

Dear Student,

The following information is to help introduce you to the benefits of pre- and postnatal yoga, and to offer you guidelines to be aware of in your practice. At any point, if you have questions that have not been addressed either here or in class, please don't hesitate to ask.

Wishing you a healthy and fulfilling pregnancy, delivery, and motherhood.

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PRENATAL YOGA BENEFITS

Prenatal & Postnatal Yoga have a many of physical, emotional and mental benefits for both you and your baby. These include:

PREGNANCY SUPPORT

- Reduces stress and anxiety through awareness and breathing practices
- Increases blood and lymph circulation, thereby supporting the physiological processes of pregnancy
- Relieves muscular and skeletal tension and pain
- Strengthens the body, and decreases stress on weight-bearing joints
- Supports good posture through the structural changes of pregnancy
- Enhances kinesthetic (body movement) awareness, allowing for comfortable structural changes
- Provides emotional support through contact with other pregnant women

LABOR SUPPORT

Breathing, relaxation and mental focus techniques

can support you through intense or difficult sensations and emotions and increase endurance

Kinesthetic awareness

- help you find beneficial laboring positions
- release tension that arises in response to pain
- support effective dilation and effacement
- support effective pushing
- help prevent whole-body soreness or injury post-labor

Muscular control and awareness

helps you isolate and use your muscles in the most effective ways, including:

- moving the hips to bring the baby lower into the birth canal
- knowing how to release and open your inner thigh and pelvic muscles to allow the baby to move through the pelvis
- knowing how to effectively use the abdominal muscles while pushing

In the event of cesarean sections (planned or unplanned), the same tools will benefit you in added ways:

- **Breathing and relaxation** practices will help calm you during early contractions or while being prepped for surgery.
- **Muscle control and kinesthetic awareness** will support early labor AND help substantially in post-surgery healing.

Postpartum Support

- Decrease in postpartum soreness, and faster recovery due to strong and flexible muscles and effective laboring
- Easier postpartum restoration of abdominal and pelvic muscles as well as postural alignment
- Kinesthetic awareness further supports healthy postpartum structural changes
- Muscle strengthening and lengthening helps prevent discomfort stemming from poor alignment as well as the repetitive strain injuries often caused by nursing, lifting and carrying infants