

Yoga for Fertility: Open to Conceive

by Iva Keene MRMed. ND. - Thursday, July 15, 2010

<https://natural-fertility-prescription.com/yoga-for-fertility/>

Yoga originated in India more than 5000 years ago. The word yoga means “union” or connection of the mind and body. The practice of yoga, which involves breathing techniques and special poses, is designed to create physical, emotional, mental and spiritual balance. Although yoga is an ancient practice, modern science is discovering the power that yoga for fertility has to reduce stress and increase well being.

Yoga for fertility focuses on the centres of the body or “chakras” associated with fertility and reproduction. In particular it uses specially designed yoga poses that open the pelvis and stimulate the second chakra located just below the naval. This vital centre has long been associated with fertility and creativity.

But more than just improving blood flow to the reproductive organs, yoga for fertility helps relax the body and restore physical and emotional balance.

Acute stress is a very real part of most women’s experience with fertility challenges. Research done by Dr. Alice Domar, director for the Mind-Body Center for Women at Boston IVF, shows that for many women dealing with fertility issues is as distressing as experiencing cancer, HIV status or heart disease. High levels of stress can increase cortisol levels, alter the function of the hypothalamus gland, which controls ovulation and contribute to irregular menstrual periods. Domar’s research also suggests that mind-body techniques such as meditation and yoga for fertility can reduce stress and increase a couple’s chance of conceiving.

Guided Meditation and self reflection are important aspects of Yoga for Fertility. Guided mediation is a technique which enables you to get more in touch with your own thought processes, become aware of internal blocks and learn to let go of negative thinking and limiting beliefs associated with fertility. By learning to change your thinking patterns you can discover a new sense of control and learn to become creative and powerful in all areas of your life.

Yoga for Fertility can benefit women by:

- Helping to reduce stress and anxiety
- Focusing on a positive self-image and positive thinking
- Renewing a sense of sexuality and feminine wholeness
- Increasing intimacy between partners
- Healing and recreating a mind-body connection
- Belonging to a community of “girl friends” experiencing the same circumstance
- Creating a renewed sense of control by learning simple ways to take charge of her reproductive health

Yoga for Fertility can help you reconnect with your inner wisdom and intuition. Classes provide a safe

place to share stories, wisdom, experiences, laughter and tears. Some women laugh and giggle uncontrollably in the class while others express their sadness and grief. Learning self love and acceptance helps overcome those feelings of isolation so many women experience. Just simply realizing that there are other women in similar circumstances makes you feel less alone.

Although participating in a *Yoga for Fertility* class is ideal, there are a few DVD's available, as well as voice guided audio classes that can be downloaded to your IPOD to help guide you through a home practice. If you would like to find a *Yoga for Fertility* class in your community visit www.yogaforfertilityresources.com

If you are unable to find a class in your area you could attend a restorative type yoga class. Be sure to let the instructor know you are open to conceive. I would recommend you avoid any high intensity yoga classes such as Power Yoga or Hot Yoga.

To help you get started right away try the following yoga for fertility poses at home. Remember to be guided by your body and continue the poses as long as they feel supportive.

Yoga for Fertility Poses

The following two poses can be used at home anytime you feel anxious or stressed. They help calm the mind and improve circulation to the pelvic area.

Legs-Up-The-Wall Pose

This pose will increase the blood supply to your pelvic area, calm the mind and relieve tired legs and feet. If you focus on expanding your belly with each inhale, it will help you soften the muscles of your vaginal wall and pelvic area. Imagine softness in your uterus and ovaries allowing the flow of blood and energy without restriction or tension.

Preparation: Lie on your side with your buttocks close to or against the wall. As you slowly roll over onto your back gently lift one leg at a time and place it against the wall. Once you are on your back, rest the legs against the wall. Stay in this pose for 5-15 minutes as you concentrate on your breathing. To come out of the pose gently bend your knees and roll over on to your side remaining on your side for 10 to 15 breaths.

Modifications: This pose can be performed using a bolster, block or blanket under the pelvis. The blanket or bolster should lift the pelvis approximately 2-3 inches depending on your level of comfort. *DO NOT use a bolster with this pose during menstruation.

Option: Move your legs away from each other creating a mild stretch for your inner thigh.

This pose will increase the blood supply to the pelvic area, calm the mind, and relieve tired legs and feet. If you concentrate on breathing, using your diaphragm, it will help you soften the muscles of the vaginal wall and pelvic area. Imagine a softness in the uterus and ovaries allowing the flow of blood and energy without restriction or tension.

Inner Reflection: Focus on your desire to have a baby. Begin to invite your baby to come into your life. Change your perspective: you are no longer “waiting” or “trying”, from now on you are “open to conceive” or “inviting your baby”.

Child’s Pose

This pose calms your nervous system, helps reduce blood pressure and balances the endocrine system. It is a resting pose that relaxes and calms your mind and body while lengthening your spine and reducing tension in your back and neck. In relation to fertility, I recommend performing child’s pose with your knees apart; this allows space for your belly to drop toward the floor with each inhale. Imagine softness in your uterus and ovaries allowing the flow of blood and energy without restriction or tension.

Preparation: Kneel on the floor with your knees slightly wider than your hip joints. Keep your feet together. Sit back with your hips and bring your chest toward the floor. Reach your arms forward and place your hands and forehead on the floor.

Modifications: If there is a space between your heels and pelvis place a block to provide support. You can use a bolster or pillow under your head and arms or bend your elbows and place your hands under your forehead.

Option: Turtle Pose - Place your hands beside your feet or ankles creating more security and safety as you settle into your “shell” for protection.

Inner Reflection: Bring your awareness to your thoughts about yourself and your body. Notice whether your thoughts are positive or negative. Accept the thoughts and imagine them floating away with feeling attached to them. Begin to invite more positive thoughts and perhaps repeat one the following affirmations: “I love my body and trust it’s wisdom” “I am whole and complete” “I accept my body” “I forgive myself” “I am fertile”

The journey through fertility doesn’t need to feel so isolating and all consuming. Mind body techniques such as yoga and meditation can help you to learn to listen to your own inner wisdom and guidance. As you begin to make choices from your heart you will find a renewed sense of control and connection to self. You can be a Mother! Follow the voice of your heart and you will find the path that will lead you to your baby to be.

By Sue Dumais

Sue Dumais is the founder of Family Passages Mind Body Studio in Vancouver, British Columbia, where she facilitates programs to support women and couples through their fertility. Sue combines more than 17 years of experience as a fitness expert, yoga instructor, energetic healer and life coach. She is the author of "A Strong Core for Life," and "Yoga for Fertility Handbook." She travels across Canada to teach and lecture on the importance of healing through one's fertility journey. Recognizing the need for more support for fertility clients, Sue has developed a *Fitness Fertility Specialist Certification* and *Yoga for Fertility Teacher Training Course*. A pioneer in her field, Sue's Yoga for Fertility Classes, Private Yoga Therapy Sessions and "Transforming Your Fertility" couples mind body program have been

instrumental in transforming the fertility experiences of countless women and couples. To learn more visit www.familypassages.ca

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