

# FLEX YOUR POWER

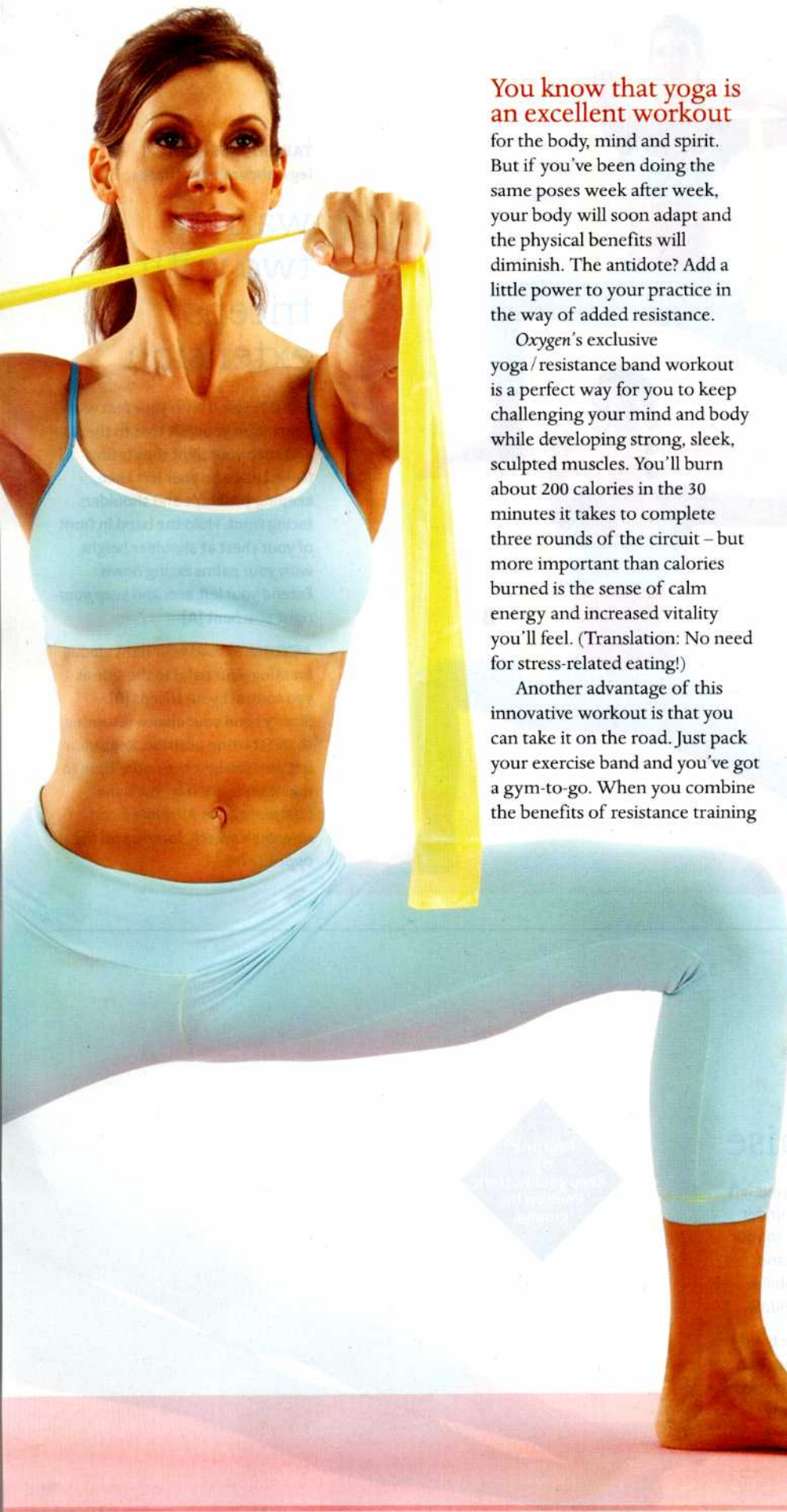
Boost the benefits of your yoga practice with this *Oxygen*-exclusive resistance band workout that will help you increase flexibility, decrease stress and sculpt a strong, sleek physique in as little as four weeks.

