



# Karuna Yoga Newsletter

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## YOGA THERAPY FORWARD TIPPED PELVIS

So, what is forward tipped pelvis (FTP syndrome)? If your spine is out of alignment, it's because the base that supports it - the pelvic bone - rotates down and forward. The pelvic bone is your largest bone and is responsible for supporting your entire body. If your spine is "leaning", it can cause bulging discs, tension inside your hips, pulled ligaments, over-stressed muscles, bone-on-bone grinding and nerve pressure (commonly felt as sciatica). I see many people with FTP syndrome. Have a look at yourself sideways in the mirror. Is your bottom pushing out backwards too much and causing an over-exaggerated curve in the lower back? Is the front of your body dropping forward? This is an indication that your pelvis is tipping forward.

FTP syndrome can cause pain because it's pulling your spine out of alignment. An imbalance in the muscles that connect to the pelvis allow it to rotate up, down, left or right and this causes the spine to lean with it. Some people try surgery to "fix" something, but if the underlying muscular imbalance is still there it will just cause trouble somewhere else.

The biggest reasons why FTP syndrome can occur are because the quadriceps are too strong, pulling the front of the pelvis down or the hamstrings are too weak, allowing the back of the pelvis to rise. The fix for FTP syndrome is simply to stretch the quadriceps and strengthen the hamstrings.

### **The Myth of "Throwing Out" Your Back**

Eventually the strain of imbalanced muscles can become too much. Something as simple as sneezing or reaching down into a cupboard can "throw out" your back. The imbalance would probably have been in existence for some time.

### **The Emotional Connection**

FTP syndrome is not the only underlying cause of back pain. Stress can cause severe back pain even when there's nothing wrong with your spine, discs, joints, muscles, or ligaments. An emotional trauma can result in stress in the muscles, causing them to "freeze". This "freezing" reduces the amount of oxygen in your body and slows the circulation of blood in certain areas, such as your back. Without the optimal level of oxygen from deep breathing and without natural body movement to keep the blood flowing, toxins get stuck within tight muscle tissue.

### **The Breath Connection**

Breathe well in your yoga practice, as without your yoga breathing your practices would not be yoga. Pranayama is not only energising but it increases the circulation of blood and keeps your temperature balanced. Stay hydrated as when you're dehydrated your blood doesn't have enough fluid to flush out all the toxins.

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## HOW TO ALLEVIATE FTP SYNDROME

### **TADASANA (mountain)**

Achieving the correct alignment in Tadasana is the first step. Start with your feet by moving forward, backward, right and left until your weight is balanced evenly on your feet. The main adjustment is to drop the sacrum and to lift the pubis toward the navel. Lift the top of your sternum without pushing your lower ribs forward. Balance the crown of your head directly above the centre of your pelvis.



DAVID MARTINEZ

### **TRIKONASANA (triangle)**

As you stretch to the side ensure that the front of your body is not pushing forward. Keep the same alignment as in Tadasana by dropping the sacrum and lifting the pubis toward the navel. Gently pull up the mula bandha and pull in the uddiyana bandha to maintain this correct alignment. Keep your weight evenly balanced on your feet.



RORY EARNshaw

### **ADHO MUKHA SVANASANA (downward dog)**

As you lift into this posture keep your knees bent and your heels lifted off the floor. Move up into the sitting bones and lengthen your tailbone away from the back of your pelvis. Avoid creating a big curve in your lower back. With an exhalation push your top thighs back and move your heels onto or down toward the floor, stretching the hamstrings. Straighten your knees but be sure not to lock them. Keep your head between your upper arms and don't let it hang.



MARTY SCODUTO

### **VIRABHADRASANA II (warrior II)**

This posture helps to strengthen the hamstrings. Exhale and bend your right knee over your right ankle. Your shin is perpendicular to the floor and, if possible, bring your right thigh parallel to the floor. Stretch your arms and keep the sides of your torso equally long and your shoulders directly over the pelvis. Press your tailbone slightly toward the pubis and lift toward your navel.



CHRIS ANDRE

### **VIRASANA (hero)**

Kneel on the floor with your thighs perpendicular to the floor. Your feet are slightly wider than your hips, with the tops of your feet flat on the floor. Sit back halfway and put your thumbs into the backs of your knees and draw the calf muscles toward your heels. Sit down between your feet using blocks if necessary with both sitting bones evenly supported. Feel the stretch in your quadricep muscles. Lengthen your tailbone into the floor to anchor the back of the body.



DAVID MARTINEZ

### **ANJANEYASANA (low lunge)**

Step your right foot forward aligning the knee over your heel. Slide your left leg backwards until you feel a comfortable stretch in your quadricep muscle. Inhale and lift your torso upright and stretch your arms up. Draw your tailbone down toward the floor and lift your pubic bone toward your navel. Stretch your little fingers toward the ceiling.



MARTY SCODUTO