

Lady's Tonic

13-minute Mini playsheet

So you're strapped for time, but you know you need a dose of yoga to kickstart your lady centres, give you an energy boost and ensure the lasting integrity of your body; this is your Mini. You'll certainly feel like super lady after this sequence! You'll have much greater mental clarity, balance and energy as you enter your day or continue on through the rest of your day. This is a full and potent sequence that will work it's magic in just 13-minutes.

Much more powerful than a daily women's multi-vitamin, this Mini works deep into the most important areas of the body that help us function well as women. As you do this Mini you will bring fresh blood to your reproductive system, you will give your digestive system a lovely massage and you will be facilitating the healthy operation of your thyroid, which we need for so many reasons as women. Your pituitary and pineal glands will get some love, and overall you will feel AWESOME!

Often we start to feel anxious, a bit overwhelmed or frustrated, because there is stagnation in the body (which left to fester leads to pain and illness). One of the best ways to help break up that stagnation, and get the energy flowing again, so you feel freedom and ease, is to do specific yoga poses that allow you to really absorb their medicine. This Mini truly is a tonic for women.

WHAT YOU'LL NEED FOR THIS MINI

You'll want to make sure you have a couple of big fat blankets folded by the side of your mat, so you can use them to protect your neck when you move into the **Shoulder Stand**.

Lady's Tonic

13-minute Mini manual

- ♥ **Rock Pose:** 90-sec
 - ♥ **Spinal Flex:** 2-min
 - ♥ **Butterfly:** 1-min
 - ♥ **Shoulder Stand:** 2-min
 - ♥ **Fish:** 1-min
 - ♥ **Rock 'n Roll:** 30-min
 - ♥ **Bridge Pose:** 90-sec
 - ♥ **Life Nerve Stretch:** 1-min
 - ♥ **Goddess Pose:** 90-sec
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Rock Pose

We begin the **Lady's Tonic** in **Rock Pose**, kneeling. To enter this pose make sure your knees, ankles and feet are straight before you sit back on them. You want a straight line from where the knees meet, to the space between the ankles, to where the big toes are not crossed, but next to each other. Ensure your sit bones are pressed squarely into your heels (there can be a little space between your knees if that is required for this to happen).



Centre your weight on your sit bones through the heels and into the ground. Completely releasing your weight to gravity through the sit bones and the heels is challenging to the tops of your feet, but the legs will feel better and the spine will be in alignment. As you sit here, pressing into the sit bones, lift your heart so you feel that lovely length in your spine, crown drawing to the sky as your sit bones root down through your ankles, into the earth.

Take a full **minute** here to find your alignment, connect with your breath and fill yourself up with love in preparation for your **Lady's Tonic**.

OTHER WAYS: Your body doesn't like this pose? You have hip, knee and ankle issues? You're not alone. Use *props*. If you can't sit on your ankles because it hurts, take a rolled up blanket, place it under the front of your ankles on the floor (you'll need to make the blanket fatter if it still doesn't feel comfortable), then place a second folded blanket from the back of your knee joints, all the way to your toes, and sit back here. Take whatever props you need to be able to sit up tall. It also helps a lot to be on a softer surface, so perhaps fold a couple of blankets to put beneath you as well. Play, until you find something that works for you.

GIFTS: Why do we love **Rock Pose**? Because it's the foundation for many other poses, and it's said that when you master sitting in **Rock Pose**, you'll be able to digest a rock!!! Hence to say, sitting in this pose is great for digestion. This pose also stretches all the muscles in the front of the legs, as well as the knee and ankle joints; a great combo for creating a greater range of movement. At the same time, it's a restful pose for the legs.

Spinal Flex in Rock Pose

Staying in **Rock Pose**, place your palms flat on your thighs. Inhale as you flex your spine forward, keeping your shoulders relaxed, then exhale as you relax the spine back. This should feel like you're riding a camel - the movement being initiated by the pelvis; the pelvis moves and the spine and shoulders follow. The shoulders will naturally fall back as you inhale, and fall forward as you exhale. Move gently and purposefully, feeling the movement of the spine, never pushing beyond a gentle stretch; we're simply warming up the spine here.

If you have a healthy neck and it feels completely comfortable, you can let your head move softly back as you inhale forward, and gently forward as you exhale back. If you feel any tension what-so-

ever, or have neck pain or past injuries, do NOT move your neck in the way shown in the diagram of our little lady. Simply keep your head straight, your face looking forward throughout the rhythmic movement. Continue for **2-minutes** before returning to centre and taking **30-seconds** to breathe the energy you've created, up your spine.



