

Important Disclaimer

The news, suggestions, information, exercises and other items in this list are intended for informational purposes only. Not all exercise is suitable for everyone. To reduce the risk of injury, please consult your Doctor before engaging in any physical and/or therapeutic exercise program. Nothing is intended to be a substitute for professional medical care.

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Asana this week:

Bent Leg Supine Rolling Twist/Jathara Parivritti

Wall Press

Reaching for that top branch!

Crooked Banana or Palm Tree Pose

Continue with The 5 Tibetans

In class during this past week I added a **short anatomy introduction to the QL's** after doing the Tibetans. As you may have experienced this muscle (on both sides) was actively a participant in all 5 Tibetans.

QL = Quadratus Lumborum

How to relieve, hard to release, back tension by unlocking your QL muscles.

Have you ever noticed **lingering ache deep in your low back** from **prolonged sitting or standing?**

With weak back muscles, these intrinsic rectangular muscles (between your ribs and hips) work overtime to stabilize your spine and pelvis, leaving the muscle tight and sore.

They also kick in to compensate for **poor posture**.

Sometimes soreness occurs, on one side, from **carrying** something heavy or a small child.

Side sleeping with your top hip hiked up every night can also tense the QL's.

Leg discrepancies are also a common cause of QL tension as most people have a slight variance in leg length and approximately 20% of people have a clinically significant difference, greater than 2cm.

What can you do?

Yoga has been known to engage these muscles, keeping them agile and pain free.

By releasing tension from your QL you can lengthen the sides of your lower back, freeing and creating a powerful relaxation within the abdomen, lower back and hips.

Where are they?

They originate on the Internal side of the iliac crest, your hip bones.

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Inserting into the 12th rib and the 1-4th lumbar vertebra (L1-4) at the transverse processes (the bony wing like protrusion on either side of the vertebrae).

How to find them?

By placing your right thumb on your back about halfway between your right side waist and your spine.

Pressing into the space between your bottom rib and/or hip.

Press in toward your transverse processes and up your right hip, you should feel your QL contract.

How do they help you move?

They sidebend your spine, help raise or “hike up” your hips one at a time, extend your lumbar spine in various asanas.

What standard yoga poses can help the QL's?

Extended Triangle = Utthita Trikonasana

Standing Forward Bend = Uttanasana

Extended Side Angle = Utthita Parsakonasana

Side Seated Wide angle = Parsva Upavistha Konasana

Revolved Head-of-the-Knee = Parivrtta Jana Sirsasana

What restorative yoga movements can I use to warm up, creating ease around the lumbar spine and releasing tightness in the hips and thighs?

Picking Fruit -reaching with corresponding heel on the ground.

Side Flank Stretch from Prone Position

Belly-Down Twist (Wheel of Life = Ayurhakrasana)

Banana Supine/Palm Tree Pose

Name: Crocodile/Bent Leg Supine Rolling Twist/Jathara Parivritti

Description:

A gentle flow added to Morning Wake-Up Stretch before the cross over the body.

With left hand on right knee, knee directly over hip and heel a direct line with knee (not touching thigh), gently roll/guide the right side of the body off the mat and to the left. Allow the head to follow including the right shoulder lifting. As the shoulder lifts, according to the extend of your roll, allow the hand along with forearm to relax and hang in line with the shoulder, palm facing up. Feel the stretch with the section of torso in front of the shoulder as the arm hangs.

Relax and flow with the breath x6.

Continuing with Morning Wake-Up Stretch until you come to this point on the other side after Apanasana (Wind Expeller In and Out 6x) then insert the roll for this side x6.

Physical Benefits: Allow the body to gently start moving and opening from side to side before going into a static and dynamic twist/stretch.

Adaptations/Variations: Only go as far as you can and only when it feels right.

Name: Wall Press

Description:

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Stand facing a wall about an arm's length away.
Place both hand on the wall at shoulder height and then step back, keeping your feet parallel until you can bend forward from the hips.
Lengthen the spine semi-parallel to the floor.
Bring the ears alongside the arms.
Press the palm into the wall and lengthen the inner edges of the arms.
Draw the pelvis away from the wall and elongate the whole spine.
Expand the chest, open the armpits, and broaden the upper back.
As you hold, lift the sitting bones and flatten the lower back.
Hold an breathe, broadening and lengthening the torso as you Inhale and relaxing tennis as you exhale.

