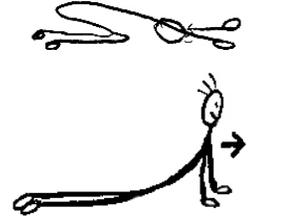
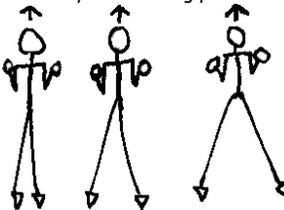


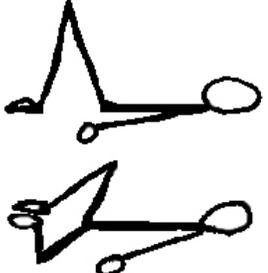


Sciatica Relief

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NOTE: Forward bends & ham string stretches can irritate Sciatica if not done properly. Slowly and gently, with the breath, ease into each stretch and, if you feel any pain, slowly and gently release the stretch to a point where there is no pain.

<p>Variation 1</p>  <p>Variation 2</p> 	<p>Spinal Flexibility</p> <p><u>Variation 1:</u> With knees under hips and hands under shoulders, exhale and pull the navel towards the spine engaging abdominal muscles and rounding the back. Inhale while melting the heart and tilting the tail bone up, shining the heart out to the front. Be sure to keep abdominals engaged so the low back is not pinched. Also extend through the crown of the head, keeping the back of the neck long. Repeat 6-8 times slowly with the breath, imagine you can feel each vertebrae roll and unroll like a wave.</p> <p><u>Variation 2:</u> When rounding the back draw the hips towards the heels. When extending the heart press the hips gently forward, engaging the abdominals to protect the low back. Lead with the heart NOT with the chin.</p>
 <p>Birds-eye view of leg positions</p> 	<p>Cobra with Leg Variations</p> <p>Lie face down, slide hands by the chest, inner spiral the thighs, engage the abdominals and press the pubic bone into the floor, melt the heart and draw the elbows towards the center line of your back. Isometrically draw the hands towards the hips and on an inhale lift the upper body, leading with the heart (NOT with the chin), exhale and release to the floor with control. Be sure to extend through the heart and crown of the head. Repeat 3-4 times each variation.</p> <p>Variation 1 is with legs about hip-width apart. Variation 2 is with legs about mat-width apart. Variation 3 is with legs about 3 feet apart.</p>
	<p>Thigh Stretch</p> <p>Sit on floor with left leg straight, supported by hands a few inches behind the hips. Bend the right leg and place the knee and shin on the floor with foot flexed, press through ball of foot, inner & outer heel, and little toe side of the foot moving back toward the right knee. Shin is parallel with front edge of the mat. Extend through the knee, engage abdominal muscles, lift the right hip up. Take 3 deep slow breaths. On the next exhale, move the belly to the left (a gentle twist). Hold for 3 breaths. On the next exhale, move the right ribs to the left. Hold for 3 breaths. Repeat other side.</p>

	<p>Hip Opener</p> <p>From same starting position as Calf Stretch, bring right foot to outside of right hand/block. Keep right knee directly over right ankle. Move right hip back as left hip comes forward (to square hips). Melt heart. Keep back of neck long. Hold for 5-6 long slow breaths. Repeat other side.</p>
	<p>Floor Lunge</p> <p>Lie on the back, extend right leg straight, inner spiral the thigh, press through the ball of the foot and heel; bring the little toe side of the foot toward the right hip. Find the natural low back curve by engaging the abdominals and slightly tilting the tailbone to the floor. Lift the left leg, bend the knee and place belt around the ball of the foot. Flex the foot so the sole parallel with the floor. Hold the belt loosely, relax shoulders and upper arms. Tug on the belt enough to bring the top of the left thigh towards floor beside the left ribs. Hold for 4-5 long deep breaths. Repeat other side.</p>
	<p>Floor Pigeon</p> <p>Lie as in Floor Lunge. Bend the left leg so the left shin over the chest and parallel to the top edge of your mat. Flex through the left foot, bringing the little toe side of the foot towards you. Hold the left leg with both hands, or use a belt along the outside of the lower left leg from foot to knee. REMEMBER to keep the bent-leg foot flexed at all times. Do not sickle the foot. Hold for 4-5 long deep breaths. Repeat other side.</p>
<p>Arm position from the back</p> 	<p>Shoulder Release with Belt</p> <p>Arm position: Make a loop with a belt shoulder width or wider. With arms behind the back, slip wrists into belt loop. Lift shoulders up to the ears, move the head of the arm bones to the back body, bring the lower tips of the shoulder blades together and down the back. Press arms away from each other into the belt and lift the little finger side of the hands up a few inches.</p>
	<p>Hip Release</p> <p>Lie on the back, arms straight at sides a few inches away from the body, knees bent, feet flat on the floor a few inches away from the hips. Find the natural curve in the lower back by slightly tilting the hips and engaging the abdominal muscles. Relax the shoulders down to the floor. On the inhale, slowly open the knees to the sides allowing the soles of the feet to come together. On the exhale, slowly, with isometric pressure, draw the knees back together. Repeat 4-6 times.</p>
<p>Starting position</p>  <p>Birdseye view of rolling positions</p>	<p>Back Massage</p> <p>Lie on the back, bring knees to chest. Roll gently from side to side with deep slow breaths lowering the legs to each side and sweeping the top arm all the way over with the legs. Imagine sea grass gently waving in a calm sea. Roll each side 4-6 times with the breath.</p>