BY PEGGY HALL | PHOTOGRAPHY COREY SORENSEN

## Your Plan »

Exercise	Sets	Reps
1. Warrior two with triceps extension	3	12–15 per side
2. Side plank with lateral raise	3	10–12 per side
3. Boat pose with shoulder press	3	12–15
4. Warrior one lunge with pulldown	3	10–12 per side
5. Chair pose with biceps curl	3	12–15
6. Warrior three with mid-back row	3	10–12 per leg
7. Bridge pose with glute activator	3	12–15 per leg

See results in as little as four weeks.



## You know that yoga is an excellent workout

for the body, mind and spirit. But if you've been doing the same poses week after week, your body will soon adapt and the physical benefits will diminish. The antidote? Add a little power to your practice in the way of added resistance.

Oxygen's exclusive yoga/resistance band workout is a perfect way for you to keep challenging your mind and body while developing strong, sleek, sculpted muscles. You'll burn about 200 calories in the 30 minutes it takes to complete three rounds of the circuit – but more important than calories burned is the sense of calm energy and increased vitality you'll feel. (Translation: No need for stress-related eating!)

Another advantage of this innovative workout is that you can take it on the road. Just pack your exercise band and you've got a gym-to-go. When you combine the benefits of resistance training

with the ancient wisdom of yoga, you're developing a deep mind/body connection that will leave you looking good – and feeling great.

Warm up first with a few rounds of sun salutations or some light jogging in place to get your blood flowing and your body and mind primed for more rigorous activity.

Perform each move in the order listed, without resting. Move through your full range of motion to increase your flexibility. Adjust the tension on the band so you'll feel challenged as you complete the number of prescribed reps. After you've completed the circuit, take a minute to catch your breath and repeat the moves once or twice more.

Do this routine three times a week on non-consecutive days and add in three 30-minute sessions of your favorite cardio every week for a well-rounded fitness program, and you'll see visible results in as little as four weeks.

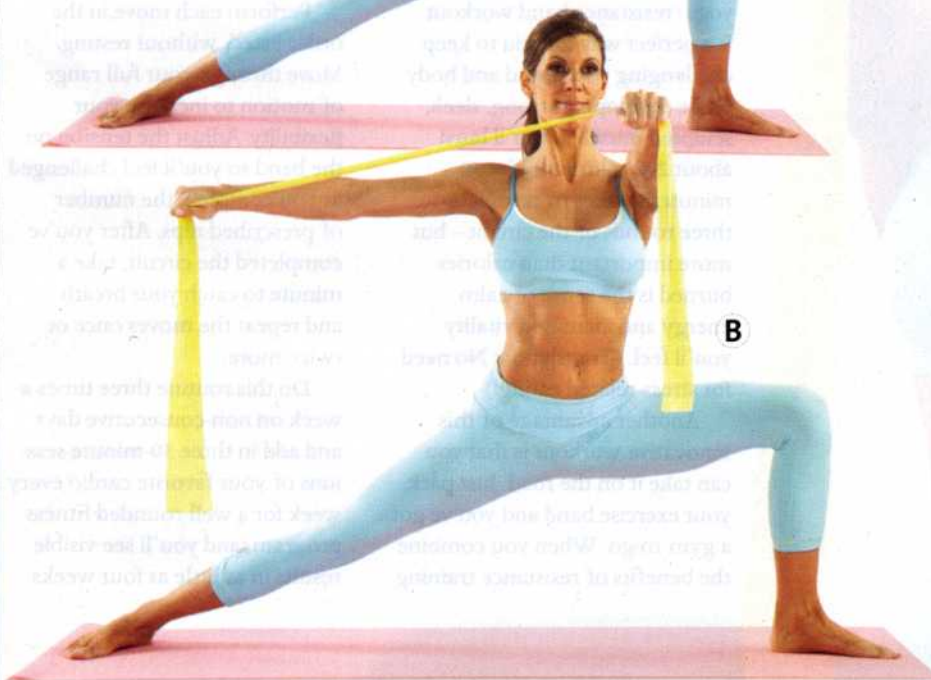
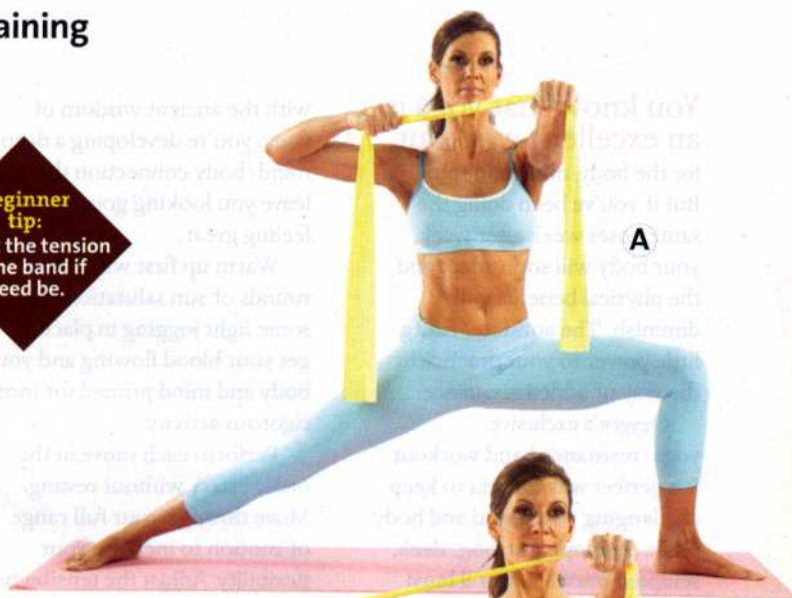