OTHER WAYS: If you've had a back injury or have a rod in your back, simply move as best you can. Do tiny movements to begin with; small movements are super beneficial. Go where your body is willing to take you. If you can't sit in **Rock Pose**, you can sit cross-legged in **Easy Pose** or on a chair.

GIFTS: Any type of **Spinal Flex** is hugely beneficial. As Yogi Bhajan once said: 'Your age is not measured in years, but in the flexibility of your spine.' So it goes without saying that we want to keep our spine flexible, as the health of our spine is a direct mirror of how youthful we look and feel. **Spinal Flex**, when carried out in **Rock Pose**, works specifically on the mid-spine, thus opening the heart and strengthening the heart chakra.

The rhythmic movement of the **Spinal Flex** is designed to move energy up the spine, carrying more blood supply to the brain, in particular the frontal brain, which is the seat of our executive thinking. It also sparks our creativity and can generate a LOT of sexual energy! Yes please! **Spinal Flex** is a beautiful tonic for maintaining structural alignment, energy flow, and general health.

Butterfly

Come into **Easy Pose**, making sure you're sitting on your sit bones. Bring the soles of your feet together in front of your groin (as close to your groin as comfortable) so the soles of your feet are touching from the toes to the heels. Hold your feet with your hands, fingers interlaced. Let your knees relax and lift and lengthen up through the spine.

As you breathe feel your ribcage open to the sides as you inhale, and relax as you exhale. Start to bounce your knees up and down - creating a fluttering motion - like a **Butterfly**. These are small movements. Bring your attention to your groin and the stretch you feel in your thighs and hips. Continue

to flutter your knees for **1-minute**.

OTHER WAYS: If you have a groin or knee injury, simply pop a blanket under your outer thighs for support. If you have sciatica, either avoid this pose, or sit on a cushion to raise your hips higher.

GIFTS: This pose improves flexibility in your lady parts and hip region, as it stretches the inner thighs, genitals and knees and strengthens the pelvic floor. It's also a really nice stretch for the lower back without requiring loose hamstrings. **Butterfly** helps release toxins and negative energy in the areas of the hip and groin. Your pelvis, abdomen and back get stimulated by a plentiful blood supply.



Coupled with **Shoulder Stand** (which we move into next), **Butterfly** helps the ovaries to function properly and balances out irregular menses. This pose not only increases fertility levels but also ensures a smoother delivery of your baby, if practised until late pregnancy. If you're experiencing fatigue from long hours of standing or walking, do this pose; it will also help with intestine and bowel movement as well as offer relief from menstrual discomfort or menopause symptoms.

Urinary problems? This is your pose. Your gall bladder lines on the outside of your legs as well as your urinary bladder lines running along your spine in your lower back get stimulated in this pose. If your feet are nice and close to your groin, so you can feel the stretch in your inner thighs (your abductors getting a juicy stretch), the kidney and liver lines also get activated, making this pose great for the kidneys and liver. If your legs are straighter and the feet further away from the groin, the hamstring will get more of a stretch.

Shoulder Stand

You will need to prepare for this pose, by taking one or two (or even three) large folded blankets and placing them under your torso (from the top of your back down to your buttocks) so your head rests just off the edge of the blankets on the floor, and your shoulders and arms are on the blanket. This will ensure your neck is looked after - as **Shoulder Stands** put extreme pressure on the delicate vertebra of your neck - making this pose dangerous if not carried out with the extra support. We want to use the blankets to reduce severe straightening of the neck.

Lying flat on your back in **Base Position**, arms by your sides, take a deep breath in and out as you engage your core. Bend your knees and bring them in towards your chest until your thighs press into your lower abdomen. Raise your hips off the floor, supporting your lower back with your hands, with elbows bent and your upper arms remaining on the floor.

Only your head, upper back, shoulders and upper arms should be touching the floor, with the weight shared by the both shoulders, the trapezius muscles; NOT the neck. Position your hands towards the middle of your spine and stretch your legs up until they're straight. Gently point your toes toward the

ceiling, keeping your legs together so your legs and spine are perpendicular to the ground.

Your elbows should not be placed any father apart than your shoulders. Keep your knees bent if straightening your legs is difficult. Ensure your entire body weight is balanced on your shoulders. Do NOT move your head in **Shoulder Stand**. Relax your tongue and throat as much as you can to allow the energy to flow and deliver some love to your thyroid, as the sternum presses on this area, and hold here for **90-seconds**.

