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POSE OF THE MONTH

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Virabhadrasana I (veera-bha-dra-sana) Warrior I

Vira = Hero Virabhadra was a powerful mythical warrior created from a lock of Shiva's hair. Shiva is the god of destruction in the Hindu Trinity, he is the masculine form of the divine, his "destructive" power symbolizes breaking down the ego.

Warrior poses work on the joints of the body, it specifically helps to alleviate pain associated with rheumatic conditions. It works on reducing pain in the knees and is a prescribed pose for people whose jobs require standing in one place or sitting all day long. It conditions and tones the lower abdomen and spinal column, and purifies the organs of generation.

The neck position activates the 5th chakra and the neck itself directly benefits because the neck muscles are strengthened (and the hearing can be improved) by practicing this pose.

Alignment

- ॐ From Downward facing dog, step your right foot forward between your hands (or as far forward as you can) lining up your right heel with your left heel. Swivel your left heel inward as you ground the outer edge of your left foot.
- ॐ Sweep your arms overhead, biceps just in front of cheeks, scapula depressed. Tilt your head back keeping the neck long (skin on back of neck should remain smooth). Drishti is upward. Feel the dual effort of grounding your lower body while you extend upward with your spine and arms.
- ॐ Swivel your left hip forward to help square the hips, posteriorly tilt your pelvis and close in the ribs to keep compression out of your lower back and the spine and pelvis in a neutral alignment.
- ॐ Bend right knee to about 90° of flexion, knee over the mid-foot (most people need to keep their knee behind their toes to protect the knee joint, however some individuals with long femurs and strong knees may need to flex their knee past the foot to deepen the pose). Do not let front leg collapse inward, keeping your knee in line with your hip.
- ॐ Hold for 5-8 breaths, inhaling straighten right knee turning feet, keeping gaze upward if possible, exhale bend left knee and descend into the pose on the left side.