Physical Benefits: A tension reliever for shoulder and upper back, a stretch that can be done at any time. The secret is to relax and at the same time reach out through the arms.

Adaptations/Variations: If one shoulder is hurting you may have to take that arm and lay the hand (palm up) on your sacrum. Or try the pose with that one arm positioned slightly lower on the wall than the other. Listening to your body and feeling what works for you.

The following two movements are to bring more mobility to your lumbar spine and sides while finding greater range of motion in side bending poses. We did these in class while finding and working with the QL's (Quadratus Lumborum)

Name: Reaching for that top branch!

Description:

Stand in Tadasana (Mountain Pose) with your arms and hand reaching skyward.
Reach your left hand way up, as if trying to pluck a ripe apple that's just out of reach.
Bend your right knee and hike up your right hip (opposite side).
Keep your left heel firmly on the floor.
Inhale and feel a stretch in your left QL, exhale to release.
Switch sides, then repeat up to 10 rounds.

Name: Crooked Banana or Palm Tree Pose

Description:

Can be done at the wall or on the mat.
Supine:
Bringing the spine into lateral flexion (side bending), bending to the right.
Keep the hips and shoulders on the floor.
Grasp your right wrist with your left hand.
Then move the feet to the right (attempting to take them slightly beyond the mat).
You can also cross the left ankle over the right to hold the legs in place.
Allow the entire left side of the body to stretch.
Stay there for several minutes, then come back to center and repeat on the other side.

General Class:

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Supine:

Legs up on Chair with Blanket roll under back: across and lengthwise.

Bridge Series

Leg/hip openers with strap, also hamstring stretch with three positions R/L

Prone:

Cat n Cow

Spinal Balance R/L

Standing:

Wall Press

Reaching for the top branch!

On Belly:

Heart Lifts

A-Symmetrical Locust & Symmetrical

Supine:

Banana

Savasana

Pranayama:

**Channel Cleaning Breath/Alternative Nostril Breathing
Nadi Shodhana/Anuloma Viloma**

(nah-dee show-DAH-nah) nadi = channel shodhana = cleaning, purifying

Step by Step

Sit in a comfortable asana or in a chair as straight as possible, with seat bones grounded and chest opened out. Breathe freely. Make the gesture called Vishnu mudra by curling in the index and middle finger of the right hand so the thumb and fourth finger can be used on either side of the nose to close the nostrils.

Alternative hand position: middle and index fingers straight and tips resting on forehead between eye brows for entire breathing exercise.

1. Inhale/exhale through both nostrils.
2. Gently close your right nostril with your thumb at the sinus bridge.
3. Inhale through your left nostril for the count of four.
4. Close the left nostril with the fourth finger of right hand, exhale through the right nostril, counting to four. Inhale through the right nostril counting to four.

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5.Close the right nostril, exhale through the left nostril counting to four. Inhale through the left nostril counting to four.
6.Release the right nostril and exhale completely.

This is one sequence You must first feel comfortable with this breathing technique, then different ratios can be added, deepening the exhalations to twice the length of the inhalations – but you must learn this technique with a teacher. Retention of the inhalations can also be developed. Ten sequences are usually practiced daily.

Benefits

This pranayama also strengthens and purifies the lungs, purifies the nadis (energy channels) and increases prana intake. Stale air is eliminated, as you increase the length of exhalation; retention of inhalation increases oxygen intake. The breathing pattern also helps calm the nerves and improves circulation. It is regarded as a general balancer and purifier of the physical and emotional systems.

* Lowers heart rate and reduces stress and anxiety Said to synchronize the two hemispheres of the brain.

Stilling the breath, stills the mind!

Essential Oil:

Peace: Vetiver, Lavender, Ylang Ylang, Frankincense, Clary Sage, Marjoram, Spearmint.

Music:

Steve Halpern: Music for Yoga

Quote:

Positive thought and feelings are health enhancing.

Feeling trust and seeing the basic goodness in others and ourselves has healing power.

Seeing crises and threats as challenges and opportunities allows us to heal.

A mind that is stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions.

-Oliver Wendell Holmes