To release the posture, slowly bend your knees toward your chest, and gently roll and relax your back onto the floor one vertebra at a time, supporting your back with your hands on the way down. Come into **Base Position**, before taking your legs out long for **Fish**.

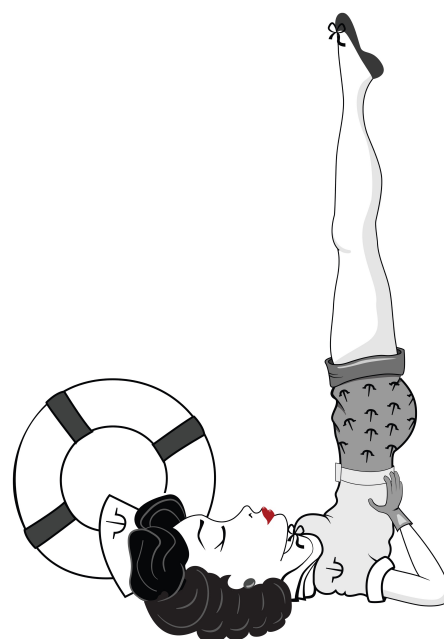
DO NOT DO IF... if you have high blood pressure or an eye disease that is negatively affected by increased pressure, hernias or a neck injury.

OTHER WAYS: Once up in **Shoulder Stand** if you find you need extra support, place your hands more on your hips as opposed to your spine. This will help you hold the pose up there more easily. If you can't get up there at all you can try this pose with a chair, or simply go into the **Legs-Up-The-Wall** pose, which you'll find in the **Moon Time Sequence**, or you can hold a **Pelvic Lift** which you'll find in the **Blissful Breath sequence**. Remember, visualising your body doing what it cannot physically do now, is what builds the neural connections so you CAN do it!

GIFTS: The **Shoulder Stand** is a powerhouse of a pose, often referred to as the Queen, and has long been considered an excellent daily posture for women. Because the body is in an inverted position, this pose reduces strain on the heart, allowing healthy blood to circulate throughout the body, especially to the neck and chest, helping people with asthma, bronchitis and throat ailments. Continued practise of this pose also eradicates common colds and other nasal nasties.

As you hold **Shoulder Stand** the thyroid and parathyroid glands in the neck get a gorgeous massage, soothing the nervous system and allowing for proper hormone function as well as regulating metabolism; thus burning calories. The position of the neck, locked against the chest, can also help eliminate chronic headaches, while the draining of blood from the legs, pelvis and abdominal area reduces varicose veins, with the increased blood flow to the face, ironing out wrinkles!

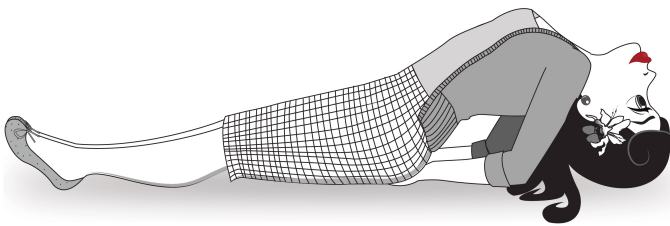
By inverting the body and thus reversing the gravitational pull on it, the digestive system receives a complete massage. This posture can, thus, help eliminate constipation and other digestive problems. The inversion also has a positive effect on the flow of spinal fluid, refreshing the body and brain, thereby creating a more restful physical and mental state in preparation for sleep. As you relax the pelvis, fresh blood is sent to the uterus.



Fish Pose

Lying flat on your back with your legs out straight and touching, feet together arch to arch. Walk your hands, palms-down, underneath your booty and hips. Keep your elbows as close together as possible and fingertips facing forward with forearms parallel to each other on the ground. Snuggle your shoulders underneath your heart space, squeeze your legs together, point your toes, and you can stay here, or you can press into your elbows, lift your chest up and come into **Fish Pose**, drawing the crown of your head to the earth. Feel your heart lifting to the sky.

Take long deep breathe here as you hold the pose for **30-seconds**. When you're ready to come out of this pose, use an inhale to expand your chest and help lift you up and out, as you exhale with control and release your head back down, freeing your hands. Draw your legs into **Base Position** and rest here for a moment, taking a full and luscious breath in and out.



