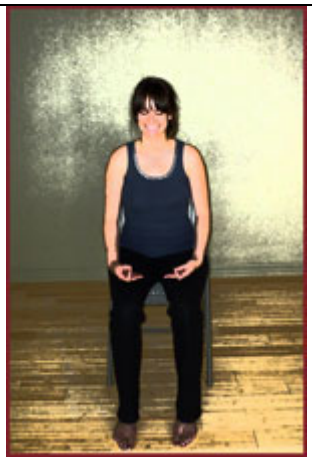
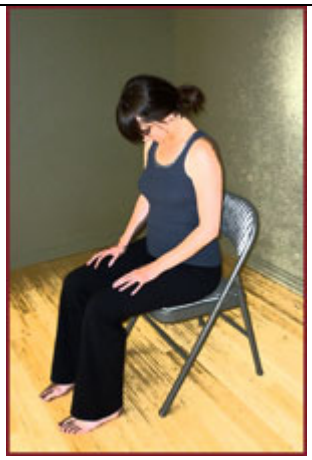
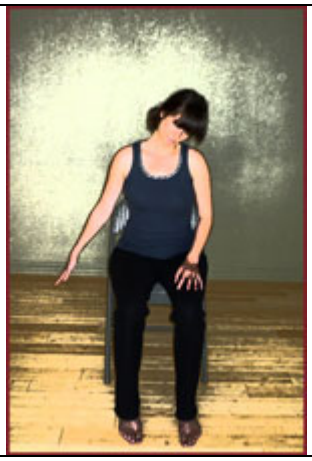
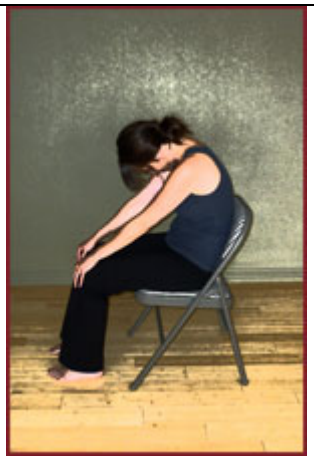
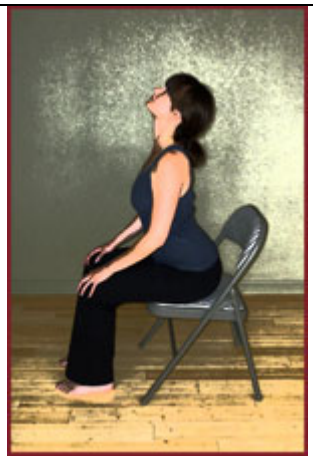
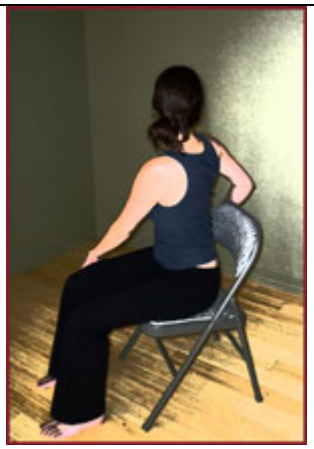
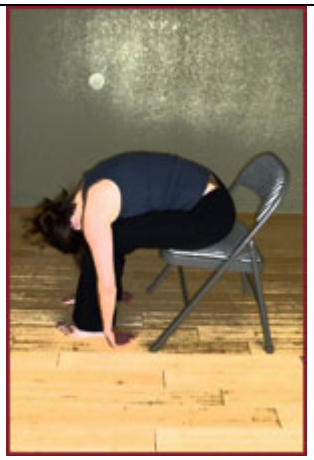
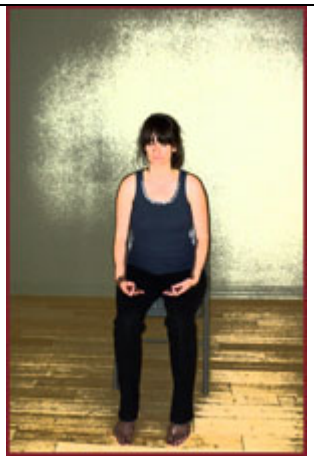
Adaptive Yoga Home Practice

We hope you enjoy this mini yoga home practice. Before beginning, please see the last page for important safety information.

