

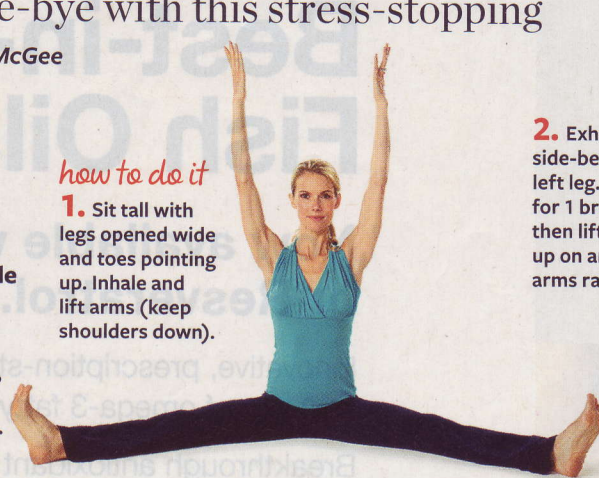
Instant Tension Tamer

Bid holiday frazzle bye-bye with this stress-stopping series of poses. By *Kristin McGee*

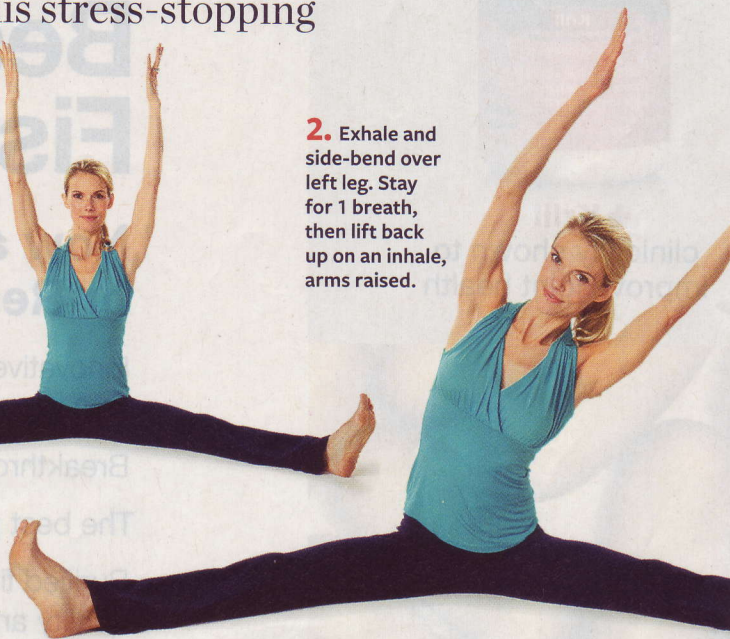
EVEN THE MOST DEDICATED yogini can get lured into the frenetic pace of this season ... and end up completely stressed out. My antidote is this series of soothing poses: **Wide Straddle Side Stretch** to **Seated Forward Bend** to **Star Pose**. Doing it loosens tension in your neck, shoulders, back, hips, and thighs, and allows you to focus completely on your own soothing breath. Allowing the world to melt away like that is just about the best present you can give to yourself, so do this series any time you feel overtaxed or overwhelmed.

how to do it

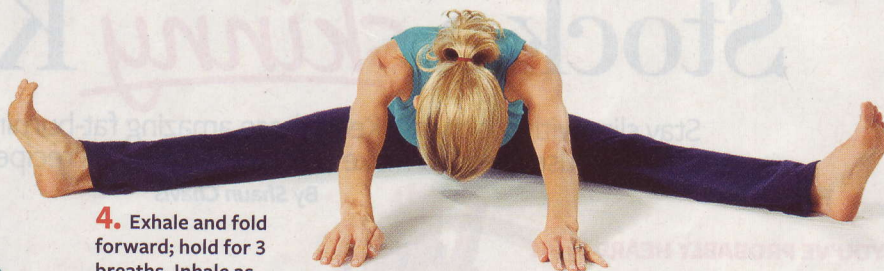
1. Sit tall with legs opened wide and toes pointing up. Inhale and lift arms (keep shoulders down).



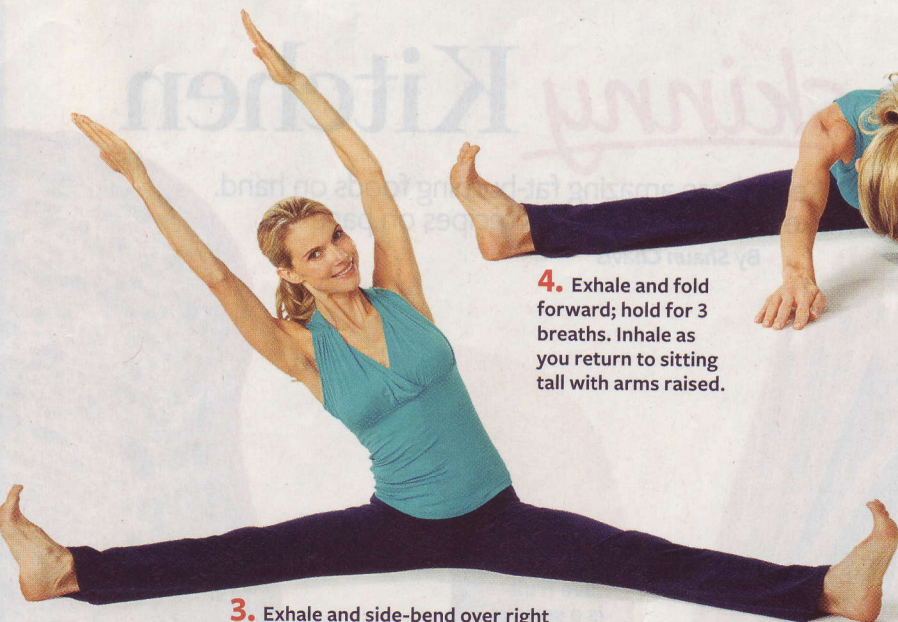
2. Exhale and side-bend over left leg. Stay for 1 breath, then lift back up on an inhale, arms raised.



4. Exhale and fold forward; hold for 3 breaths. Inhale as you return to sitting tall with arms raised.



3. Exhale and side-bend over right leg. Stay for 1 breath, then lift back up again on an inhale, arms raised.



5. Lower arms, bend knees, and bring feet together to form a diamond. Exhale as you round forward and down; stay for 8-10 slow, deep breaths, then inhale as you slowly round back up. 