Anatomy day 6

Natalie Bavinck 2026

What happens in the body
The trimesters
Asana in pregnancy
Precautions
Benefits

PREGNANCY AND PRENATAL YOGA

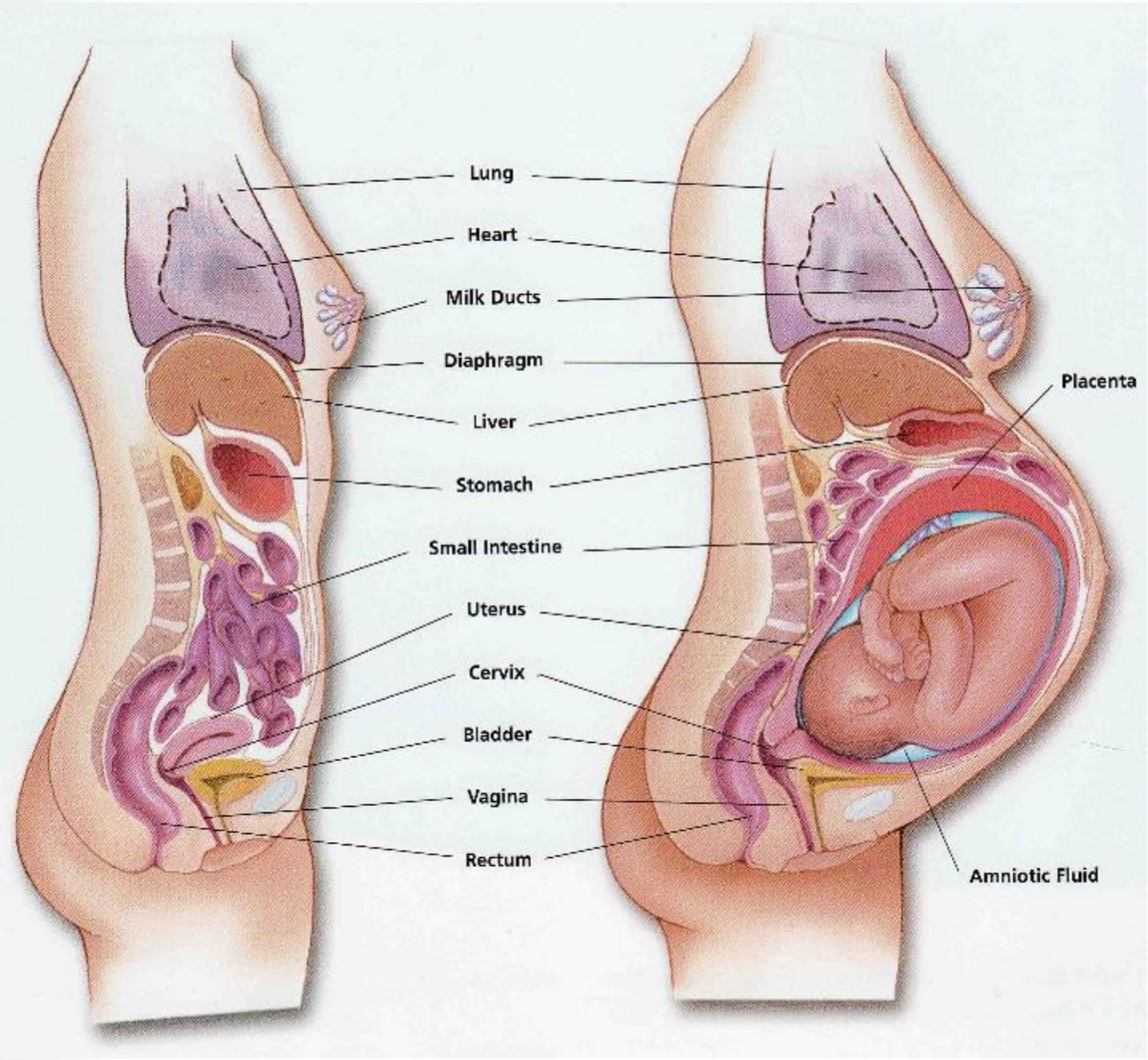
2e Trim / CA1-7S / 14.0cm / 31Hz
EDD 24-07-2026 / 20w3d / TIs 0.3 / TIb 0.3 / MI
V8
[2D]
Res
Gn 47
DR 100
FA 4
P 90%