Pose	Cues	Modifications
	• **CENTERING** • Legs hips width apart • Ankles below the knees • Sits bones grounding down • Spine lengthening up • Crown of the head lifts • Shoulders relaxed • Sternum lifts • Hands on the thighs palms up • Close eyes • Focus on your breath • When a thought comes into your mind, acknowledge it, set it aside and bring your attention back to your breath	• Place a block between your feet • Use a strap to bind your legs from splaying out • Place a folded blanket behind you if you have trouble sitting up straight
	• **NECK STRETCH** • Keeping the same posture as above, place your palms face down on your thighs • Take in a deep breath and then exhale as you lower your chin down towards your chest • Hold for several breaths	
	• **NECK STRETCH (continued)** • From the chin-to-chest position, slowly roll your right ear to your right shoulder • To intensify the stretch, extend your left arm out to the side with the fingers spread wide • Slowly roll your chin back to your chest and repeat on the other side • Repeat several times on each side	• IMPORTANT: Don't just mechanically roll your head from side to side. Be very mindful in your movement. Be aware of and feel each muscle and vertebra moving as you stretch your neck.
Cat	• **CAT /COW**	**Cow**

	• Place your hands on your knees and inhale <u>Cat:</u> • Exhale, tuck your tailbone, round your back, shrug your shoulders forward to broaden the upper back and bring your chin towards your chest <u>Cow:</u> • Inhale, press your tailbone out, arch your back, roll your shoulders back, lift your sternum and look up towards the ceiling • Repeat several times introducing as much movement into your spine as feels good	
	• **SIDE STRETCH** • Reach down with your right hand to grab on to the side of your chair • Inhale as you sweep your left arm up • On the exhale, lean over to the right • Look up towards your wrist • Keep both shoulders relaxed • Keep your spine long • Hold for several breaths • Come up on the exhale and repeat on the other side • Repeat several times on each side	• If you feel wobbly, place another chair (or something sturdy) to your right side to place your right hand on • If it hurts your neck to look up, turn your head to look towards the floor
	• **TWIST** • From a seated position, inhale as you sweep both arms up to bring the biceps towards your ears (keep the shoulders relaxed!) • On the exhale, start to turn to the left as you bring your right hand to the outside of your left knee, and your left hand to the back of your chair • Gently look over your left shoulder • Keep your knees hips width apart • Keep your right sit bone grounded down • Inhale as you lift and lengthen your spine and on the exhale, twist a little further to the left • Hold for several breaths • Release on the exhale and repeat on the other side	• If it hurts your neck to look over your left shoulder, turn your head to the right • If you're having trouble keeping you right sit bone grounded, place a sandbag over your right upper thigh • If you're having trouble keeping legs hips width apart, put a block between your knees (and bind thighs with a strap if needed)

	• **FORWARD FOLD** • Place your hands on your knees and sit up tall • Make sure your ankles are aligned under your knees • Inhale and lengthen your spine • On the exhale, bend at your elbows and lower your torso down towards your thighs • Let your head hang heavy • If you feel stable, release your hands down to the floor • Hold for several breaths • To come up, bring your hands back to your knees and slowly roll back up	• IMPORTANT: Avoid (or practice with caution)this pose if you have blood pressure issues • If you feel unstable, place a bolster over your thighs so you have something to lean onto
	• **CENTERING** • Legs hips width apart • Ankles below the knees • Sits bones grounding down • Spine lengthening up • Crown of the head lifts • Shoulders relaxed • Sternum lifts • Hands on the thighs palms up • Close eyes • Focus on your breath • When a thought comes into your mind, acknowledge it, set it aside and bring your attention back to your breath	• Place a block between your feet • Use a strap to bind your legs from splaying out • Place a folded blanket behind you if you have trouble sitting up straight

What are the goals of adaptive yoga?

Simply stated, the goals of adaptive yoga are to enhance breath and movement, build and strengthen one's inherent mind – body relationship, improve overall strength and flexibility and, perhaps most important, to have fun and feel good! Know that adaptive yoga is not about making your body look a certain way in a pose, but to elicit the *sensation* of a pose. Don't be afraid to modify a pose to fit your individual needs.

Are there any risks associated with adaptive yoga?

Yes. The risks of adaptive yoga vary from person to person depending on their condition. We highly recommend that you discuss your desire to practice adaptive yoga with your health care provider. Always listen to your body and practice gentle poses.

What does it mean to "listen to my body"?

Adaptive yoga is about developing the mind-body connection and quieting the mind, it's not about pushing your body's limits. Your body will usually give you signs that you're pushing too hard. Signs that you're pushing too hard *could include* shaking, dizziness, shortness of breath, holding your breath, goose bumps, seeing stars and straining among other things. Sometimes it's just a gut feeling that a particular pose might not be good for you. Always air on the side of safety and avoid poses that don't feel right or come out of a pose if your body is giving you signs.

Yoga prop home conversion guide:

- Block = Book
- Strap = Necktie or belt
- Bolster = A rolled up blanket or a couple of pillows
- Sandbag = 5-10 lb bag of rice