

A close-up photograph of a person's hands rolling up a teal yoga mat on a light-colored wooden floor. The mat is partially unrolled, and the person's hands are positioned to roll it up. The background is slightly blurred, showing the person's legs in dark clothing.

# Yoga and osteoporosis: suggestions for safe and appropriate practice

Dr. Caitlin McArthur

Registered Physiotherapist, PhD

Postdoctoral Fellow – GERAS Centre for Aging Research, McMaster University

[mcarthurc@hhsc.ca](mailto:mcarthurc@hhsc.ca)

 [@McArthurCaitlin](https://twitter.com/McArthurCaitlin)

# Objectives:

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1. Discuss the overall principles of a safe yoga culture
2. Provide an overview of what movements in yoga practice should be modified and why they should be modified for people with osteoporosis
3. Provide suggestions for yoga postures that should be encouraged, modified, and avoided





<https://www.bonefit.ca/bonefit-map-locator/>

Overall considerations  
for yoga

1. Consult a physiotherapist if you are new to yoga, have a history of spine fractures, or you are feeling uncertain about what to do.



## Overall considerations for yoga

2. Seek out a yoga class designed for people with osteoporosis and other health conditions (e.g., osteoarthritis), and ensure your instructor has proper training for working with this population.

<https://www.yogaalliance.org/Directory>

# Overall considerations for yoga

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3. Make sure your yoga instructor knows you have osteoporosis



# Overall considerations for yoga

4. Focus on controlled movements, and less on intensity of the postures.

Yoga is not about competition between you and the person on the mat beside you, so work at your own level and pace. Injuries can occur when you try to force yourself into extreme positions.





## Some things you can think about:

- keep your balance steady: focus on one point with your eyes and maintain firm contact with a support object (wall, ground, steady chair) with your feet and/or hands
- keep good alignment: try to keep your spine as tall, lengthened and as straight as possible throughout each posture and transitions between postures

<https://www.verywellfit.com/ball-workout-for-balance-and-strength-1230908>



<https://www.pinterest.co.uk/pin/451767406348053018/>

Modify any movements that:

- make you bend your spine forwards, backwards or twist as far as you can (example: rag doll)
- are done in sitting (example: seated twists)
- force your hip into full rotation (example: pigeon)



# Modify any spine movements that:



- are repetitive (doing a movement over and over – example: rolling like a ball)



- rapid (moving quickly – example: jumping your feet to your hands from downward facing dog)

<https://www.skimble.com/exercises/724-jump-or-step-legs-to-hands-how-to-do-exercise>

# Modify any spine movements that:



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yg47UxxV9Vc>

- weighted (holding a weight or something heavy while you do the movement, example: Russian twist with a dumbbell)



- any of the above in combination (e.g., repetitively bending forward as far as you can)

<http://yogaforhealthyaging.blogspot.com/2018/04/time-to-rethink-standing-forward-bend.html>



Sometimes its not the end position that makes the yoga posture a problem – it's how you get there!

Transitions are important, too!

# Why do I need to modify these movements?

- they put a lot of pressure on your spine and hip bones in ways that increase your risk of breaking a bone
- since osteoporosis already makes your bones more susceptible to being broken, you should try to decrease any other factors that could cause them to break





<https://www.yogajournal.com/poses/warrior-ii-pose>

Yoga postures you should continue to do with proper instruction and guidance:

