

# Might Yoga Be Right for You?



If visions of twisting yourself into a pretzel have kept you from trying yoga, you've come to the right place. Here are **three simple ways to do yoga at home** that may help you enjoy **the benefits** yoga has to offer.<sup>1</sup>

## What is yoga?

Yoga consists of different movements called **postures or poses**. As you do the movements, you're also keeping your mind **focused on your breathing**.<sup>1</sup>

Yoga may help you to:

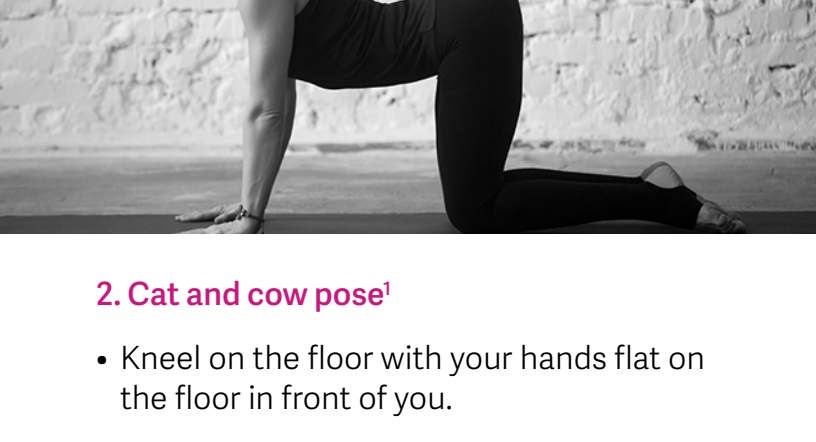
- Calm your mind and **feel more relaxed**<sup>1</sup>
- Become **stronger and more flexible**<sup>1</sup>
- **Stay healthy** by boosting your body's ability to protect you from viruses and bacteria<sup>2</sup>

The following poses target many parts of your body, including the **core muscles** of your trunk and pelvis,<sup>3</sup> which are important for **keeping your whole body moving better**.<sup>4</sup>



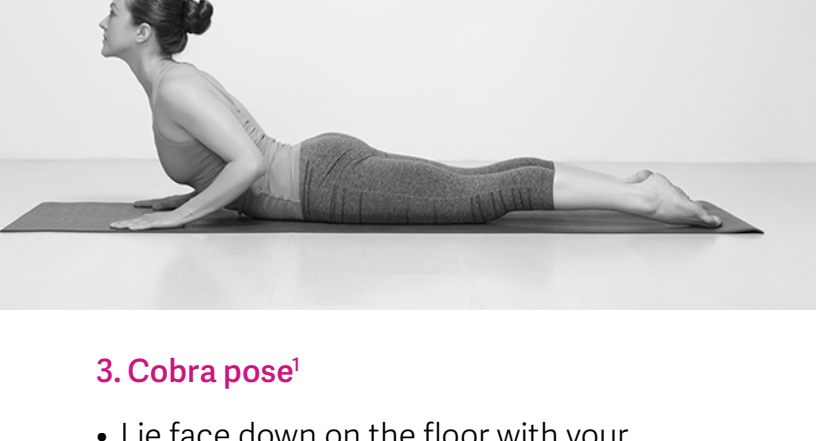
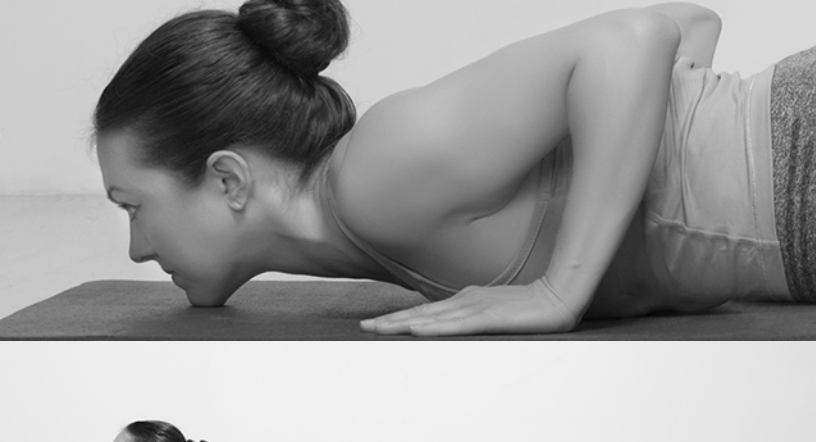
## 1. Mountain pose<sup>1</sup>