Pregnancy

- Our bodies change a lot during pregnancy to allow for the baby to get the right amount of nutrition, space and oxygen
- Every pregnancy is unique
- The same woman may have totally different pregnancies with every child

Development in utero:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmlcRqdDqH4

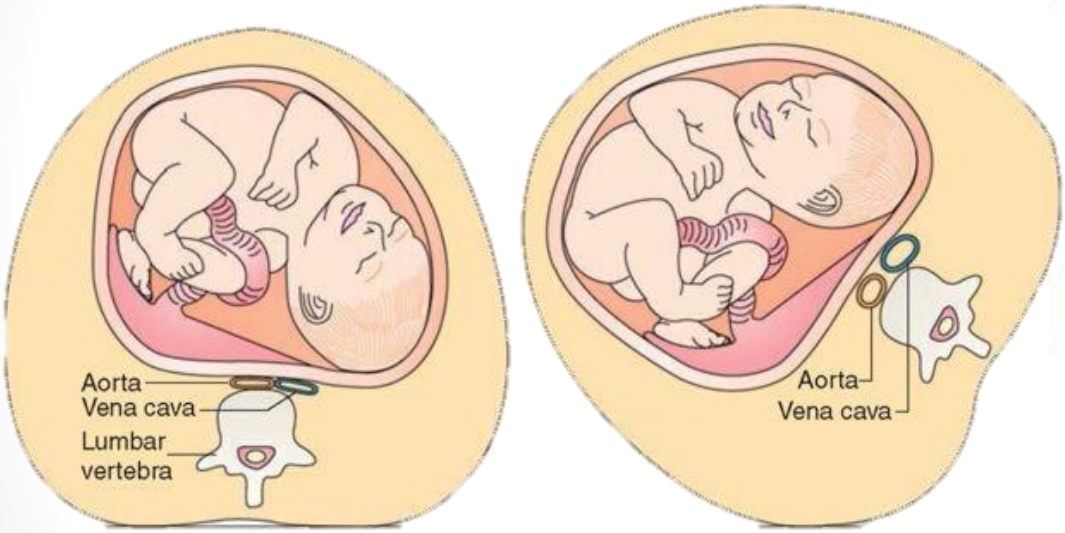

Lung
Heart
Milk Ducts
Diaphragm
Liver
Stomach
Small Intestine
Uterus
Cervix
Bladder
Vagina
Rectum
Placenta
Amniotic Fluid

