

Love your feet and keep your whole body happy.

We communicate with the earth through our feet. The feet connect to the ground, the information from the nerves in the skin, connective tissue and joints travels up through the body to other nerves in skin, ligaments and joints to build whole body communication. This felt sense from our proprioceptors movement allows us to move fluidly throughout our day. It allows us to balance as we walk on many surfaces and without bumping into other people. We need to feel what our feet feel in order to stay mobile and healthy.

Our vertical alignment and our movements as vertical creatures are dependent on clear communication through our joints. There are 26 bones and 33 joints in each foot and approximately 206 bones in the whole body, so if our two feet make up 52 bones (our hands 54), that architecture becomes very important in informing the other bones (and joints) stacked above. Each one of the joint movements has a direct effect on the many movements of the bones and joints above (knee, hip and spine, etc.). When one joint is compromised, it affects all the joints in relationship to that joint. If you have ever sprained your ankle you remember how it impacted the whole body.

In addition to the bones, joints, ligaments and tendons and within the feet, there are arterioles moving into capillary beds (blood flow and oxygen exchange) and nerve fibers found throughout most tissues (skin, fascia, muscle, bone, tendons). This allows for nourished tissue from the blood and oxygen as well as healthy sensation and muscular action (nerve capacity). When the muscles and fascia are too tight or dense it affects access of blood into the area as well as nerve function. Injuries and surgeries may also freeze areas with scar tissue, fascial knitting, muscular bracing or systemic trauma response to the injury.

Increasing mobility and strength in our feet moves blood flow and fosters healthy nerve function as well as builds ankle stability and whole body balance. Foot mobility and strength gives our knees and hips many different ranges of support and movement and allows for more adaptability in our hips and through our spine.. There is a springiness and nourishment in the tissue from the skin cells to bone cells and everything in between. Regular movement decreases compression in the joints, and increases blood flow, lymph flow, nerve function and micro-nutrition as well as balancing and stabilizing our stature.

And I always find that it allows for a deeper breath.

I feel different in my body; lighter and more fluid. When I do my feet movements (they both like it even though foot sounds better); stretching, exploring many different ranges of motion, loading the feet in different shapes and bringing attention to my breath, I feel more able to listen to my body. My thoughts are more objective and my emotions are able to gently unfold, there is an evolution within my feeling awareness. A very tangible and helpful mind and body relationship, and an appreciation of what I have right inside of my skin and radiates from my heart.

9 movements to create change in your feet.

Here we get to put it into practice and you get to feel the results for yourself. Work your way up to being able to hold each pose for 10 breaths or more.

Slow inhale, slow exhale.

1. **ball rolling**

You can use the video the first time for the ball rolling. Remember to go slowly and breathe to allow your body time to relax into the pressure of the ball. Use a tennis ball or a lacrosse ball. Spend time on each part of the foot.

2. **calf stretch**

Roll up a sticky mat or a towel into a tube. One foot steps onto the roll with the heel on the floor and the foot draped over the shape of the roll. Other foot steps in front of the roll.



3. **top of toe stretches**

tops of the toes on the floor or blanket. You can start by sitting on a chair.



4. **virasana- hero's pose**

sitting on a prop(yoga block, folded blankets or towels) with your heels outside of your prop. Gentle stretch on toes, feet, shins, knees. Lift hips higher if u need



5. **vajrasana-** sitting on heels with toes turned under, and with toes straight. Use blanket under buttock if you need.



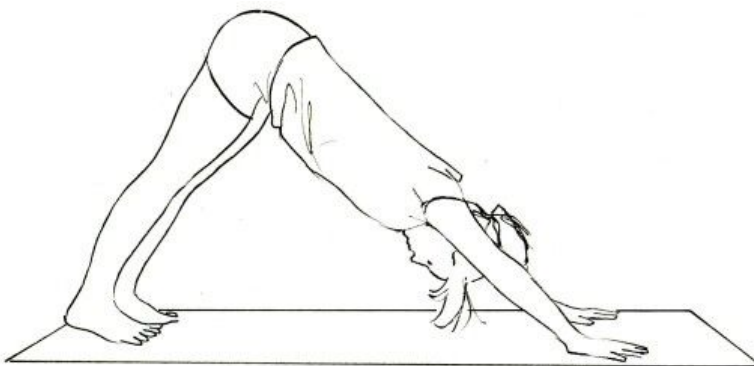
6. **squat-** heels can be on a blanket or blanket behind knees



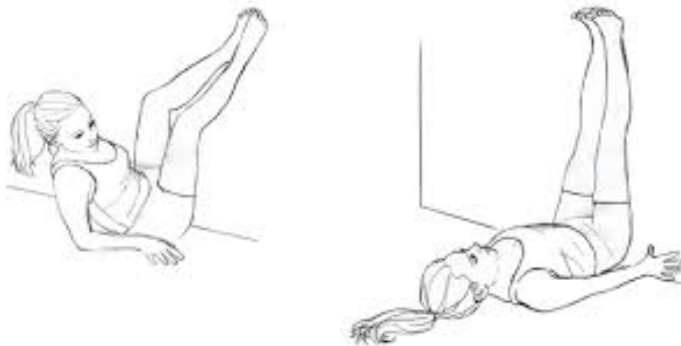
7. **baddha konasana** - cobblers pose, butterfly pose. Feet can press together as knees move apart. Helpers: hips on blanket, hands behind, hands in front or lying back.



8. **downward facing dog**- spread hands and feet and shift hips back to the hips, knees can be bent



9. **legs up the wall** – lay on the floor, legs up against the wall on a chair or edge of bed



Foot love!!

a few resources for feet

- [yamuna foot wakers](#)- comes with a video
- [whole body barefoot by Katy Bowman](#) - as well as videos, books, articles, shoes lists, etc
- [northwest foot and ankle](#)- find your diagnosis and matching non surgical treatments