## Poker Face

Born and raised in Minnesota where she went to school to be a sports reporter, model and actress Suzanne Freeman now lives and works in Los Angeles. She appeared during the second season of ABC's *The Bachelor* and was co-host of *Poker Royale* on the Game Show Network.

**beginner tip:**

Adjust the tension in the band if need be.



**TARGET MUSCLES:**  
legs, abdominals, triceps

## warrior two with triceps extension

**SET UP:** Stand with your feet wide apart. Turn your left toes to the side and keep your right toes facing front. Lunge on your left knee, keeping your hips and shoulders facing front. Hold the band in front of your chest at shoulder height with your palms facing down. Extend your left arm and keep your right arm bent [A].

**ACTION:** Extend your right elbow, pressing your palm to the side as you contract your triceps [B]. Slowly bend your elbow, returning to the starting position. Keep your left arm straight the entire time to maintain tension on the band. Complete 12 to 15 reps on one side, then switch, lunging on the opposite leg.

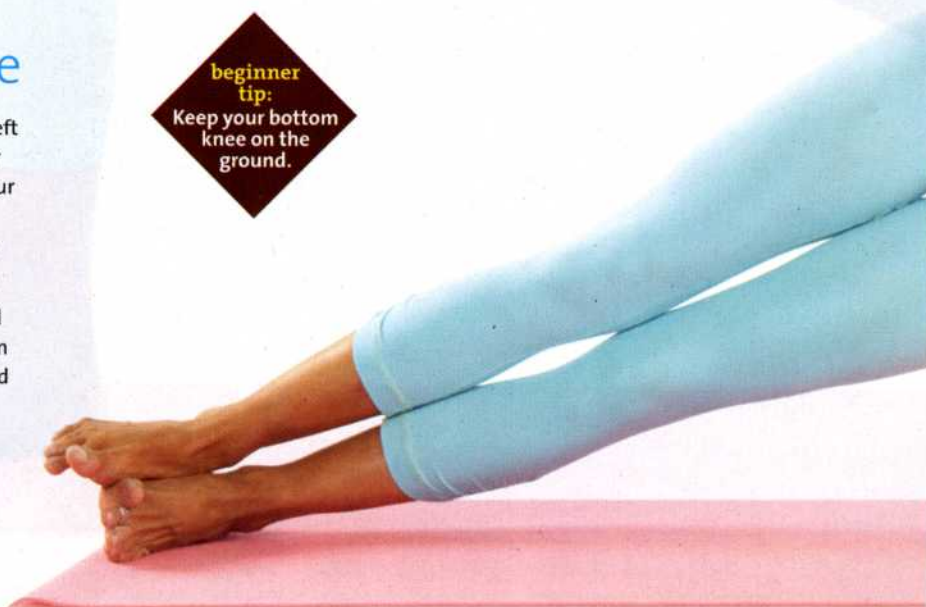
**TARGET MUSCLES:**  
obliques, medial and posterior delts

