







short daily yoga for hormonal balance

1.		<p>calm, even breath, which becomes deeper over time</p>	<p>Begin seated on a block, cushion etc. and close your eyes or soften your gaze, arrive in the present moment, listen to the sounds and be aware of any sensations, then begin to focus on your breath.</p>
2.		<p>Khapalabhati pranayama: exhale drawing your belly in, your diaphragm up quite actively, inhale by releasing the belly passively. One round is between 30 and 80 breaths.</p>	<p>Start with a few rounds of kaphalabhati pranayama. Begin with 30 breaths, then pause for a few breaths (do a full lung retention if you wish), then another round with 50 breaths, and maybe a third one with 80. This practice is quite heating, so may bring on a hot flash, but it is great to increase the energy level / blood flow in the abdominal region. Not recommended during menstruation and ovulation (if that still applies).</p>
3.		<p>Sitali pranayama. Curl up your tongue or put your tongue between your upper and lower rows of teeth, inhale this way with your mouth open. Close your mouth, keep the air inside for a short while, then exhale through the nose.</p>	<p>If you should get a hot flash, then practice the serpent breath, sitali, to cool you down before continuing with your practice.</p>
4.			<p>Stand in tadasana, mountain pose. Feet firmly planted in the ground, arms relaxed alongside the body, crown of the head striving towards the sky.</p>

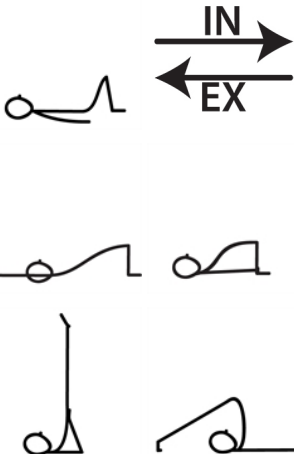


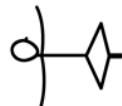
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5.		<p>Uddyana bandha or agni sara kriya: from standing, on an exhale bend down and push your hands into your thighs, elbows pointing outwards. When you are done exhaling, on empty lift your diaphragm up as if to tuck your belly under your ribcage (Uddyana) and optionally: forcefully move your belly in and out like bellows (agni sara kriya). Lift your chest when you need to inhale. Do 3 repetitions. Activates your digestive system (so make sure you have an empty stomach) and gives you energy for the day.</p>
6.		<p>Now prepare your joints for the asanas by rotating all your joints: Start with ankle rotations, knee circles, hip circles, then shoulder rotations, wrists, neck (don't go far back with your head).</p>


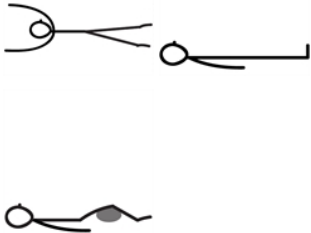

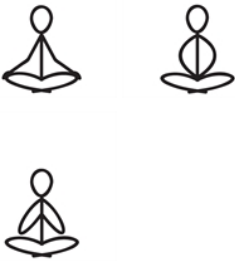
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<p>7.</p>			<p>Then practice several rounds of the sun salutation (surya namaskar) of your choice. The one shown here is a hatha yoga one. Start slowly, if you wish to create more heat, you may want to go a bit faster or to bring in some more active variations. Do at least 3 rounds and pause if you get out of breath.</p>
<p>8.</p>			<p>Then lie down and take a few deep and calm breaths as a break before the poses on the floor.</p>

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<p>9.</p>			<p>Then practice active bridge pose, start with your back on the floor, knees bent, feet hip-width apart, arms alongside the body. Inhale lift your hips and back off the floor, arms over your head and going behind you towards the floor, exhale return arms and back slowly to the floor. For the last one stay in the raised position for several breaths, if you want to intensify it, reach for your ankles or interlace your fingers under your back. If your neck is fine and you like to practice an inversion, you may go up to shoulderstand (sarvangasana) and stay there for a few breaths, or even move on into plough (halasana). It is helpful to have a blanket under your shoulders. Make sure you come out of the pose slowly using your abdominal muscles.</p>
<p>10.</p>			<p>As a counterpose, bring your bent legs into towards you, knees to chest (apanasana). Stay several breaths.</p>
<p>11.</p>		<p>Full yogic breath</p>	<p>Then take the fish pose by tucking your arms under your body and lifting your chest on an inhale, then letting your head gently drop back on an exhale until your head touches the floor. The weight is on your elbows. Increase the amount of time in the pose over a few weeks. (If this is unpleasant for your neck or you have elbow / shoulder issues, rest your back on a bolster instead. in this case stay well up to 5 min.) Get out of the pose slowly and stay in savasana for a few breaths</p>
<p>12.</p>		<p>Deep abdominal breath happens automatically in this pose.</p>	<p>Come into a diamond shape. Back on the floor, spread your bent knees and bring the soles of your feet together, the closer your feet are to your body, the more stretch you get, so adapt to your needs. Open your arms sideways or even over head if comfortable. Stay about 5 breaths.</p>

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13.			<p>Happy baby as counterpose for the backbends. Lift your bent legs, take hold of your feet or shins, pull on them whilst the soles of your feet face the ceiling. Feel your back pressing against the floor and after a while your legs may shake a bit with the effort. You can increase your stay in this pose up to 3 or even 5 min.</p>
14.		<p>relaxed breath or start a few rounds of full yogic breath</p>	<p>Now extend your legs, pause if needed, and give your whole body a good stretch. Then rest in savasana for at least 5-10 min. Support your knees if your lower back is uncomfortable. If staying in silence is not for you, play soft music or listen to a recorded relaxation.</p>
15.		<p>Left hand resting on thigh, right hand in front of face. Block right nostril with your right thumb and inhale through the left. Retain the breath as long as feels good, then block left nostril with ring finger and exhale on the right. Inhale on the right, retain, exhale on the left. This is one round.</p>	<p>Then come to a supported seated position and practice alternate nostril breathing for at least 5 rounds. This is very calming for the nervous system and helps to get a "clear head". If you have a lot of hot flashes, inhale and exhale through the LEFT nostril, keep the right one blocked</p>
16.			<p>Remain seated with your hands on your knees, in your lap or on your chest. Stay as long as you please. If you have a mantra or a positive affirmation, now is a great time to repeat it. You could also gaze at a candle flame (tratak) or at a positive, inspiring image / statue etc.</p>

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