



### ACTIVITY: 7 Yoga Poses to Relieve Work Stress

#### Purpose

- Stretch tight muscles
- Practice deep breathing
- Clear your mind

#### Background

- Chronic stress and tension are placed on your body during the day in your job.
- Sitting at a desk for hours on end places unnecessary strain on the lumbar spine, overstretches the mid to upper back, and shortens the chest and hips—leading to neck, shoulder, and low back pain.
- If you can set aside just a few minutes during your workday to take some deep breaths, clear your mind, and stretch your tight muscles with these yoga poses, your body will thank you, and you can move through your day healthier, happier, and more stress-free!

#### ESTIMATED TIME

**10** minutes

#### MATERIALS

##### Required:

- A. Desk, table or countertop
- B. Chair
- C. You!

### Activity

Walk your co-workers through these activities. Demonstrate the poses as you encourage your team to follow along. See page 3 for pictures of poses.

- 1. Seated Crescent Moon Pose** Lift your arms overhead and stretch your fingers wide. Lean to the right, taking 2 to 3 deep breaths. Repeat on the left side for another 2 to 3 deep breaths.
- 2. Wrist and Finger Stretches** (Try these stretches every 2 hours.) Extend the arms to the sides or overhead and draw 5 to 10 circles inward and outward through the wrists. Next, quickly spread the fingers and close the fists, repeating this 5 to 10 times to shake off any excess tension. Place the hands one on your desk, palms facing up and fingers towards you, putting gentle pressure to counter stretch the wrist and the forearm. Alternatively, you may stretch each arm out and bend the wrist inward then outward, counter stretching with your other hand. Hold each side 5 to 10 breaths.
- 3. Chair Pigeon Pose** While seated in your chair, both feet flat on the floor, cross your right leg over the left at a 90-degree angle, keeping the foot flexed as to not place pressure on the knee. Maintain equal weight distributed between the sitting bones while staying in an upright seated position. You should feel a gentle to moderate stretch on the outermost part of the right thigh. Hold 5 to 10 breaths before switching sides.
- 4. Sit and Stand Chair Pose** Begin seated with your knees bent 90 degrees and your feet flat. Press down from your heels, trying not to move the feet in toward your chair or use your arms, and make your way up to standing. From standing, slowly sit straight back down, refraining from leaning forward and/or from shifting the hips to one side or the other. Repeat 5 to 10 times.
- 5. Desk Chaturanga** Rest your hands about shoulder width distance on the edge of your sturdy desk, and step your feet back so your torso is a diagonal line to the floor. Your feet firmly placed, inhale as you bend the elbows to a 90-degree angle, hugging the elbows in towards the ribs. Exhale and press your chest back up to the starting position. Repeat 8 to 12 times.
- 6. Desk Upward Dog Pose** Set up the same way here as you did for Chaturanga above. With your arms straight, lower your hips toward the desk, refraining from sinking in the lower back by using the strength in your legs. Stretch your chest between your shoulders and gently tilt your chin upwards while sliding the shoulder blades down the back. Hold 5 to 10 breaths.
- 7. Desk Plank Pose** Place your hands shoulder width distance or wider at the desk edge. Step your feet back until your feet are directly under your hips as you create a pleasant feeling traction for your spine. Hold 5 to 10 breaths and let this pose help you undo all the negative effects of sitting.

### Discussion Questions/ Key Points

- How do you feel after going through those quick exercises?
- Would it help to try to do these exercises once a day/night to help relieve stress and reduce tension?

<https://www.doyouyoga.com/7-yoga-poses-you-can-do-at-your-work-desk-to-relieve-stress-68712/>



# RESILIENCY CHAMPION GUIDE

## Yoga Poses

1. Seated Crescent Moon Pose



2. Wrist and Finger Stretches



7. Desk Plank Pose



6. Desk Upward Dog Pose



3. Chair Pigeon Pose



5. Desk Chaturanga



4. Sit and Stand Chair Pose

