

TIME HEALTH TIME

EXERCISE/FITNESS

5 Yoga Poses for Better Sleep

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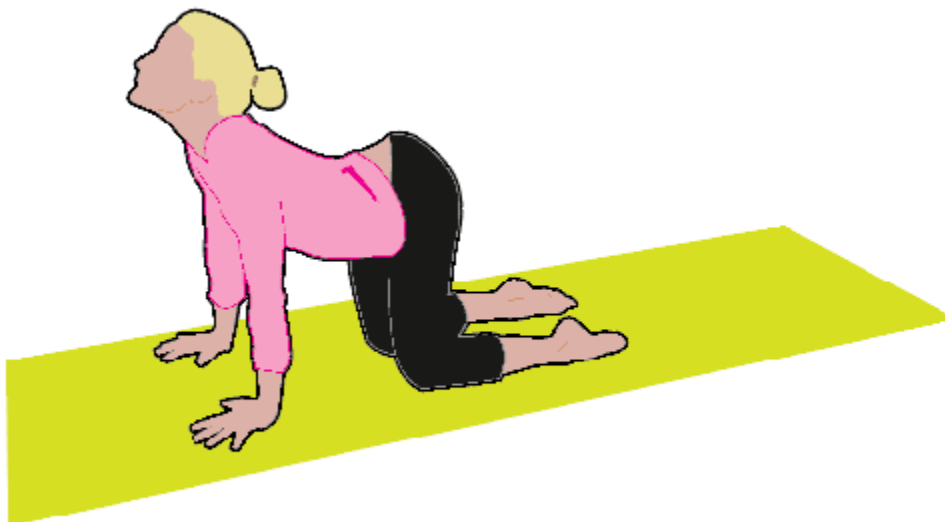
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If your goal is sounder sleep, it's a good idea to try tiring yourself out during the day. Any exercise can do this, of course. But [yoga](#) may be the best type for the job.

Not only does yoga offer (often intense) physical activity, but it imparts an extra mind-body benefit. "Yoga helps elicit what we call the relaxation response, which is essentially the physiological opposite of the stress response," says Laura Malloy, director of yoga programs at Massachusetts General Hospital's Benson-Henry Institute for Mind Body Medicine. It helps ease any muscle tension you've built up throughout the day—even unknowingly—while soothing a racing mind.

For a natural sleep aid, Malloy recommends trying these five yoga poses before bed. Do each pose for six repetitions, or hold them for six cycles of deep breathing.

Cat-cow stretch



Cycling slowly through these two movements releases tension from the back, torso and shoulders, Malloy says. "Coordinating the breath with the movement can help quiet a busy mind."

Child's pose



Rest your chest to your thighs and stay there for six slow, deep breaths for some moments of calm. The pose helps bring the mind's focus inward by tuning out external distractions, Malloy says.

Legs up the wall



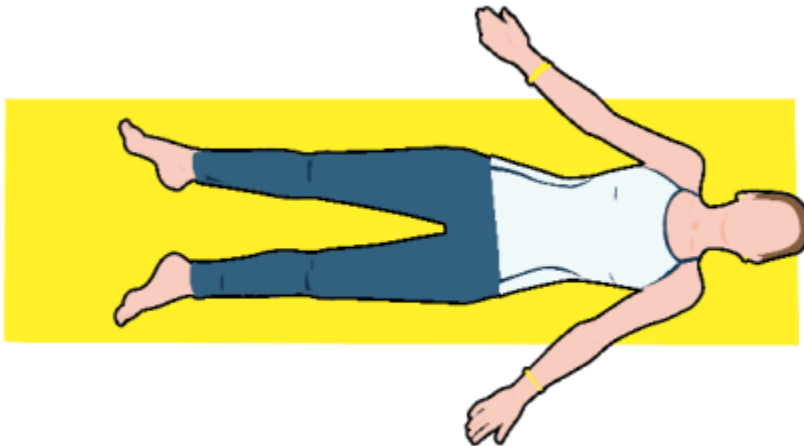
This restorative pose reduces stress and fatigue, Malloy says. Stay there for about five minutes.

Supine twist



Do a supine twist on both sides to balance the body and release spinal tension.

Corpse pose



The most beloved part of any yoga class is *savasana*, or corpse pose. "It lowers blood pressure and heart rate, and it teaches you how to relax as a preparation for sleep," says Malloy. Rest here for about five minutes.

On the web at <http://time.com/4757902/yoga-poses-sleep/?iid=sr-link1>