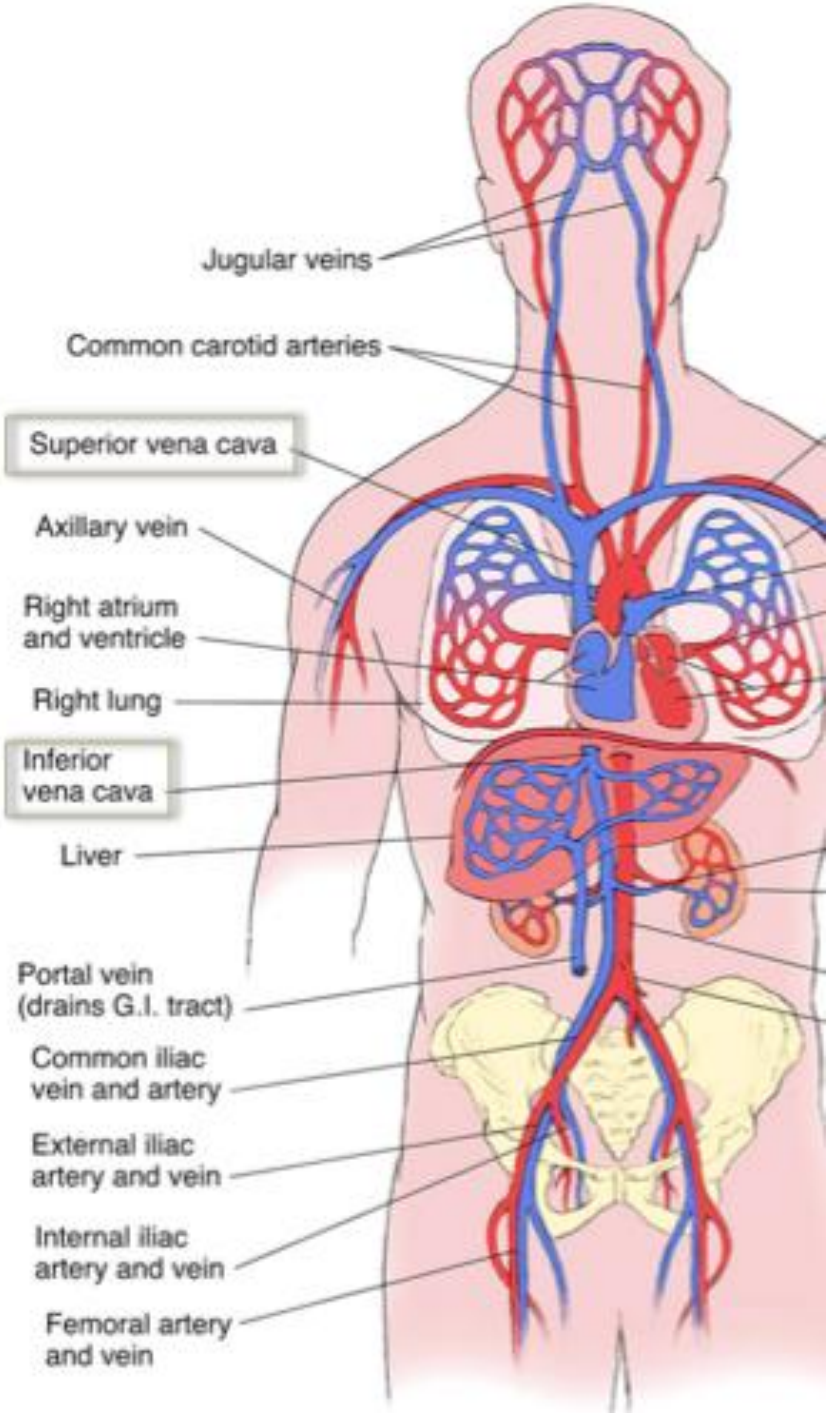
What happens in the body?

