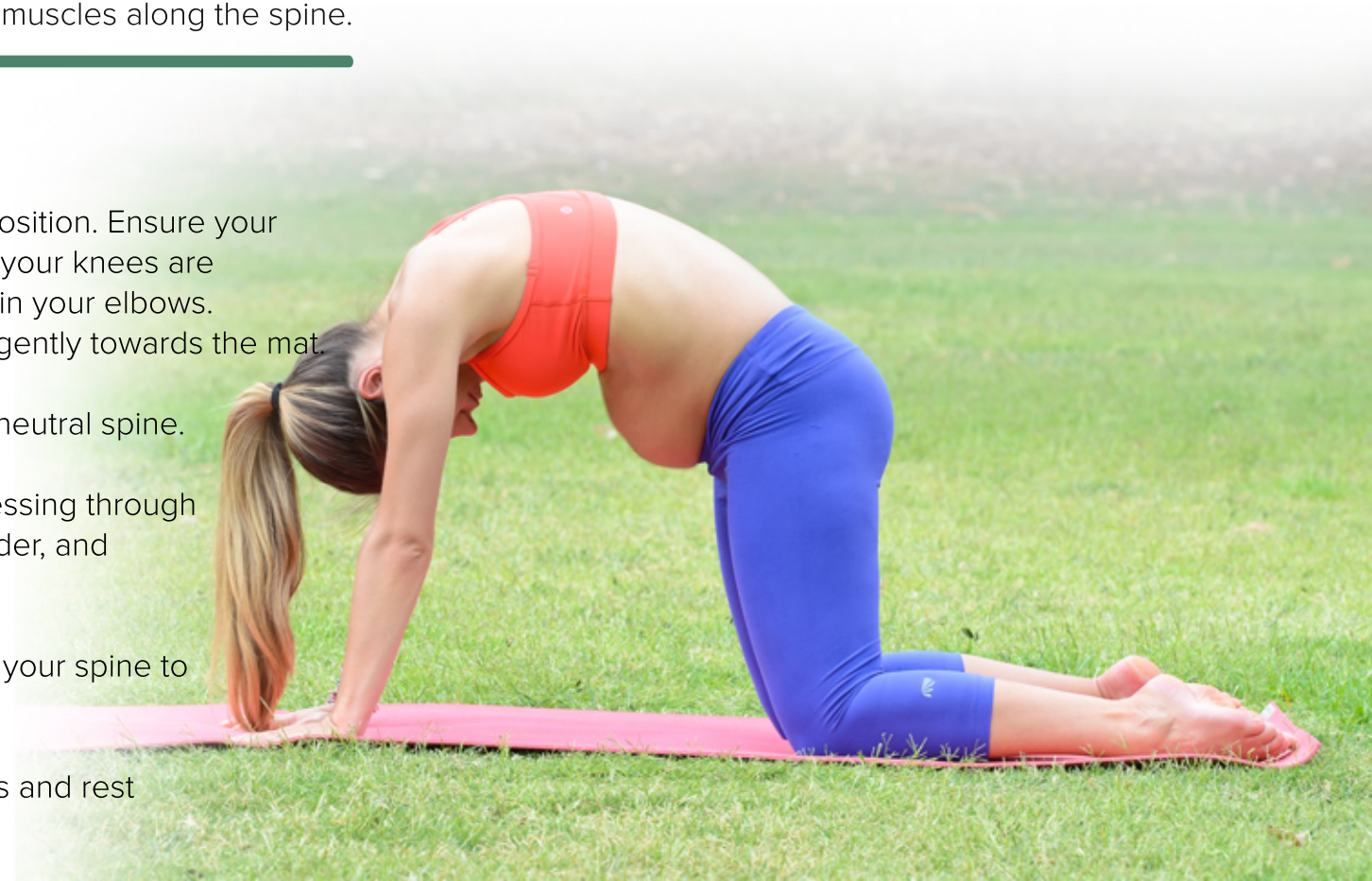
## Bidalasana

(Cat Cow Pose)

Incredible strengthening and stretching for the spine. A sweet release for the lower back and opens the groin which aids in opening the hip joints. This is a great pose to include in labour in between contractions as it aids in releasing tense muscles along the spine.

