

Tension-Relieving Sequence - Great for Just Before Bedtime!

Begin with a tension-relieving pose that's a modification of Virabhadrasana 1 and end with Viparita Karani for Savasana. This sequence begins with a bit of energy and resolves into a cooling, mind-quieting, releasing finish.

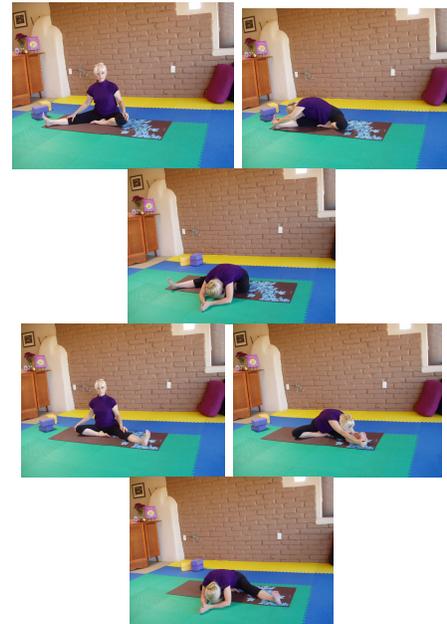
Virabhadrasana 1 with Ha Kriya (10 to 12 breaths)

Set up and move into virabhadrasana 1 on the right side. Fully extend and straighten the arms and stretch the fingers and the skin of the palms. Forcefully exhale while bringing the arms to the sides - hands made into fists - and bringing fists into the tops of the thighs. Ensure the inhalations are long and full and the exhalations are forceful to begin to release tension and stress.



Parivritta Janu Sirsasana (10 to 12 breaths in each variation)

Set up and move into janu sirasana on the right side, then half revolve to the right so the legs are widely separated and you are sitting crosswise on your mat. Inhale to create inner body length; exhale folding forward over the extended right leg; bring forehead to knee or shin. Stay here 10 or more breaths as you release tension in the spine, hips, hamstrings. Then keeping low to the ground, walk the hands to center, bringing the torso along. Fold forward, resting forehead on blocks, stacked hands or the floor. Stay here 10 or more breaths to continue releasing tension in spine, hips, lower back. Slowly bring torso vertical; switch sides and repeat.



Happy Baby Pose (10 to 12 breaths)

Lie supine on mat; bend knees and grasp soles of the feet with the hands from the outside edges of the legs. Let the groins deepen, the sitting bones release open. Keep shoulders on or close to the floor, shoulders stable and arms relaxed. Stay for 10 to 12 breaths as you allow the legs to release, the spine to lengthen.



<p>Supported backbend to lift and open the heart (anahata chakra)</p>	<p>Place a block (pad with a towel) or firm bolster crosswise on mat, about one third from top edge. Lie back on the bolster, making sure bolster is directly behind the heart. Extend the legs straight, heels pointing away from the body. (Legs can also be placed into sukhasana if desired.) Extend arms laterally, lifting the sternum, resisting the chin away and opening the heart. Stay here 10 to 12 breaths to fully release chest and release any gripping in the heart.</p>	
<p>Savasana - Use Viparita Karani (Legs Up the Wall) Stay for 5 to 15 minutes.</p>	<p>Place a firm bolster lengthwise against the base of a wall. Rest hips and the lower back on the bolster; swing extended legs up toward ceiling, resting them against the wall - heels reaching toward ceiling. A sandbag can be placed on the feet if you have help in placing it. Release the pose gently to reclining on the right side of the body. Slowly come to sitting and then quietly get into bed if using this sequence late evening.</p>	