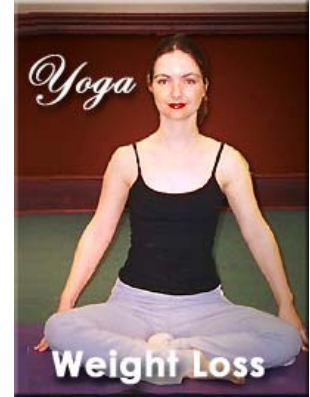


NEW APPROACH TO WEIGHT LOSS

by [Dr. Jason Cheng](#)

Excess weight gain stems from a combination of mental, physical, and even spiritual imbalances. Though we try to increase metabolism at the gym and decrease fat production with the newest diet fad, without a balanced approach and tool to unify these elements, long term balanced weight loss becomes merely a mirage.

Though yoga provides its immediate focus on awareness and posturing, its effects on breath, flexibility and strength-- the foundations of optimal weight control--are immediate. As you proceed with the asanas, or poses, focus on how each part of your body feels, and always remember to breathe; each time you repeat the exercise, you will feel different and learn something new. The continual experiencing and renewed awareness of each routine formulates the new and improved body you continually develop. Remember that doing these exercises, if done daily can be one of the many tools you can use to transform not just your fat zones, but also your digestion, your nutrition, and overall outlook on life!



1) SEATED POSE (Dandasana) FORWARD BEND

Though this pose may look simple, it is quite complex. Always focus on the alignment of the low back, the abdominal and thigh muscles. When done consciously, this pose can tone the entire body, the waist, and of course the abdominal muscles. An awareness of a proper seated pose will provide proper alignment for the subsequent poses in the seated sequence.

1. Sit with straight legs, completely upright on your sit bones. Make sure that you are not slouching your back.
2. You may want to sit on a blanket to keep your pelvis correctly aligned.
3. Make sure to flex your feet and extend them out through your heels, pulling your toes back towards you.
4. Keep the back of your thighs pressed firmly to the floor.
5. As always, lengthen your spine upward, as if someone was pulling you spine from the top of your head, while keeping your shoulder blades down.
6. Perform this initial pose for 5- 10 even paced long breaths.

2) SEATED CROSS LEG FORWARD BEND (Swastikasana)

1. Begin in a simple cross-legged position with your right leg folded in first with your left leg on the outside.
2. Stretch your arms behind you, placing your hands on the floor comfortably, with your fingertips turned away from your body.

3. As you inhale, lift your chest forward and up, while pulling up your shoulder blades down gently lifting your chin.
4. Take 3-5 long breaths.
5. As you exhale, walk your hands forward until you feel a comfortable stretch in your hips.
6. As you stretch, keep your shoulders down, your sit bones squarely on the floor. Feel as if your are lengthening your spine.
7. After you have taken 3-5 breaths, slowly walk your hands back up to the starting position.

3) SINGLED-LEG SEATED FORWARD BEND (Janusirsana)

1. Begin in a simple seated pose with arms to the sides, and legs forward, stretched, and relaxed.
2. Bend your right knee and place the sole of your right foot high on the inner thigh.
3. Slowly walk your hands down your extended leg until you feel a full stretch on your lower back. Do not force the stretch all the way for a full bend, but merely to a point of comfortable resistance.
4. As you perform the forward bend, keep your shoulder blades moving down your back and your abdominals fully engaged.
5. As you hold your foot/leg, lift your chest and continue breathing and lengthening your spine as you stretch the inner thigh and back of the bent thigh.
6. Breathe evenly for approx 5-10 slow breaths.
7. Inhale as you slowly walk your hand back up the stretched leg.
8. Change legs and repeat.

4) SEATED CROSS TWIST

1. Inhale and lengthen the spine.
2. As you exhale, twist the spine holding the position of comfort for 5 seconds. Concentrate on your breath and keeping your spine lengthened.
3. Inhale, then exhale while coming back to center. Repeat to the other side.

5) COW/CAT POSE (Marjarysana)

—stabilizing the mechanics between the all-important abdominals and their action with the spine.

1. Focus on keeping your hands under the shoulders and knees under your hips. This is the neutral position for cat pose. Inhale, and lengthen the spine...
2. As you exhale, pull your abdominals in and gradually lift your rib cage toward the sky while releasing your neck forward. This is Cat pose.
3. Inhale, then as you exhale focus on extending your spine into a Cow pose while keeping your head focused ahead.

Repeat this sequence alternating between Cat and Cow 5 times.

6) LEG EXTENSIONS

For focus on legs and buttocks:

1. As you inhale stretch one leg back
2. Exhale and bring the knee toward the chest.
3. Repeat this with each leg 2-3 times, then repeat this sequence with the other leg.

7) CHILD POSE (Balasana)

Begin in the neutral position as above. Inhale and lengthen your spine, then as you exhale move your hips back while dragging your arms forward in front of you. You should feel as if you are sitting on your heels. This allows your body to be supported by your thighs.

Note: if this is difficult for your ankles or knees, place a small rolled towel or cloth under your ankles to relieve the pressure on them.

Note: if the pose is uncomfortable for the neck or head, placing a small block under the forehead and stretch the arms forward.

8) MOUNTAIN TO VOLCANO POSE (Tadasana)

1. Feet comfortable distance apart.
2. Bring palms together to the heart and inhale bringing the arms above the head
3. Inhale arms to the sides, then bring the arms above the head.

Now imagine pushing off your legs and stretching for the sky from your heels up through your fingertips. Keep your spine and chest relaxed, and neck relaxed, guarding against forcing or creating tension. Also do not overextend or lock your knee and elbow joints.

Keep a slight backbend, allowing your chest to open slightly, revealing the openness of your soul to the world.

