

Do's and Don'ts of Integrated Mother and Baby Yoga

Please DO	Please DON'T
<p>Show tenderness to yourself (<i>ahimsa</i>) – nurture first, stabilise posture and muscles second, strengthen last</p> <p>Find contentment with the present situation (<i>santosa</i>) – transform challenges into gifts</p>	<p>Push too hard or move fast</p> <p>Feel isolated – becoming a mother is not always easy or straightforward</p>
<p>If you are still bleeding (lochia can continue up to 16 weeks after birth), focus on gentle floor-based work, breathing and relaxation</p>	<p>If you are still bleeding, please avoid inversions and standing poses.</p> <p>Avoid inversions until abdominal support for back is re-established and pelvis is re-aligned</p>
<p>Use deep relaxation to overcome exhaustion – can do as baby feeds, use lots of cushions to feel supported</p>	<p>Don't get dressed for as long as possible!</p> <p>Wear your loveliest pyjamas and encourage visitors to make you tea.</p>
<p>Do lift yourself before you lift your baby! As EXHALE, lift pelvic floor UP and abdominals IN</p>	<p>Don't forget about your posture as you carry your baby – try to be aligned symmetrically, avoid spinal rotation where possible (difficult with car seats!) and use holds practised in class</p>
<p>Do practices that engage the pelvic floor e.g. sitting on ball or blocks, or semi-supine (lying on back with knees bent)</p>	<p>Avoid sit-ups, crunches or any other fierce work with abdominals (vaginal as well as caesarean births) – it's counterproductive!</p>
<p>Around 4 to 8 months proceed to more asanas carefully, focusing on twists to re-knit oblique abdominals (but not as sit up!), pelvic tilts/ circles/ rocking, chest-opening practices</p>	<p>Avoid wide stances in standing postures (width of sarong for first 8 weeks, then not much wider). Particularly if breastfeeding because joints will still be lax</p>
<p>Use sound to relax yourself and your baby e.g. RAM to tummy, YAM to heart, HAM to neck or <i>brahmari</i> (humming bee breath)</p>	<p>Avoid focusing on the 'externals' – heal from the inside out rather than 'bums & tums' exercise.</p>
<p>Find time to rest and relax with your baby – tiredness and anxiety will affect milk production, so balance socialising and getting out of the house with quiet time</p>	<p>If you are experiencing incontinence (urinary or faecal leakage) after the early postnatal period do not ignore it, please seek medical advice. It can be fixed!</p>

Remember, if you're both dressed, you've made it out of the house and arrived before the end of the class – **you're doing great!**