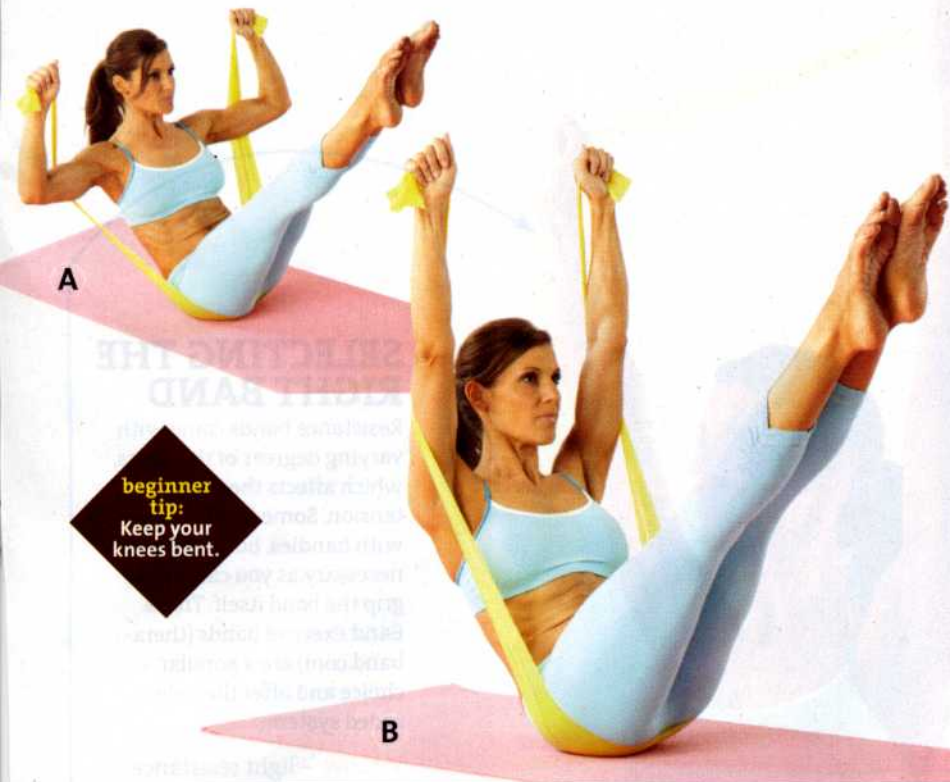
## side plank with lateral raise

**SET UP:** Come into a side plank on your left side and place one end of the band under your left hand [A]. Extend your legs so your feet are in line with your shoulders and keep your abdomen engaged to stabilize your spine. Avoid sagging in your middle.

**ACTION:** Clasp the other end of the band with your right hand and extend your arm toward the ceiling, until your palm is lined up over your right shoulder [B]. Slowly lower to the starting position, keeping your legs extended the entire time. Do 10 to 12 reps on each side.

**beginner tip:**  
Keep your bottom knee on the ground.





A

B

**beginner tip:**  
Keep your knees bent.

**TARGET MUSCLES:**  
abdominals, anterior delts

## boat pose with shoulder press

**SET UP:** Sit on the band. Draw your knees together and extend your legs, lifting your feet to eye level. Keep your abdomen engaged to support your spine. Clasp the band and bend your elbows with your palms at shoulder level, facing forward [A].

**ACTION:** Extend your elbows and press your hands skyward, executing the press [B]. Bend your elbows to return to the starting position. Do 12 to 15 reps.



A

B

**TARGET MUSCLES:**  
quads, lats

## warrior one lunge with lat pulldown

**SET UP:** Grasp the band with an overhand grip, extend your arms overhead and step forward with your left foot. Turn your back foot out slightly, keeping your heel on the floor. Try to keep your hips and chest facing your front leg and keep your back leg straight.

**ACTION:** Squeeze your elbows toward your waist, bringing the band behind your head. At the same time, lunge on your front leg, bending your left knee to 90 degrees. Then straighten your leg and extend your arms to return to the starting position. *Do 10 to 12 reps on one side, then switch.*

**beginner tip:**  
Shorten your stance if necessary.

### SELECTING THE RIGHT BAND

Resistance bands come with varying degrees of thickness, which affects the level of tension. Some bands come with handles, but they're not necessary as you can simply grip the band itself. Thera Band exercise bands (theraband.com) are a popular choice and offer this color-coded system:

- YELLOW** – light resistance
- RED** – medium resistance
- GREEN** – high resistance
- BLUE AND BLACK** – very high resistance

Start with a medium resistance and make it more challenging if need be by adjusting your grip on the band. Shortening the length of the band will result in stronger resistance.