Time: 15 seconds to 1 minute

9) CHAIR POSE

1. Exhale release the arms, bending the knees folding at the hip forward.
2. Inhale and sweep the arms forward and parallel your arms to the ground.
3. Inhale and sweep the arms to the Prayer pose.

10) STANDING FORWARD BEND (Uttanasana)

1. Starting from Mountain Pose, inhale and bring your arms out to the sides and overhead.
2. As you exhale release your arms to the sides and fold forward pivoting from your hips dropping your hands and head down toward the ground.

3. Note: if your hamstrings are too tight to fold all the way down, place a brick for leverage.

11) LUNGE

1. Exhale and walk to the right for lunge pose, making sure your feet are pointed towards the right, in the direction you are looking forward. Keep the toes of your back foot turned under as your lengthen the back leg and spine as if they are pulling from each other. Focus on keeping your weight primarily on your front foot.

Hold this for 3-5 breaths.

2. Press into your forward heel, pushing your body away and turn your back leg into a standing forward bend.
3. Repeat this pose towards the other side.

Note: if you are unable to stretch fully, focus on the lunge with the arms balanced on two bricks.

12) WIDE LEG DOWNWARD FACE

1. From the wide legged forward bend, walk your hands forward while pushing back with your back legs and pushing the floor away from you. This is an excellent way of stretching the hamstrings, knees, and shoulders. Continue this for 5-10 breaths.
2. Finish the pose by walking back into wide-legged forward bend, then up to mountain pose.

13) WARRIOR POSE 1 (Virabhrdrasana 1)

1. Step the back foot approximately 3-4 feet. They should be spaced about shoulders width.
2. As you turn toward the right, your knee, hip, and feet should be all facing the same direction.
3. Inhale and bring your arms overhead, and as you exhale bend your right knee lowering your body.
4. Raise your head looking toward the sky with your hands.
5. Hold for 5-10 breaths.
6. Repeat on the other side.

14) WARRIOR 2 (PROUD) POSE:

(Virabhrdrasana 2)—strengthens the joints around hips, buttocks, and knee.

1. Turn the right foot out, the left foot in. Inhale and bring arms up half way.
2. Bend the right knee over the right foot, coming into Warrior 2 Pose.
3. As always keep the back foot strongly rooted to the ground.
4. Keep your pelvis and shoulders level.
5. Make sure to keep knees and feet pointing the same direction.

Hold for 5-10 breaths, and repeat to the other side.

15) TRIANGLE POSE: (Trikonasana)

1. Beginning in mountain pose, step your feet 3-4 feet apart.

2. Turning your right foot out, raise your arms shoulder height.
3. Inhale, then as you exhale rotate and extend your side body out over your right leg.
4. When the spine is lengthened fully in position, rotate your chest upward so that your left shoulder blade moves as if you were against a wall. This will help you keep your alignment optimized.
5. Focus on the stretch in your hamstring and opening of your hip as you stretch your body out and up.
6. Note: if looking up is too strenuous, then look at the floor or just straight in front.
7. Note: utilize the block if your hamstrings are too tight.

16) EXTENDED SIDE STRETCH: (Parsvokonasana)

1. With feet shoulders apart, inhale and brings arms apart. Turn the right foot and knee outward from the thing. Inhale and raise the arms shoulder height, keeping shoulders down.
2. As you exhale, bend the right knee over the right foot. Lengthen the right side rotating your spine as you place your right hand on either the mat or a brick, depending on your level of flexibility .
3. Hold for 5-10 breaths.

17) WIDE LEG DOWNWARD FACE

1. From the wide legged forward bend, walk your hands forward while pushing back with your back legs and pushing the floor away from you. This is an excellent way of stretching the hamstrings, knees, and shoulders. Continue this for 5-10 breaths.
2. Finish the pose by walking back into wide-legged forward bend, then up to mountain pose.

18) HERO'S POSE: (Virasana)

1. If you cannot sit comfortable on your legs and feet, utilize a brick. Focus on elongating the spine while sinking the tailbone into the earth.
2. Note: do not put undue strain on your knees, and do not roll your ankles or feet to either inside or outside.

19) COBRA WITH LEG BEND

From the lying cobra position with palms facing down, slowly bend one leg up while lifting the head and neck up simultaneously. Then slowly release the pose back to a lying cobra. *Do this for 4 times, and then switch sides.*

20) LOCUST POSE

(Salabhasana)

1. From Child's pose, use your arms to push up and lie on your belly.
2. Stretch the fingertips towards the toes and lift from the spine as the head and legs stretch up into a modified Locust Pose.
3. Inhale and release the arms, legs and feet back down.

4. Feel as if you are lifting your belly and body away from the floor, feeling the stretch from the crown of your head down into the tips of your toes.
5. Inhale, and release as you exhale.
6. You may end this pose with a stretch into child's pose.

21) BRIDGE POSE: (Setu Bandhasana)

Excellent for gluteals, inner thighs and low back strengthening.

1. Lying on your back, keep your heels in line with your sit bones and shoulders down, with the spine flat and long on the mat.
2. Inhale, and exhale pressing the heels down to lift your hips off the floor.
3. Maintain good tone by keeping your tailbone directed towards your hip.
4. Utilize the strength of the thighs to keep the alignment of the upper body and lower body.
5. The weight should be on shoulders, arms, and feet.
6. As you exhale, slowly unzip the spine from top to bottom lowering segment by segment.

22) CORPSE

Distribute your weight evenly, allowing your hands, shoulder blades, pelvis, hips, all symmetrically contact the ground. Feel the sense of your natural curves, noting where you naturally contact the ground and where you naturally don't. Those with low back pain frequently are unable to have the low back contact the ground.

Rest and observe for a minimum of 2 minutes