DO NOT DO IT... if you have high or low blood pressure or have had serious lower-back or neck injuries.

OTHER WAYS: Simply resting with your head off the edge of the blanket as you set yourself up for **Shoulder Stand** with your shoulders snuggled under your heart space is an easier variation, especially if you have any neck issues. If you want to advance this pose, you can do a little **Breath of Fire** here as you hold the **Fish**.

GIFTS: **Fish Pose** is a great counterpose to **Shoulder Stand** and in some texts is considered the destroyer of all diseases. It can be an effective way to relieve neck and back pain, bringing flexibility to the spine. Because it stretches your chest open, your bronchial tubes are widened which helps make breathing easier. In time, your rib cage will expand, and this will encourage you to breathe more deeply, which is super helpful for those with asthma and bronchitis.

Fish Pose helps beat fatigue, menstrual pain - by stretching out the muscles in the back, neck, chest and legs, giving you instant relief from muscle aches and pains associated with menstruation - and anxiety. It improves circulation; helps stimulate the organs of the stomach and abdomen, fighting indigestion, gas and that feeling of bloating. Toning the nerves connected with sexual functions it helps reproductive problems heal too.

The pressure on your neck in **Fish Pose** stimulates the energy centre that regulates the voice, thus improving the quality of your voice - if you're a singer, do this one! It also tones the thyroid and parathyroid gland (which regulates the level of calcium in the body), the pituitary and pineal glands get a lovely boost and as an added bonus, **Fish Pose** gives you a natural glow! The beauty of the **Fish!**

Rock 'n Roll

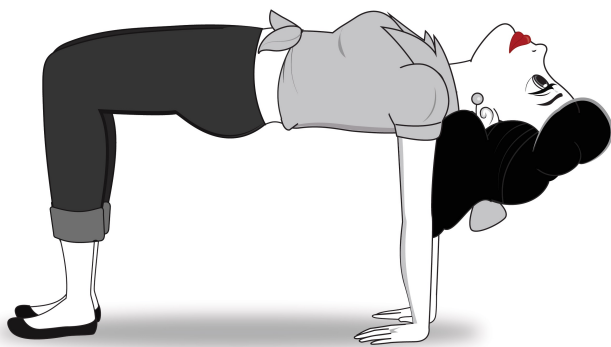
Bring your knees into your chest, holding them in your arms. Gently peel your head off the floor, and tuck your chin to your chest. Rock back and forth along the entirety of your spine – all the way from your tailbone to your neck – softly massaging your spine into the earth. Make sure you roll along your spine at least **3 times** before coming up into **Easy Pose**.



GIFTS: **Rock'n Rolling** does more than help us move from **Base Position** to **Easy Pose**; it circulates our life force energy and relaxes the spine. The spine is viewed as an energy antenna, thus rocking and rolling along the spine, helps wake up that energy and get it flowing more freely through the body. *Why do you want energy flowing through your body?* Because stagnant, stuck energy is the cause of illness and disease. When we get the energy moving – which is the aim of Chinese Medicine and Acupuncture – the body is free to heal itself.

Bridge Pose

Sitting on your booty have your feet out in front of you hip-width apart, soles of the feet flat on the floor, knees pointing to the sky. Place your palms flush on the floor next to your booty or a fraction further back, shoulder-width apart. You can turn your fingers facing towards the body or away (for a more powerful pose); just make sure your shoulders are comfy with the option you choose. Chin tucked in a touch, gaze towards the navel, on the inhale press into all ten knuckles, engage your core and lift your booty up until there's a straight line from your knees to your collarbone so your body is parallel with the floor; you want your thighs and spine in one line.



Then you have two options here. You can hold here, engaging the abdominal wall taking long slow deep breaths, or you can exhale down, inhale up, exhale down, inhale up, and continue for **90-seconds**, moving with soft grace as you stay strong in the core throughout. Whichever option you choose, make sure you keep your arms and calves at right angles with the floor when you come up into the **Bridge**. To come out to the pose, simply use an exhale to float on down.

OTHER WAYS: **Bridge Pose** is a strong pose, and if you don't have a lot of back strength to begin with you will need to build up to this one. In this case, simply press up from the floor as far as you can lift, hold for as long as you can, then lower down, and repeat. Gently work your way up into this pose, gradually building strength. If this is simply too much, then you have the option of doing **Pelvic Lifts** (found in the **Blissful Breath sequences**) instead.