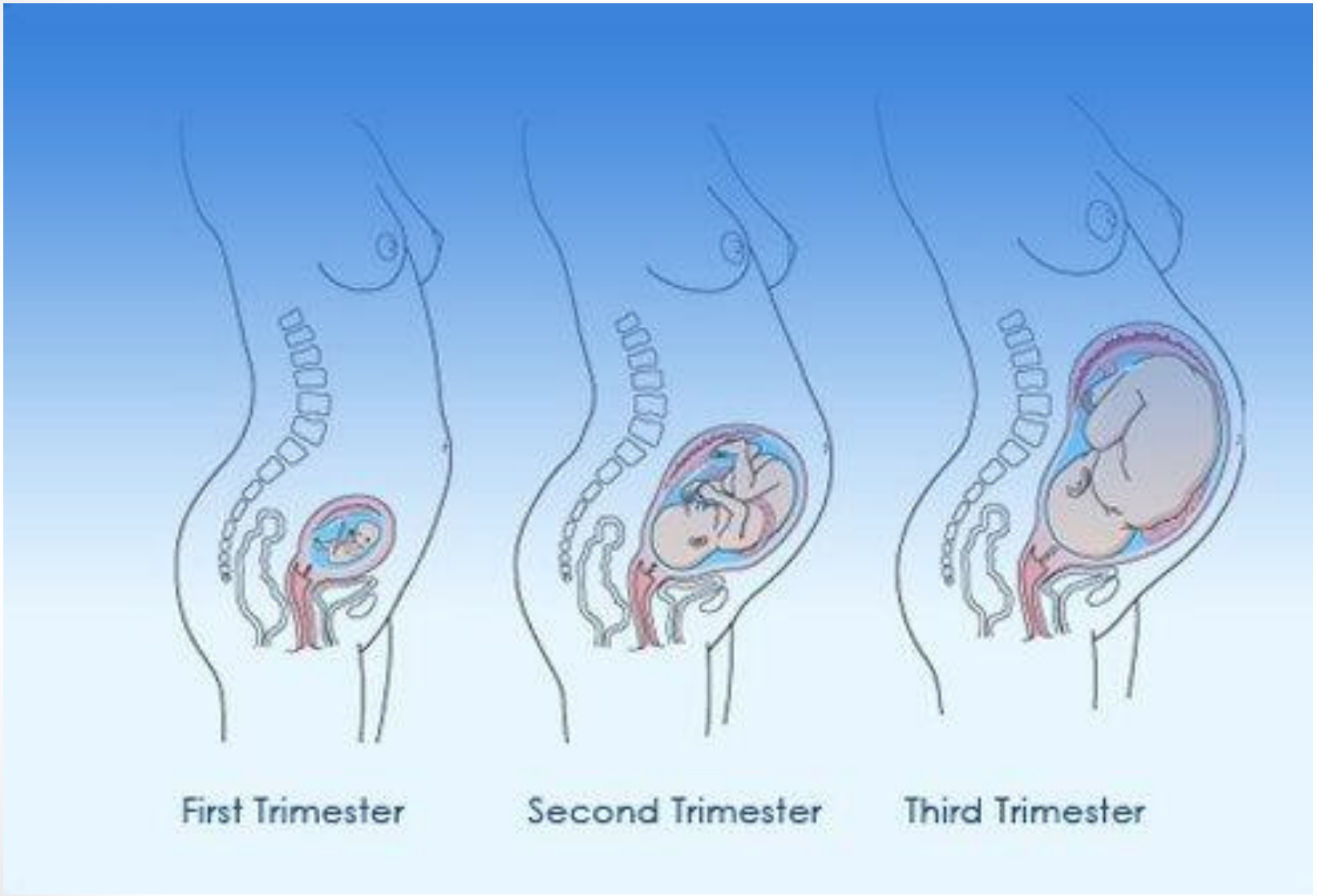
- A totally new organ, **the placenta**, grows in you to pass oxygen and nutrients to the fetus.
- Relaxin causes the ligaments to soften and allow flexibility in the pelvis. Pelvic bones start moving to make birth possible, the vagina relaxes and the cervix widens. It also relaxes the uterus to prevent cramping and premature childbirth
- Blood volume increases by a whopping 50% and the cardiac output can increase up to 20%
- Hormones can make your skin dry out and your face may be a bit more oily causing the pregnancy glow
- And most importantly: You're building a whole new person!

And what else?

