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FAMILY HEALTH

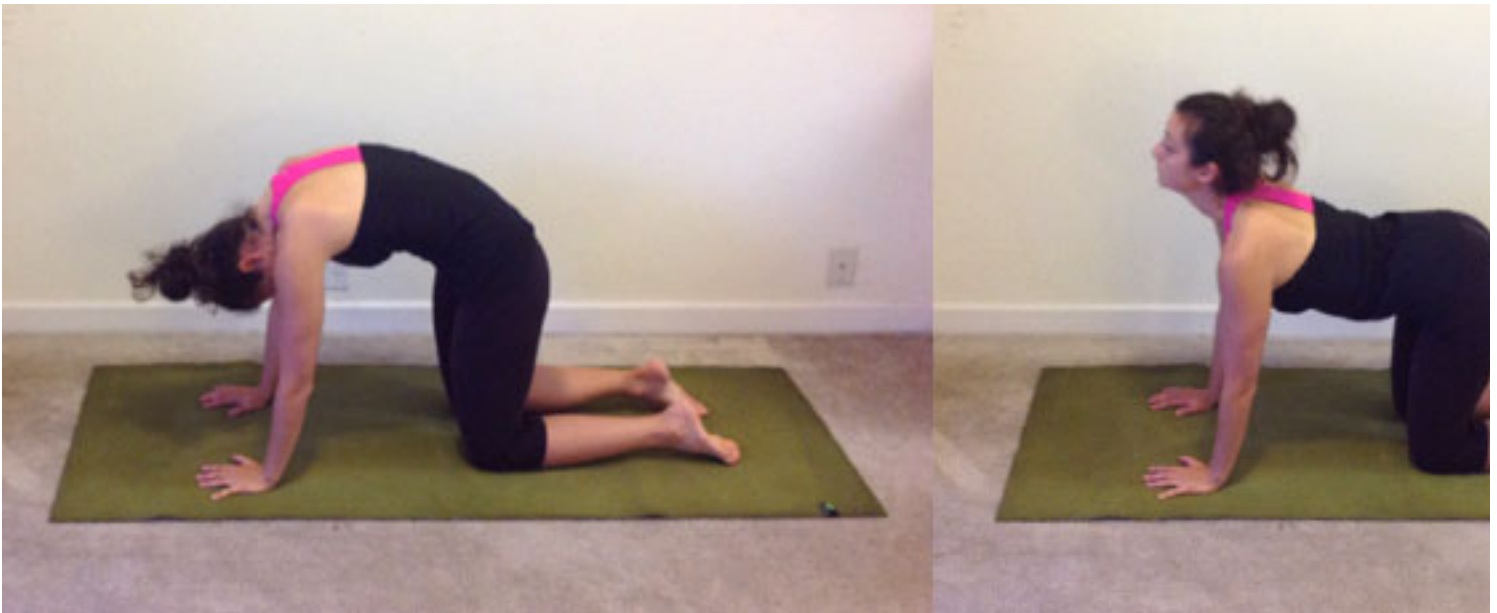
10-Minute A.M. Yoga Practice to Start Your Day Right

October 4, 2013, 12:00AM

Need a fresh start to your day? Awaken your mind and invigorate your body as you start your morning with an energetic yoga practice. Morning yoga eases the transition from the sleeping to the waking state and prepares you for whatever may come your way throughout the day.

This simple and easy routine includes nine postures and takes 10 minutes to complete. Try something new this fall as you rise, shine and practice yoga.

Cat/Cow



Cat/Cow is an excellent pose to warm up the spine, breath and body. This rhythmic movement flows with the inhalation and exhalation, and is known for helping maintain a healthy spine.

How to Perform: Start on all fours with hands under the shoulders and knees under the hips. On your exhalation, round the spine toward the ceiling, while bringing your chin toward the chest. Inhale, reverse the motion and lower the navel toward the floor, and lift the chin toward the ceiling. Continue this motion, working with the inhalation and exhalation. Complete for one minute.

Downward-facing Dog



Most dogs after waking from a nap stretch in this position, thus giving credit to its name. This position is beneficial in a morning practice to alleviate a tight back, hips and lower extremity. **How to Perform:** From the all-fours position, slightly walk your hands forward. Curl the toes underneath. Exhale, lift the hips into the air and allow the heels to relax toward the floor. The chest should maintain a relaxed position as the shoulders roll away from the ears. Hold for 30 seconds.

Runner's Lunge



Runners Lunge allows the extended leg to open while maintaining strength and stability in the upper body. This is the perfect posture to transition from mat to standing poses.

How to Perform: From down dog, lower onto all fours. Slightly lift your torso and bring your right leg forward. Reposition the hands on each side of the foot. and curl the toes

of the back foot onto the floor. Slowly, lift your back knee and hold.

To regress, place the back knee on the floor. Hold for 30 seconds.

Revolved Side Angle Pose



This position increases mobility in the upper body while opening the groin, glutes and thighs. This also challenges balance.

How to Perform: From Runners Lunge, reach your right arm overhead, to where your torso rotates toward your inner thigh. To regress, place the back knee on the ground. Hold for 30 seconds.

Crescent Lunge



Crescent Lunge strengthens and lengthens various areas of the legs, and promotes shoulder stability, while opening the front of the chest. This position also challenges balance.

How to Perform: From Revolved Side Angle Pose, rotate the torso back to Runner's Lunge and then lift the torso over the hips. Reach the arms up and wide. To regress, place the back knee on the ground. Hold for 30 seconds.

Warrior Two



Warrior Two promotes strength in the legs, as well as strength and stability in the upper body. This position encourages a strong breath to allow for the pose to be meditative.

How to Perform: From Crescent Lunge, plant your back foot at a 45-degree angle. Simultaneously, rotate your torso and bring arms to shoulder height.

**Repeat from Downward-facing Dog to Warrior Two with the left leg forward. Hold each position for 30 seconds.*

Standing Wide-legged Forward Fold



This forward-folding position allows the upper body to relax, while opening the back area of the legs and glutes.

How to Perform: From Warrior Two, straighten your legs and square your toes forward. Slowly lower the torso and rest the hands on the floor. If you cannot touch the floor, place the hands on the shins or thighs. Hold for one minute.

Tree Pose



Tree pose challenges balance, while lengthening the inner thigh and stabilizing the upper body.

How to Perform: Stand in an upright position and turn your right knee away from the

body. Place the foot either above or below the knee. Reach the arms overhead and relax the shoulders away from the ears. To regress, place the toe on the floor with the heel above the ankle. Hold for one minute on each leg.

Spinal Twist



Spinal twists are wonderful chest and hip openers, allowing the torso and pelvic region to gain better flexibility and mobility.

How to Perform: Lie on your back with your feet on the floor and arms at shoulder level. Slowly lower the knees to the right and turn your face toward the left. Hold for 30 seconds and switch sides.



By Elizabeth Kovar

Elizabeth Kovar M.A, personal trainer and yoga/fitness instructor, earned Yoga Alliance 318 hours in Ashtanga yoga & Chakra Meditation from the Ayurveda & Yoga Retreat and Hospital in Coonor, India. She studied yoga in five different countries, and learned through some of the best names in the yoga industry. Her Master's Thesis "Creating Yoga Programs for People with Movement Disabilities" was implemented on a 12 week research study for people with Stage 1-2 Parkinson's Disease with the University of Toledo Physical Therapy and Neurology Department. She resides in Seattle, WA and is the fitness coordinator at the City of Lynnwood Recreation Center. Elizabeth is also a freelance

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