

## This week's posture/asana – **Camel**

**This week's saying/thought** - Call upon the camel for strength, endurance and protection.

**Sanskrit** - Ustrasana

**Modifications** - Place a thickly folded blanket under knees ♦ Warm up with Sphinx and Cobra pose (gentle backbend)

**Precautions** - Headache ♦ Low blood pressure ♦ Pregnancy ♦ Neck injury ♦ Use Yoga Blocks



**Benefits** - Chest, neck & spine stretch ♦ Calms the brain ♦ Helps alleviate stress ♦ Stimulates abdominal organs, lungs & thyroid ♦ Rejuvenates legs ♦ Improves digestion ♦ Helps menopause ♦ Relieves menstrual discomfort ♦ Reduces anxiety, fatigue, backache, headache & insomnia ♦ Therapeutic for asthma, HBP, osteoporosis & sinusitis.

There are some poses you can get away with rushing, but this isn't one of them! Ask you students to imagine they are performing "camel" in the desert. It's really, really hot, so you do it really, really slowly.

### steps

**1)** Kneel on floor with knees hip width & thighs perpendicular to floor. Keep outer hips soft. Press shins & tops of feet into floor.

**2)** Rest hands on back of pelvis, bases of the palms on the tops of the buttocks, fingers pointing down. Inhale & lift heart by pressing the shoulder blades against back ribs.

**3)** Lean back against firmness of tail bone & shoulder blades. Keep head up, chin near the sternum & your hands on the pelvis.

**4)** Lift front of pelvis toward ribs. Lift lower back ribs away from pelvis to keep lower spine as long as possible. Press palms firmly against soles (or heels), with bases of palms on heels & fingers pointing toward toes. Turn arms outwardly so elbow creases face forward. Keep neck in a neutral position, neither flexed nor extended or drop head back.

**5)** Stay for 10 to 60 seconds. To exit, bring hands onto the front of pelvis, at hip points. Inhale & lift head & torso by pushing hip points down. If head is back, lead with heart to come up.