**beginner tip:**  
Place the band under one foot for less resistance.

**TARGET MUSCLES:**  
quads, glutes, biceps

## chair pose with biceps curl

**SET UP:** Stand on the band with your feet two or three inches apart and your toes pointing straight ahead. Grasp the ends of the band with your palms facing up. Bend your knees and lower your hips, but keep your chest lifted and back straight [A].

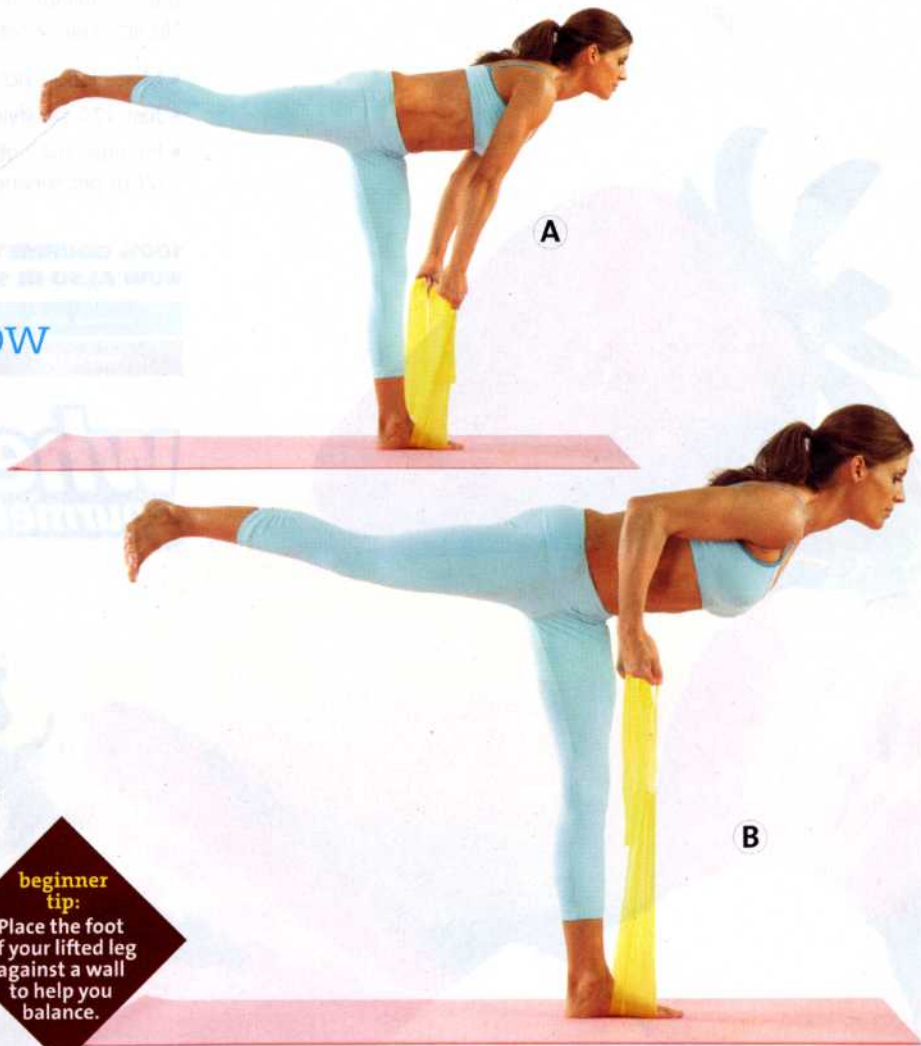
**ACTION:** Hug your elbows to the sides of your waist with your palms facing forward. Curl your palms toward your shoulders, squeezing your biceps as you complete the contraction [B]. Slowly lower, working the eccentric portion of the move to help elongate your muscles.  
Do 12 to 15 reps.

**TARGET MUSCLES:**  
glutes, hamstrings, abdominals, back

## warrior three with mid-back row

**SET UP:** Place the band under your left foot and grasp the band with your palms facing each other. Extend your right leg behind you and lower your torso until it's parallel to the ground, keeping your head, hips and heel on the same plane. [A]

**ACTION:** Bend your elbows, drawing your hands toward the bottom of your rib cage. Initiate the movement with your back muscles and squeeze your shoulder blades together at the peak of the contraction [B]. Extend your arms to return to the starting position. Keep your leg lifted and your abs engaged the entire time. Complete 10 to 12 rows on one leg, then switch.



