



Chair Yoga: Safe, Simple, and Beneficial for Older Adults

by Jim Miller

Dear Savvy Senior,

I've been hearing a lot about chair yoga lately. My New Year's resolution is to improve my health and get moving again, but I have trouble getting down on the floor. What can you tell me about this type of yoga?

Arthritic Abby

Dear Abby,

If you're looking for a safe way to get active again but find traditional exercise routines difficult, chair yoga may be the perfect fit.

Chair yoga is a gentle form of yoga that's done either sitting on a chair or using the chair for support while standing. It adapts traditional yoga poses so they're accessible to people who may have limited mobility, balance issues, or difficulty getting down on the floor.

This practice helps improve flexibility, strength, and balance, boosts circulation and mobility, and promotes relaxation while reducing stress. This makes it an effective and safe way to stay active and support overall well-being at any age.

A typical chair yoga session begins with simple seated postures, such as gentle twists, stretches for the arms and legs, or movements that open the hips and shoulders. These exercises loosen stiff joints, improve posture, and increase flexibility in areas of the body that often become tight with age.

It can also include standing poses like modified lunges or gentle balance work, with the chair always nearby for stability. Breathing exercises are often incorporated throughout the practice, encouraging participants to slow down, deepen their breath, and cultivate a sense of calm. Sessions usually end with a short period of guided relaxation or meditation, leaving participants refreshed and grounded.

How to Get Started

To get started, you just need a sturdy chair without wheels and preferably without arms, and some comfortable clothes. The goal with chair yoga is to stretch, not cause pain. So go only as far as feels comfortable and don't push beyond your limits.

If possible, consider joining a local chair yoga class. Many local senior centers, YMCAs, and community recreation centers offer chair yoga as part of their wellness or fitness programs. Some yoga studios and gyms may offer gentle yoga or chair yoga too. And if you're enrolled in a Medicare Advantage plan, you may be able to access classes for free through *SilverSneakers.com*.

If attending an in-person class isn't an option, you can also practice chair yoga at home. There are chair yoga apps and many videos you can access on YouTube to guide you through a routine.

Chair Exercise Options

As an alternative to chair yoga, there are chair exercises you can add to your routine that can help improve strength and balance, reduce joint pain and prevent falls.

To execute some of these exercises, you'll need some resistance equipment like light dumbbells, water bottles, soup cans or resistance bands.

- Sit-to-stand: For this exercise, sit at the edge of the chair, feet hip-width apart. Stand up without using your hands, then slowly sit back down. Use hands lightly on the chair or use a walker or cane if needed for support.
- Seated marches: Sit tall and alternate lifting one knee at a time toward your chest.
- Seated bicep curls: With elbows tucked in, curl weights towards shoulders, then lower with control.
- Seated overhead press: Press weights overhead from shoulder height, then slowly lower.
- Seated leg extensions: Extend one leg straight out and hold for 2-3 seconds, then lower and repeat.
- Heel raises: Lift heels off the floor, pause, and lower back down.

For noticeable benefits, these exercises should be performed at least three days a week, doing three sets of 8 to 12 repetitions.

Send your questions or comments to [questions@savvysenior.org](mailto:questions@savvysenior.org), or to Savvy Senior, P.O. Box 5443, Norman, OK 73070.

Commissioners...

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was added regarding the Kidder County Senior Services food pantry building. New lighting fixtures have already begun to be installed, with more to come. There are also some plumbing projects that KCSS is applying for a grant to help pay for to improve the building. The Commissioners will be seeking bids for these projects.

The Commissioners are also looking to expand to a five-member Water Board to help ensure Kidder County's interests are well represented as Stutsman County continues to press to have water from the Crystal Springs Watershed pumped through Kidder County, into Burleigh County, and into the Missouri River.

The plan has not been well-received by either county, or a majority of its residents, so far.



"Life is a mountain. Your goal is to find your path, not to reach the top."

~ Maxime Lagacé

Steele Volunteer Fire District Annual Meeting and Election of Officers will be held at the Steele Fire Hall January 8, 2025 at 6 pm



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Off the Bookshelf

By Maralee Kalianoff

THE STARS ARE FIRE

At twenty-four years old, Grace Holland is trapped in a loveless marriage, often wondering why in the world her husband, Gene, even married her. They have two toddlers, a girl, Claire, and a boy, Tom, and they make Grace's bland marriage tolerable.

The summer of 1946 is a season of continued rain along Maine's coastline. Grace is tired of stringing drying laundry inside the house and misses taking the children out for walks to the nearby beach.

Then when the summer of 1947 brings a severe drought to Maine's coastline, Grace is sorry she cursed the rain the previous year. As fall approaches with no measurable precipitation, concern is widespread about the possibility of fire.

As fires occur in surrounding areas, Gene joins a group of men who decide to travel to neighboring towns where the plan is to create a firebreak to stop the spread of a raging fire which would endanger Gene and Grace's home and others in the area.

As Grace waits impatiently for Gene to return, she makes a plan for evacuating if needed for her and the children. Her plan is to take as little as possible and go to the beach where she and her children will dig into the wet sand along the ocean's edge and wait there until the flames pass their area. Digging deep into the wet sand, Grace and her children are rescued soon after the fire passes through. Grace's home is destroyed and Gene hasn't returned. She eventually takes her children and her mother to Gene's mother's house, which is empty after his mother recently died. Her house has been spared by the fire.

Weeks pass with no word from Gene. Grace needs to find a way to support her children and pay the bills. She takes in a boarder, a pianist who plays beautiful music for the little group. Grace finds a job as a receptionist in a busy doctor's office and things are looking up. Grace is content, even happy, and her children are well cared for by their Grandma while Grace works. And when there is still no word about Gene, Grace finds herself wondering if she is wishing harder that Gene will eventually return to his family or wishing he won't.

In "The Stars Are Fire" by New York Times bestselling author Anita Shreve, you follow the story of a woman who discovers her own amazing strength when she is put to the test.

This book is available at the Kidder County Public Library in Steele.

## AMVETS BREAKFAST

Sponsored By the Steele AMVETS

Sunday, January 4th  
9:00 am - 1:00 pm

Sausage - Pancakes - French Toast - Hash Browns  
Scrambled Eggs - Orange Juice - Coffee

Steele AMVETS Club - Use West Door

## Steele AMVETS New Years Eve Party

Supper Specials ~ 5:00 pm

Shrimp Linguine, Filet Mignon, Filet Medellion or Salmon includes a loaded baked potato and salad bar.

Door Prizes and Free Music from 9:00 pm - 1:00 am

The Steele Ozone and Kidder County Press is proud to sponsor this series of articles. The Kidder County Library is open 9 - 12 & 1 - 5 M-F.

If you've not stopped in lately, you are missing a lot!

Remember, the Library accepts old eye glasses.