### Instruction

- ✓ Move to your hands and knees in a table top position. Ensure your wrists are directly beneath your shoulders and your knees are directly beneath your hips. Keep a micro bend in your elbows. Center your head in a neutral position looking gently towards the mat.
- ✓ Inhale looking forward and keeping a straight, neutral spine.
- ✓ Exhale rounding the back like an angry cat, pressing through the palm of the hands, tucking the tail bone under, and looking towards Baby.
- ✓ Move back and forth with the breath and allow your spine to lengthen and release.
- ✓ To release move the buttocks back to the heels and rest in wide legged child's pose



# 11 Yoga Poses



03

## Adho Mukha Svanasana

(Downward Facing Dog)

Strengthening pose that stretches the back, shoulders, hamstrings, calves, and arches of the feet. It lengthens the spine and builds strength in the heart, arms, and legs. It also is wonderful in aiding digestion.

### Instruction

- ✓ Move into child's pose and stretch your arms forward and plant your hands on the mat. Move into a table top position.
- ✓ Ensure hands are shoulder width apart and middle finger is pointing forward on the mat. Take knees and feet slightly larger than hip width apart, tuck the toes under, and exhale lifting your sitting bones towards the sky.
- ✓ Relax with your head and neck down, gently looking towards the mat. Slowly straighten the legs and work your heels towards the earth.
- ✓ Keep your feet slightly turned in and parallel with the mat and try to keep a slight micro bend in the arms and legs.
- ✓ Shake your head 'yes' and shake your head 'no' and move the shoulders away from your ears to melt down your back.
- ✓ Take 3 long nourishing inhales and exhales and release bending the knees and moving back into wide legged child's pose.



\*Third Trimester or late pregnancy variation: Use a wall for chair for support, feet slightly wider than hip distance apart, bend forward at a 90 degree angle hinging from the hips. Place your hands on the wall or chair and keep the ears in line with the arms. Gently gazing down and releasing the back.



# 11 Yoga Poses



04

## Ashva Sanchalanasana

(Lunge Pose)

Strengthens the legs and arms and builds stamina. Stretches your groin, psoas, and opens your hips for labour.

*\* Be mindful of any sensitive knees and ensure to step gently into the pose creating a great foundation*

### Instruction

- ✓ Stand in the center of the mat, feet slightly more than hip distance apart, inhale moving your arms above your head, exhale swan diving forward and place your finger tips towards the mat.
- ✓ Inhale slightly bending the knees, looking forward, and exhale as you gently take a large step back with the left foot. Place both hands on the inside of the right foot.
- ✓ Extend through the left leg and reach through your heel, with the ball of the foot on the floor.
- ✓ Bend the right knee and ensure to keep it inline above the ankle.
- ✓ Gradually soften the right buttock to the floor and allow your hips to open. Breath with Baby.
- ✓ Drop the back left knee for more support and hold for 5-10 breaths.
- ✓ To release, inhale looking forward and pressing through through hands, and gently step back into downward facing dog.
- ✓ Repeat on the other side



# 11 Yoga Poses



05

## Virabhadrasana II

(Warrior II)

Strengthens the legs and arms, builds stamina, stretches your hips, aids in balance and stability, and aids in energizing the body

*\*Be mindful of any sensitive knees, and with neck issues keep the head looking straight forward and do not turn the head to look over the front finger tips*

### Instruction

- ✓ Stand in the center of the mat and turn to the side, with feet together and
- ✓ Step your legs apart about 1.5 leg lengths. Turn your right foot to the right 90 degrees and line up the heel of your right foot with the center arch of your left foot
- ✓ Turn your left toes in slightly to ensure that the side of the foot is parallel with the end of your mat.
- ✓ Lifting and activating your quadriceps, slowly raise your arms to shoulder height and extend energy all the way through your finger tips.
- ✓ Slowly bend the right knee into a lunge, ensuring that the knee stays directly over the ankle.
- ✓ Keep the center of your body over your hips and elongate through your spine
- ✓ If you do not have any neck injuries, slowly turn your head and focus past your right finger tips.
- ✓ Be mindful of your breath and take 3 long inhales and exhales. Energize through the legs and lengthen through your arms and finger tips.
- ✓ To release, gently straighten the right knee and step back together. Repeat on the other side.