- Corpse
- Bridge
- Warrior
- Mountain
- Chair
- Crocodile
- Sphinx
- Locust

# Yoga postures you should avoid:

- Spinal rocking
- Ragdoll
- Saw
- Plow
- Pigeon



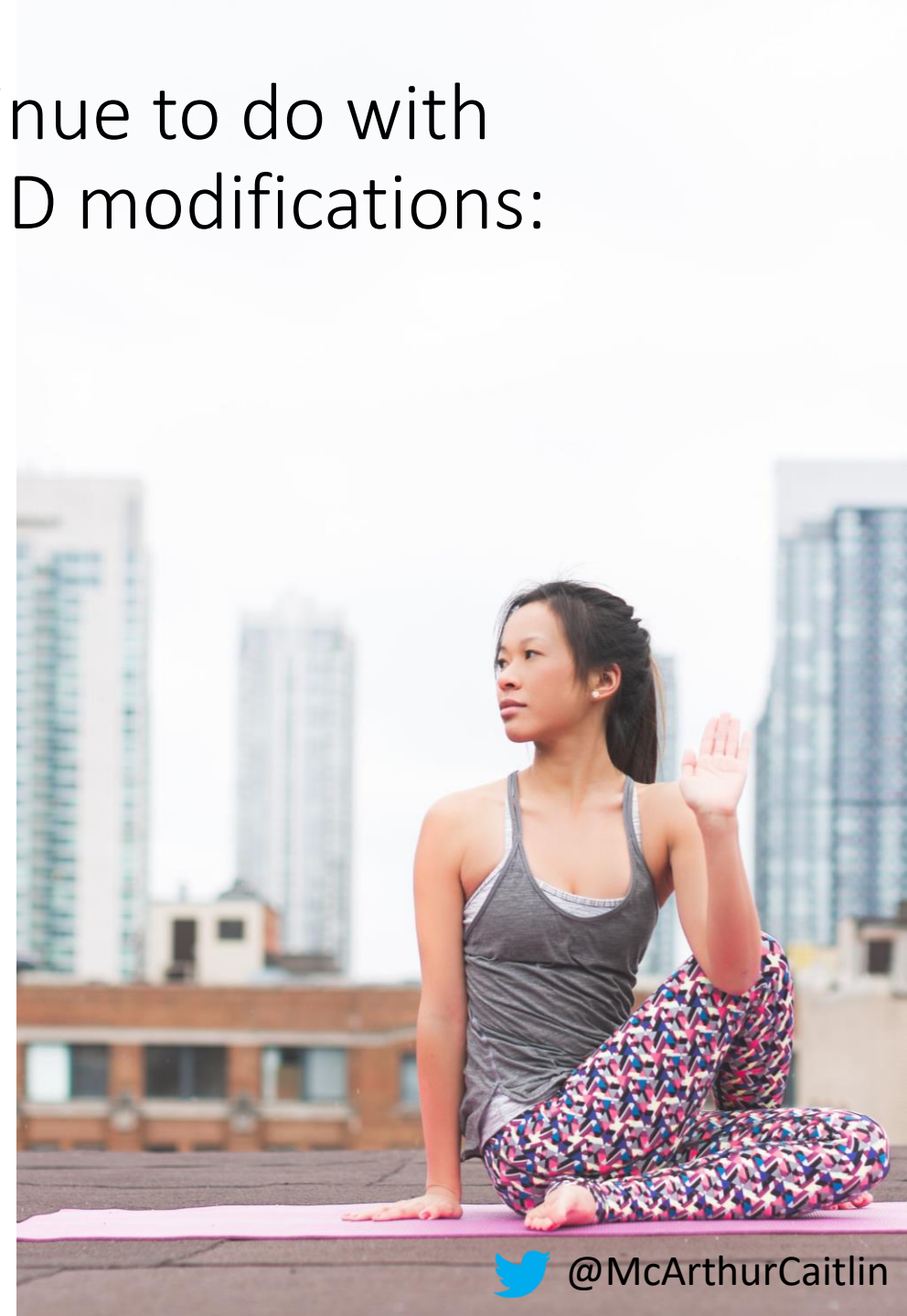
Yoga postures you should continue to do with proper guidance, instruction, AND modifications:

Child's Pose – put a yoga block under your head or place your forehead on stacked fists to avoid a rounded back



# Yoga postures you should continue to do with proper guidance, instruction, AND modifications:

Twists – don't go as far as you can, do them lying down instead of sitting: in a knees-down twist lying on your back, rest your knees on a nearby wall or folded blanket so you don't go too far





# Yoga postures you should continue to do with proper guidance, instruction, AND modifications:

Thread the needle – do it lying on your back, keep your head down on the ground to avoid a rounded back



[http://www.theyogaposes.com/yoga\\_poses.php?input\\_page=yoga-threading-the-needle-pose](http://www.theyogaposes.com/yoga_poses.php?input_page=yoga-threading-the-needle-pose)



Should I use props, like blocks, blankets, or yoga straps to help me?

What about  
chair yoga?

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What about hot yoga?

# Remember:

- Practice at your own pace, it is not a competition
- Seek out a yoga instructor who is trained
- Modify activities that include forward bending, rotation of the spine or forced rotation of the hip and that are repetitive, rapid, weighted, or combo
- Only use props if they help you stay aligned and keep your balance, not push further than you should



Thank you!

