

RELAXATION-PROMOTING RESTORATIVE YOGA ROUTINE

By [Elizabeth Kovar](#) // [Fitness](#) // 12/15/2015

Restorative yoga is a gentle form of yoga that involves holding positions for longer periods of time. This type of yoga uses props to support the body during passive stretches. Most positions are seated, supine or prone, which reinforces a relaxed state and helps reduce stress.

Complete these poses while using traditional yoga props or with the use of pillows and blankets. Hold each pose for at least two to three minutes for the most benefit. You can ease into the pose with several deep breaths. Once in the pose, allow the breath to come back to a steady state.

JANUSHIRASANA (HEAD-TO-KNEE POSE)



Focus: Lengthens the posterior leg

How to Perform: Sit on the floor with the legs extended. Bend the left knee and place the left foot next to the right inner thigh. Place a block or folded blanket on the left side of the right knee. Fold forward from the pelvis and rest the head on the block or blanket. Place the hands on the floor on top of the props.

UPAVISTHA KONASANA – SEATED WIDE-LEGGED STRADDLE



Focus: Lengthens the posterior leg and inner thigh.

How to Perform: Sit on the floor with legs extended. Place the legs into a “V” position. Place the block or folded blanket between the legs. Fold forward from the pelvis and rest your head or hands on the prop.

SUPTA BADDHA KONASANA (SUPINE BUTTERFLY)



Focus: Lengthens the inner thigh and opens chest

How to Perform: Sit on the floor with feet on the floor and place two pillows or folded blankets on the outside of each leg. Recline back onto a pillow to support the head and spine. Allow the knees to drop to each side and place the soles of the feet together. Relax the legs onto the prop and keep the arms by your sides.

SUPTA MATSYENDRASANA – (RECLINED SPINAL TWIST)



Focus: Opens the thoracic spine and abductors

How to Perform: Lie on the floor or on top of a pillow for upper back and head support. Place a pillow on the left side of the legs. With the feet on the floor, lower the legs onto the pillow and extend the arms on the floor at shoulder height. Hold and switch to the opposite side.

SAVASANA (CORPSE POSE)



Focus: Promotes relaxation

How to Perform: Lie on the floor or on top of pillows to support the upper back and head. You can place a blanket on top of your body. Let the arms relax by your sides and breathe normally. Stay in the pose between five to 10 minutes.



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Elizabeth Kovar, MA, has studied yoga in five different countries. Her master's thesis, "Creating Yoga Programs for People with Movement Disabilities," was implemented on a 12-week study for people with Stage 1-2 Parkinson's disease. Based in Seattle, she serves as fitness coordinator at a local recreation center.