20 postures for a healthy heart

Yoga is the art of reposing in different postures while keeping focus on the breath. As a result, every yoga posture has a particular effect on the respiratory system; and therefore affecting the heart as well.  
  
The following postures begin with mild ones, gradually increasing to more demanding ones that require greater stamina and strength. The body gets relaxed and rejuvenated with the concluding postures.

## 1. Tadasana (Mountain pose)

The Mountain pose helps strengthen the heart and also adds flexibility to the body.

## 2. [Vrikshasana (Tree pose)](http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/yoga-poses/tree-pose-vrikshasana)

The Tree pose calms and brings equilibrium to the mind. Reposing in this yoga pose is useful as a calm mind leads to a steady and healthy heart functioning.

## 3. Utthita Hastapadasana (Extended Hands and Feet Pose)

This yoga posture requires more focus and strength to balance.

## 4. [Trikonasana (Triangle pose)](http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/yoga-poses/triangle-pose-trikonasana)

This is a heart opening standing yoga posture designed to promote cardiovascular exercise. The chest gets expanded while breathing deep and in rhythm increases stamina.

## 5. [Veerabhadrasana (Warrior pose)](http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/yoga-poses/warrior-pose-virbhadrasana)

The Warrior pose improves balance in the body and increases stamina. It also releases stress while calming the mind and helps keep the heart rate in check.

## 6. [Utkatasana(Chair pose)](http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/yoga-poses/chair-pose-utkatasana)

In this yoga posture, you can feel the heart and respiration rate increase. It is a heating and strengthening posture.

## 7. [Marjariasana (Cat pose)](http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/yoga-poses/cat-stretch-marjariasana)

This yoga posture is a welcome relief after the Chair pose as it allows the heart rate to settle and become soft and rhythmic again.

## 8. [Adho Mukho Svanasana (Downward facing dog pose)](http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/yoga-poses/downward-facing-dog-pose-adho-mukha-svanasana)

This yoga posture is used as a resting position as it calms the system and energises the body.

## 9.[Bhujangasana (Cobra pose)](http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/yoga-poses/cobra-pose-bhujangasana)

This yoga posture increases the stretch to the chest and requires more strength and stamina than the Sphinx pose.

## 10. [Dhanurasana (Bow pose)](http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/yoga-poses/bow-pose-dhanurasana)

Stimulating and a deep stretch for the whole body, the Bow pose opens and strengthens the heart region.

## 11. [Setu Bandhasana (Bridge pose)](http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/yoga-poses/bridge-posture-setu-bandhasana)

Less demanding than Bow pose, the Bridge pose facilitates deep breathing, opens and improves blood flow to the chest region.

## 12. Salamba Sarvangasana (Half Shoulder stand)

The Half shoulder stand pacifies, activates the parasympathetic nervous system and creates space in the chest. It is a restful and rejuvenating posture.

## 13. [Ardha Matsyendrasana (Sitting Half Spinal Twist)](http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/yoga-poses/sitting-half-spinal-twist-ardha-matsyendrasana)

The Sitting half spinal twist works on the whole spine and opens the chest sides alternately.

## 14. [Paschimottanasana (Two-legged forward bend)](http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/yoga-poses/seated-forward-bend-paschimottanasana)

Serving as a resting posture, the seated forward bend brings the head lower than the heart facilitating the reduction of the heart rate and respiration while allowing the system to rest.

## 15. Dandasana (Stick pose)

Countering the previous postures, this yoga posture facilitates good posture, strengthens the back and at the same time stretches the shoulders and chest.

## 16. Dolphin pose

The Dolphin pose is a little more demanding than Downward facing dog pose as it helps by increasing stamina and strengthening the upper body in preparation for more heart opening postures.

## 17. Dolphin plank

The Dolphin plank pose gets the heart pumping again.

## 18. Sphinx pose

The Sphinx pose allows the chest to open again. It is a mild backbend that gently opens the chest, stretches the lungs and shoulders.

## 19. [Shavasana (Corpse pose)](http://www.artofliving.org/in-en/yoga-poses/corpse-pose-shavasana)

Deep rest is the counter pose for all yoga postures as it allows the body and breath to make the subtle adjustments necessary for the overall health of the system.

## 20. Anjali Mudra

The Anjali mudra opens the heart, calms the brain and reduces stress and anxiety. It also prepares the body better for pranayama and meditation.

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