- Stand straight with your feet at the same width as your shoulders.
- Roll your shoulders up and back, and lift your chest up.
- Slowly breathe in as you raise your arms beside your head with your palms facing in.
- Hold the pose for 10 seconds and continue to breathe.
- Slowly breathe out as you lower your arms to your sides



## 2. Cat and cow pose<sup>1</sup>

- Kneel on the floor with your hands flat on the floor in front of you.
- Keep your knees under your hips and your hands under your shoulders.
- Take a slow deep breath in.
- Slowly breathe out as you arch your spine upward and tilt your head and hips down (like a cat).
- Slowly breathe in as you curve your spine downward and tilt your head and hips up (like a cow).
- Repeat a few times.



## 3. Cobra pose<sup>1</sup>

- Lie face down on the floor with your legs straight out behind you and point your toes.
- Place your palms lightly on the floor next to your chest and under your shoulders.
- Squeeze your buttocks and tighten your abdominal muscles.
- Slowly breathe in as you lift your head, shoulders and upper back off the floor, trying to keep them all in the same line.
- Hold the pose for a few breaths.
- Slowly breathe out as you lower to the floor. Repeat.

**You may also find it helpful to look online for yoga instructional videos for beginners. Consider trying some simple yoga poses and see how they make you feel!**

Always talk to your primary care physician before starting an exercise plan and to figure out which exercises are safe for you.

### Sources

<sup>1</sup> Mayo Clinic. Slide show: Yoga poses. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/stress-management/multimedia/yoga-poses/sls-20464430?s=1>. Published September 19, 2019. Accessed October 28, 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Gopal A, Mondal S, Gandhi A, Arora S, Bhattacharjee J. Effect of integrated yoga practices on immune responses in examination stress — A preliminary study. *Int J Yoga*. 2011;4(1):26-32. doi:10.4103/0973-6131.78178. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3099098>. Published January–June 2011. Accessed October 28, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Rathore M, Trivedi S, Abraham J, Sinha MB. Anatomical Correlation of Core Muscle Activation in Different Yogic Postures. *Int J Yoga*. 2017;10(2):59-66. doi:10.4103/0973-6131.205515. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5433114>. Published May–August 2017. Accessed October 28, 2020.

<sup>4</sup> U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Strengthening Your Core. Physical Activity Handouts, P37 version 5.0. Move! Weight Management Program. [https://www.move.va.gov/docs/NewHandouts/PhysicalActivity/P37\\_StrengtheningYourCore.pdf](https://www.move.va.gov/docs/NewHandouts/PhysicalActivity/P37_StrengtheningYourCore.pdf). Accessed October 28, 2020.

Your health plan is committed to helping you achieve your best health. Rewards for participating in a wellness program are available to all members. If you think you might be unable to meet a standard for a reward under this wellness program, you might qualify for an opportunity to earn the same reward by different means. Call Member Services and we will work with you (and, if you wish, with your doctor) to find a wellness program that offers the same reward and is right for you in light of your health status. See the FAQs for the Member Services phone number.

The information provided through the My Health Pays® program is for general information purposes only and is to be used at your sole risk. This is not intended to diagnose problems or recommend treatment and is not a substitute for your doctor's care. My Health Pays is not affiliated with nor is in any way officially connected with the source(s) cited here. The Information is provided by My Health Pays is "AS IS." My Health Pays makes no representations or warranties of any kind about the completeness, accuracy, or reliability of the information provided on the website or by third parties. Through the My Health Pays website You may be able to link to other websites which are not under the control of My Health Pays. We have no control over the nature, content and availability of those sites. The inclusion of any links does not imply a recommendation or endorse the views expressed within them.