



Karuna Yoga Newsletter

Issue no: 63

May 2013

YOGA THERAPY It's Time for Abdominals

Without a strong physical centre, every yoga posture we do is in danger of falling apart from the inside out. Our core strength is what lets us keep it together.

Our modern lifestyle creates weak abdominals as most people sit with their backs rounded, which makes the abdominal muscles become weak. When the abdominals aren't strong enough to do a posture, such as a leg lift while lying on our backs, it is possible to compensate by pulling from the lower back, which can cause injury.

Our core strength is the vital force that holds us steady in the asanas, keeps us upright in our standing postures, gives us vitality in backbends and enables us to maintain balance.

Problems can occur if your core muscles are weak such as:

- Chronic lower back pain
- Hip and knee injuries
- Shoulder and neck tension
- Repetitive strain injuries in the shoulder, neck or arm due to posture and compensation changes.

Yoga teachers have long understood the importance of strong abdominals. This is not just about developing the surface muscles, or "six-pack abs". Yoga also focuses on the underlying muscles to build abdominals that are both strong as well as flexible.

Abdominal muscles assist breathing, align the pelvis, flex and rotate the trunk, keep the torso erect, support the lumbar spine, and hold in the organs of digestion. Strong, toned muscles at the core of your body support good health.





Which postures can help you to develop stronger abdominal muscles? The Plank Posture is an excellent all-around toner that develops strength in the upper and lower abdominals. Navasana (Boat Posture) trains all four abdominal layers, particularly the lower abdominals, which often tend to be overlooked.

Positive Effects

Through practising various postures you'll learn how to find your inner core muscles and how to activate them and to stabilise your back from the inside out. Some of the positive effects you may notice from developing a healthy 'core' include an overall increase in energy levels, a decreased occurrence of injuries, improved posture, diminished muscle tension, and improved performance and quality of life.

Contact Lynne on 00302892042356 or email lynne.gully@iremia.net

POSTURES THAT HELP TO STRENGTHEN THE CORE

<p>JATHARA PARIVARTANASANA VARIATION</p> <p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases the blood supply to the lower spinal region and helps the spine and the muscles of the back to function properly. Strengthens the oblique muscles (side abdominals). Invigorates the abdominal organs and strengthens the hip muscles. <p>Cautions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prolapsed disc or other spinal injury. 	
<p>DOLPHIN PLANK</p> <p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Calms the brain and helps relieve stress and mild depression. Stretches the shoulders, hamstrings, calves, and arches. Strengthens the arms and legs, and core muscles. Helps prevent osteoporosis. <p>Cautions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you have a shoulder injury, support torso on a bolster. If you have a neck injury, support forehead by resting your forehead on a block set between your forearms. 	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">DAVID MARTINEZ</p>
<p>FULL PLANK</p> <p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthens the arms, wrists, and spine. Tones the abdomen. <p>Cautions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid if you have carpal tunnel syndrome. <p>If you are experienced I will take you into Side Plank in the classes.</p>	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">DAVID MARTINEZ</p>
<p>PARIPURNA NAVASANA (BOAT)</p> <p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthens the abdomen, hip flexors, and spine. Stimulates the kidneys, thyroid and prostate glands, and intestines. Helps relieve stress. Improves digestion. <p>Cautions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heart Problems. Neck injury: Sit with your back near a wall to perform this posture. As you tilt your torso back, rest the back of your head on the wall. 	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">CHRIS ANDRE</p>