- The amount of oxygen we need increases up to 50% but the room for the diaphragm gets smaller
- Metabolism changes and may lead to low blood sugar
- Core temperature changes, high body temperature can lead to dehydration or overheating
- Dizziness from compression on the vena cava
- Taste, vision and smell (can) change
- The breasts change
- Weight gain and fluid retention, this is absolutely normal but can be uncomfortable
- Estrogen and progesterone changes


Aorta
Vena cava
Lumbar vertebra
Aorta
Vena cava


Jugular veins
Common carotid arteries
Superior vena cava
Axillary vein
Right atrium and ventricle
Right lung
Inferior vena cava
Liver
Portal vein (drains G.I. tract)
Common iliac vein and artery
External iliac artery and vein
Internal iliac artery and vein
Femoral artery and vein


First Trimester
Second Trimester
Third Trimester

Yoga in pregnancy

- Yoga is an activity that focuses on mental and physical wellbeing and is a great way to stay active and healthy during pregnancy
- Conscious breathing is a beautiful practice for pregnancy and birth
- As a yoga teacher you're often one of the first to know of pregnancy, be cautious with your reaction when a student tells you about it
- Many yoginis will continue their practice with you until they sign up for prenatal yoga

Possible benefits of yoga in pregnancy

- Increased strength, resilience and endurance
- Increased awareness and acceptance of physical and emotional changes of pregnancy
- Decreased stress and/or anxiety
- Higher sense of empowerment
- Decreased lower back discomforts
- Increased pelvic floor health and awareness
- Spiritually and emotionally uplifting

Precautions for yoga and pregnancy

- Heated practices and rooms
- Abdominal compression (bhujangasana, navasana, twists)
- Laying flat on the back during late pregnancy
- Deep backbends
- Deep stretching
- Deep squats
- Inversions and balances (center of gravity shifts)
- Breath retention and advanced or heating pranayama
- Compression of the vena cava

Helpful pointers for pregnant yoginis

- Check in with your healthcare provider about yoga and pregnancy
- Avoid asana that just don't feel good or are contraindicated
- Allow your practice to change as you change
- Take your time
- Stay cool and hydrated
- This is your practice!
- Make yourself comfortable
- Stay curious
- Bring a snack and water to class
- Find a spot near the wall

Top tips for yogi mama's

1. No breath retentions, you're breathing for 2
2. Avoid heating practices (warm rooms or pranayama)
3. No ab or core strengthening
4. No deep twisting, open twists are okay in moderation
5. Avoid falling in inversions or balances
6. Don't do deep stretches

First trimester (1-13 weeks)

Common discomforts: Nausea, fatigue, cravings, frequent urination, bloating, breast tenderness, hormonal fluctuations, emotions

In-class considerations: May need to take more rest than usual, may need to leave for the bathroom, laying on the belly may be uncomfortable for the breasts, may get emotional

Second trimester (14-26 weeks)

Common discomforts: cravings, frequent urination, lumbar lordodis changes

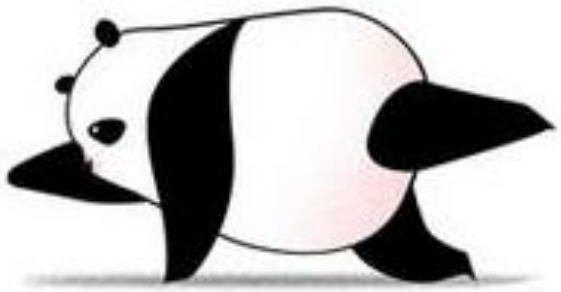
In-class considerations: May need to leave class for the bathroom, may need to modify back bending, balance gets affected, joint laxity, avoid laying down on the belly, abdominals start to move and stretch, higher need for self compassion, extra love and care

At 22 weeks baby can hear sounds and vibrations

Third trimester (27-42 weeks)

Common discomforts: Joint laxity, shortness of breath, insomnia, back pain, fatigue, shoulder tension from breast and belly weight, fear of birth, separated rectus abdominus, pubis misalignment, swelling and fluid retention, increased urination, constipation, braxton-hicks

In-class considerations: Reminders to not stretch too deeply or over exert, may need to rest more, back bending needs extra care, shoulder relief, more symmetrical poses and no open legs, if baby has dropped down avoid any inversions



Table

Postpartum (from birth)