Variation: Use a wall as support and do the pose against a wall to aid in body balance. Bring your hands to your hips to control balance and intensity of pose.



# 11 Yoga Poses



## 06 Prasarita Padottanasana

(Wide Angle Forward Fold)

Great pose for promoting healthy digestion, opening the hip joints, releasing the lower back, and stretching the hamstrings and inner thigh muscles. I love the lengthening and sweet release of this pose along my spine.

### Instruction

- ✓ Stand in the center and middle of your mat. Take your legs about one and half legs distance apart. Slightly turn the toes inward and pigeon toe the feet.
- ✓ Place your hands on your hips, keep a slight microbend in the knees and inhale lifting towards the sky.
- ✓ Exhale, hinging from the hips, swan dive forward and once at a 90 degree angle, gently reach the finger tips towards the earth and release the head towards the mat.
- ✓ For support, I encourage you to use a block or bolster to place the hands on (this will relieve any tension in tight hammies!) Lengthen through the spine and feel a nice deep stretch through the hamstrings. Try to ensure that your hip bones are even.
- ✓ Connect with your breath and allow your sit bones to rise to the sky and lift through your knee caps and thighs.
- ✓ To release, inhale looking forward, slightly bending the knees, bring your hands to your hips and gently rise to a standing position.



# 11 Yoga Poses



## 07 Utkata Konasana

(Goddess Pose)

Time to tune into your inner and outer Goddess! Build strength and stamina in your thighs and buttocks which will help you during labour. Tones the pelvic floor and cultivates your inner strength.

### Instruction

- ✓ Step to the middle of your mat and step the feet about a leg lengths distance apart.
- ✓ Turn the toes out and the heels in
- ✓ Exhale and take a deep squat, bringing the thighs parallel to the earth. Open the knees and ensure that they are directly over your ankles. Adjust your feet if you need to.
- ✓ Inhale bringing the hands together in a prayer position or bringing the arms out to a 90 degree angle at your side and shining your palms to the sky
- ✓ Breath deeply taking nourishing inhales and exhales and hold for 5 breaths, repeat as you wish!



# 11 Yoga Poses



## 08 Malasana (Yogic Squat)

An excellent hip and groin opener that helps Mom prepare for labour and delivery by opening and shortening the birth canal. Great for strengthening the legs and working on the pelvic floor.

### Instruction

- ✓ Step towards the front of your mat and step your feet apart (approximately the width of your mat or wider if needed)
- ✓ Bend the knees, fractioning them over the toes, and move slowly into a deep squat, keeping your body weight slightly forward.
- ✓ Bring your arms gently to your heart center in prayer position. Gently press your elbows against your inner thighs and drop the buttocks to the earth.
- ✓ Lengthen through the spine, lift the chest, and roll your shoulders back. Ensure to keep all four corners of the feet on the floor.
- ✓ Feel free to sit on a block for support as well as on a block and against a wall for more support.
- ✓ Close your eyes if you wish, connect with Baby and take 5 deep breaths.
- ✓ To release, inhale and slowly stand up



Variation: For a supportive malasana pose I recommend sitting on a block, bolster, or even stack pillows and do the pose against a wall. This will enable you to hold the pose, close the eyes, connect with Baby, and repeat any affirmation or practice any pelvic floor exercises. Hold for 5 breaths.

**Affirmation: "I am nourished and my Baby is growing stronger every day"**

# 11 Yoga Poses



09

## Baddha Konasana

(Cobbler's Pose)

Wonderful hip and groin opener and increases blood flow to the pelvis and abdomen. A calm restorative pose that allows you to focus inward and breathe with Baby. It helps to prevent varicose veins during pregnancy.

