



# Karuna Yoga Newsletter

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## YOGA THERAPY FOREARM STRENGTH AND FRACTURE PREVENTION

No matter how strong, flexible, or agile you might be, you can still lose your balance and fall, risking painful fractures. So, your ability to catch yourself is crucial to prevent a damaging impact, and that requires strong forearms and especially strong wrists.

The bones and the muscles that control the forearm need to be strong because if you fall you will automatically try to catch yourself with your arms and hands. If your forearm bones are strong and flexible, you'll be less likely to suffer a fracture in the forearm.

We need to increase the density and strength of critical bones in the forearm that are more likely to fracture, including the wrists. A break in the radius bone at the point closest to the wrist accounts for up to 18% of all fractures in people over 65 years of age. Yet, people tend to be more concerned about fractures occurring mainly on the hip and spine areas.







The forearms are the most neglected muscles in the body. As your forearm muscles gain strength, so will your bones. This might shock you: osteoporotic fractures of the forearm are more common than both hip and spinal fractures, with most forearm fractures occurring in the wrist.

The forearms are vulnerable to fracture for a variety of reasons. For one thing, we tend to put out our hands and arms to catch ourselves from a fall. Another reason is the general neglect of the forearm. We don't think about strengthening these bones through exercise. A good way is to hold small hand weights with your palms facing down and then lift the weights with the backs of your hands coming up towards your body with bent elbows. Some yoga postures will also help to strengthen the forearms.

The muscles of the upper arm are important for strengthening the humerus (upper arm bone) and the elbow joint. Strong biceps help break or prevent a fall if you catch and hold on to something to keep your balance. The triceps muscle has three heads that begin at the scapula and attach at the base of the humerus and the ulna at the elbow joint. It runs along the back of the forearm. So, we need to strengthen the biceps and the triceps by doing certain yoga postures.

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## YOGA POSTURES TO STRENGTHEN FOREARMS AND UPPER ARMS

<p><b>PHALAKASANA (plank)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthens the arms, wrists, and spine</li> <li>• Tones the abdomen</li> </ul>	
<p><b>DOLPHIN PLANK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calms the brain and helps relieve stress and mild depression</li> <li>• Stretches the shoulders, hamstrings, calves, and arches</li> <li>• Strengthens the arms and legs, and core</li> <li>• Helps prevent osteoporosis</li> </ul>	
<p><b>ADHO MUKHA SVANASANA (downward dog)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calms the brain and helps relieve stress</li> <li>• Energizes the body</li> <li>• Stretches the shoulders, hamstrings, calves, arches, and hands</li> <li>• Strengthens the arms and legs</li> <li>• Helps prevent osteoporosis</li> </ul>	
<p><b>DOLPHIN</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps to relieve stress and mild depression</li> <li>• Stretches the shoulders, hamstrings, calves, and arches</li> <li>• Strengthens the arms and legs</li> <li>• Helps prevent osteoporosis</li> <li>• Therapeutic for high blood pressure, asthma, flat feet, sciatica</li> </ul>	
<p><b>SALABHASANA (locust)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthens the muscles of the spine, buttocks, and backs of the arms and legs</li> <li>• Stretches the shoulders, chest, belly, and thighs</li> <li>• Improves posture</li> <li>• Stimulates abdominal organs</li> <li>• Helps relieve stress</li> </ul>	
<p><b>VIRABHADRASANA II (warrior II)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthens and stretches the legs and ankles</li> <li>• Strengthens shoulders and arms</li> <li>• Increases stamina</li> <li>• Therapeutic for flat feet, osteoporosis, and sciatica</li> </ul>	
<p><b>UTKATASANA (chair)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strengthens the ankles, thighs, calves, and spine</li> <li>• Stretches shoulders and chest</li> <li>• Strengthens shoulders and arms</li> </ul>	