GIFTS: **Bridge Pose** is brilliant for helping strengthen the back, helps stretch the lower back and alleviate lower back pain. At the same time you're also strengthening the wrists, arms, legs and shoulders and keeping the spine active too. It's good for the immune, digestive and reproductive systems while calming the nervous system - releasing anxiety and tension in the body - for a restful night's sleep. **Bridge Pose** is simply another version of the **Reverse Plank** pose found in the **Luscious Lady Parts** sequence.

Life Nerve Stretch

Moving straight from **Bridge** pose take your legs out long, feet flexed. Imagine your feet are pushing up against a wall! Bend your legs a touch if this stretch is too much. Feeling your sit bones plugging into the earth, inhale your crown tall. Spread your fingers and toes as you inhale and reach for the stars. Then exhale your torso forward, heart reaching for your toes. Take your feet in your hands, letting your tummy snuggle into your thighs.

Look forward, smile - then on an exhale, let your back round over, head releasing. Feel the lovely stretch up the back of your legs as you take long deep, calming breaths here. If you need more of a stretch, strengthen your legs a little further. Hold this pose for **1-minute** as you take slow deep breaths. To come out of the pose, tuck your chin into your chest, press forward into your heels, and on an inhale, gently release your feet as you slowly roll up through the staircase of your spine.

OTHER WAYS: If your hamstrings are tight, straight legs will be near impossible, so simply bend them as generously as you need. As long as you feel the stretch up the back of your legs, you're getting all the yummy nutrients. You can also put a blanket under your booty to help raise your hips and ease the pose.

GIFTS: The **Life Nerve Stretch** will help stretch out your life! When you stretch the back of your legs, you're stretching your Life Nerves - the large nerves in your legs that connect with your parasympathetic nervous system that helps you regain harmony in stressful situations, hence why you feel more emotionally balanced. You can do this pose alone for just three minutes before bed for a more restful sleep! If you choose to press into your big toes as you hold this pose, you are also stimulating the pituitary gland.



Goddess Pose

Take your elbows down to the floor behind you and gently lower yourself down into **Goddess Pose**; legs splaying out to the sides to form a diamond shape, soles of your feet touching. Place your hands where they feel most drawn, for example, on your ovaries or one hand on your heart and one on your womb.

Or you may like to rest your hands out to the sides of your body on the floor, palms facing up. Yogi's choice.



With each exhalation allow your knees to sink a touch closer to the floor. Intend for your body to lengthen up through your neck, like a string is pulling gently from the top of your head. Intend for there to be space between each rib as they open outwards. Relax the groin, and invite your body to completely let go. Feel the openness in your chest and connect in with your heart as you body softens into this beautiful **Relaxation** for **90-seconds**. Surrender into your heart and simply notice how your whole body softens as you lay here and surrender into the pose.

To end the Mini, simply take your hands to your chest in **Prayer Position** and say out loud: 'I am love'.

OTHER WAYS: If you cannot take your torso all the way back to the floor, place a cushion or two, a folded blanket, or a bolster if you have one, under your back to support you in relaxing fully into the pose. Make it as comfy as you need it to be to allow

for a complete surrender. You can also place some cushions under each knee of extra support.

Another option, which is really beautiful even if you can lie back in this pose without props, is to roll up a towel or blanket so it's like a fat snake and place it on the floor, so that when you lie back in this pose, the rolled by blanket runs along your spine. Resting here in this supported pose helps really open up the chest so your heart can shine, and just feels really lush.

GIFTS: **Goddess Pose** is another pose that is referred to as the Queen of all yoga poses for women and is a really nice restorative posture to do as soon as you wake up, before you go to sleep, or just when you need little time to connect into your centre. It helps open up the hips and stretch out the groin - also giving the thighs and knees a delicious stretch - so your energy doesn't get stuck in your pelvic region, while at the same time helping you feel more open emotionally.

Reclining back in this yummy pose helps expand the lumbar curvature of the spine, while lengthening the layers of the abdominal wall, helping maintain pelvic organ support. Given many women's reproductive and digestive problems stem from abdominal tension, this is a beautiful pose to softly relax the belly and keep the abdominal organs healthy.

Goddess Pose is especially a great pose if you experience menstrual cramps or when your energy is low. This pose also has a drying effect on the internal organs and helps reduce a heavy menstrual flow and diarrhoea. For those women who have cystitis (burning sensations when urinating) around the time of menstruation, this pose relaxes the bladder to help relieve those symptoms.