Common discomforts: Breast tenderness, fatigue, lack of concentration, joint laxity, back and shoulder ache, weakened pelvic floor, possible abdominal surgery, hormonal fluctuations and emotions

In-class considerations: May need to modify laying on the abdomen asana, may need to take more rest than usual, remind not to stretch too deeply, may need months to fully recover from birth, emotions may appear

Lotus

Common Discomforts of Pregnancy
Nausea
Indigestion
Breast Tenderness
Frequent Urination
Headaches
Backache
Sweating
verywell

Asanas for pregnancy

- Quad strengtheners
- Mula bandha for pelvic toning
- Hip opening asana
- Lower back stretches
- Core stabilizing poses
- Standing asana
- Heart openers
- Side bending
- Cat-cow
- Grounding asana
- Legs up the wall and half inversions
- Brahmaree breath

Injuries and yoga

Common injuries

What can we do?

COMMON INJURIES AND CONDITIONS

Injuries and yoga

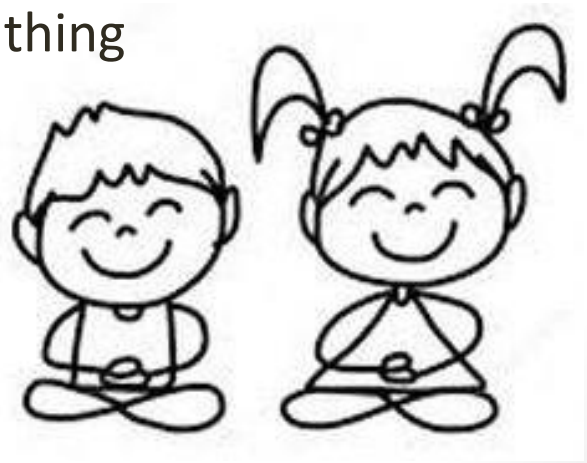
- Yoga promotes present moment awareness and a focus on ahimsa
- The yamas help us co-regulate and be with others in a harmonious way
- The niyamas help us selfregulate
- We all have different bodies and different body awareness, what works for you may not work for somebody else
- Be cautious with sharp and shooting sensations (pain is subjective) and avoid causing numbness

Common injuries

Acid reflux – Panic attacks – Arthritis – Asthma – Tendonitis – Carpal tunnel – Disc issues and herniation – Diabetes – Ear infection – Eye issues – Frozen shoulder – Heart conditions – High blood pressure – Low blood pressure – Hip replacements – Hypermobility – Knee injuries – Osteoporosis – Sciatica

What can we do?

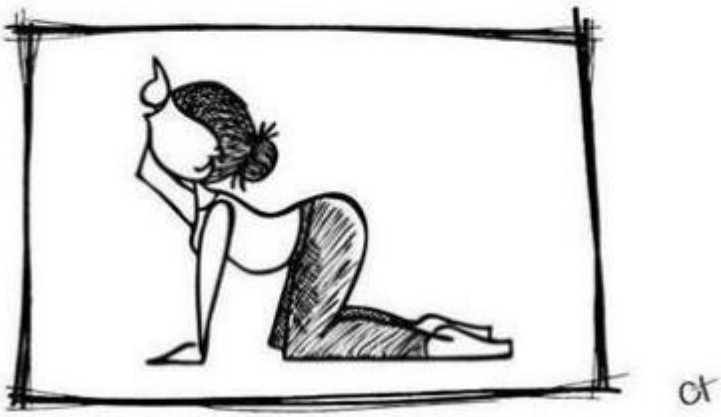
- Normalize the use of props by demonstrating
- Use inviting language
- Be clear on precautions
- Ask permission to adjust and check if it feels good
- Check on your student during practice
- Ask about their specialist's advice
- Emphasize the practice in yoga practice
- Encourage laughter and conscious breathing
- Anything else?



Thank you!

cat

cow



frickin awesome unicorn