*\*Avoid with any inner groin strains, be mindful of any sacroiliac injuries*

### Instruction

- ✓ Fold blanket in half and come to sit on the buttocks on the folded of the blanket. This will assist in a forward pelvic tilt and relieve lower back tension.
- ✓ Bring the soles of the feet together and draw them in towards the groin in a diamond shape.
- ✓ Interlace the fingers in front of the toes and keep the feet on the floor. Inhale lift the chest and lengthen the spine and gently tilt forward.
- ✓ Exhale extend forward, ensure to lengthen through the spine and gaze towards the floor, keeping the neck in line with the spine.
- ✓ Connect to the breath and use your elbows to gently press into your thighs to help deepen the stretch.
- ✓ Hold for 5 to 10 breaths and feel free to close your eyes and focus inwards.
- ✓ To release, inhale looking forward and exhale lifting the chest upwards



# 11 Yoga Poses



10

## Upavistha Konasana

(Supported Wide-Angle Forward Fold)

Excellent posture for the groin and reproductive system, allows blood and energy to flow in the pelvic area, improves flexibility, and stretch the hamstrings.

*\*Avoid with any inner groin strains, be mindful of any sacroiliac injuries*

### Instruction

- ✓ Fold blanket in half and come to sit on the buttocks on the folded edge of the blanket. This will assist in a forward pelvic tilt and relieve lower back tension.
- ✓ Open legs into a wide 'V' shape with the toes and knee caps pointing towards the sky
- ✓ Place your bolster lengthwise in between your legs (or even a chair in front of you for more of a relaxed stretch)
- ✓ Keep a small micro bend in the knees and activate the thighs, inhale and lengthen up the spine
- ✓ After you have lengthened the spine, hinge from the hips and exhale walking the hands forward. Rest your chest on either the bolster or the base of a chair.
- ✓ Continue to breath and hold for 3 minutes. To release, inhale looking forward and exhale lifting the chest and walking the hands back to your side. Gently bend the knees and bring the legs back together, giving them a little shake.
- ✓ \* Not pictures with the chair or bolster variation



# 11 Yoga Poses



11

## Sukhasana

(Supported Wide-Angle Forward Fold)

Ideal for sealing your yoga practice and allowing the full benefits of all of the poses you have just done to flow through your body and to Baby. Rest your body, still the mind, and allow any remaining tensions to melt away. Helps to balance and calm the nervous system and most importantly allows you to cultivate inner peace. You can tap into this inner peace at any time and it will be a reservoir of calm for you in preparing for labour.

### Instruction

- ✓ Come to a crosse legged seated position, drawing the heels towards the groin. I encourage you to use a block. This will help to raise the hips and create more comfort for sitting.
- ✓ Lift through the spine and out through the crown of the head. Melt the shoulders down the spine.
- ✓ Gently close your eyes and allow your hands to rest on your thighs, palms facing up. Take a deep nourishing inhale and exhale.
- ✓ If you like bring your left hand to the heart and your right hand to cradle Baby. Sit in sweet silence and connect with your breath and repeat any affirmation or mantra.
- ✓ Hold for 5 minutes and allow yourself to truly feel empowered and know that you are preparing for a labour of love ahead

#### Affirmation:

I love you  
I have created space for you and send nourishment and love with my flow of breath  
I will soothe you with the vibration of my voice and together we will move in the melody of our hearts  
I give thanks to my body that grows and is filled with strength and support for you  
As I wrap my arms around my belly I will find stillness and share in the sweet joy of your movements and becoming a Mother  
I love you





# 11 Yoga Poses



**Enjoy these 11 Prenatal Yoga Poses and I hope they connect you with your sweet Little One and build the strength of body, mind, and spirit for your delivery! Namaste**

To ask Melissa a question about plant-based pregnancy or yoga visit:

**[www.paddisonprogram.com](http://www.paddisonprogram.com) or  
[www.risinglightyoga.com](http://www.risinglightyoga.com)**

Disclaimer: This article is for informational and entertainment purposes only and is not a substitute for a qualified prenatal yoga teacher. The author is not a medical doctor and is not responsible for any consequences regarding your use or intended use of any information provided on this article. Always check with your medical professional or seek out a trained prenatal yoga instructor in person to tailor postures to your body as needed.