**beginner tip:**  
Place the foot of your lifted leg against a wall to help you balance.

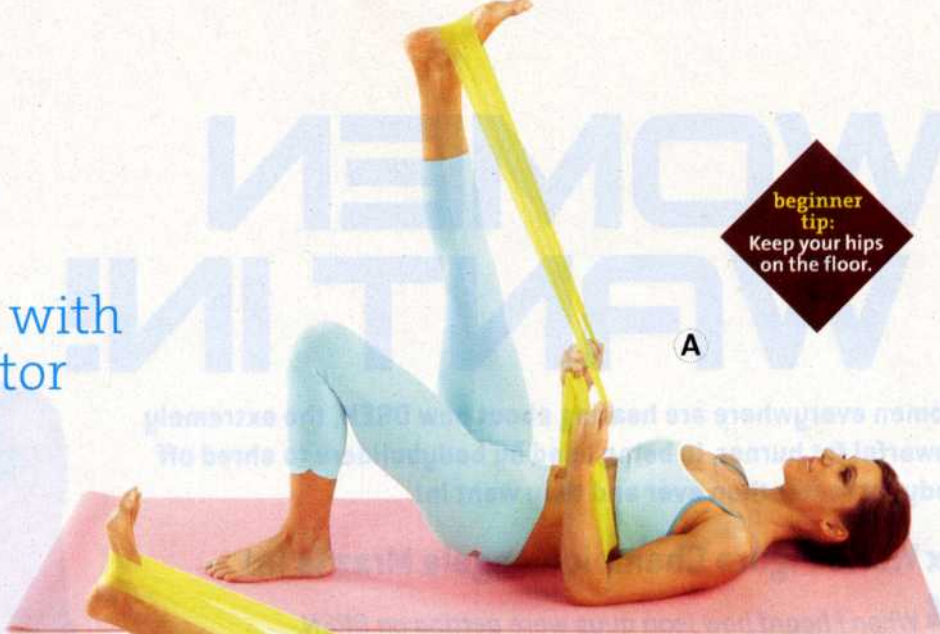
**TARGET MUSCLES:**  
glutes, hamstrings

## bridge pose with glute activator

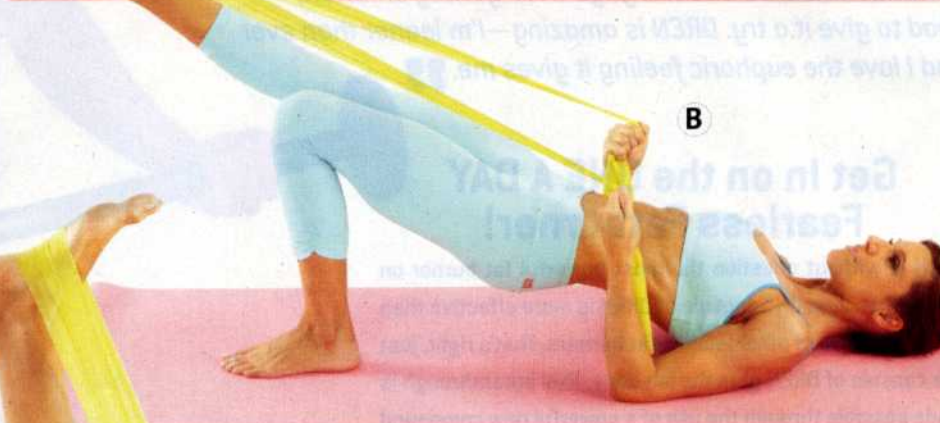
**SET UP:** Lie on your back, bend your knees and take the band around the bottom of your right foot. Straighten your right leg and extend it toward the ceiling. Press into your left foot and lift your hips off the floor just a couple of inches [A].

**ACTION:** Keeping your hips lifted and constant tension on the band, slowly lower your right leg until your right knee comes in line with your left knee (about 45 degrees) [B]. Really pull with the back of your leg, feeling the contraction where your glute meets your hamstring. Extend your leg overhead to complete the action [C]. Do 12 to 15 reps on one leg, then switch.

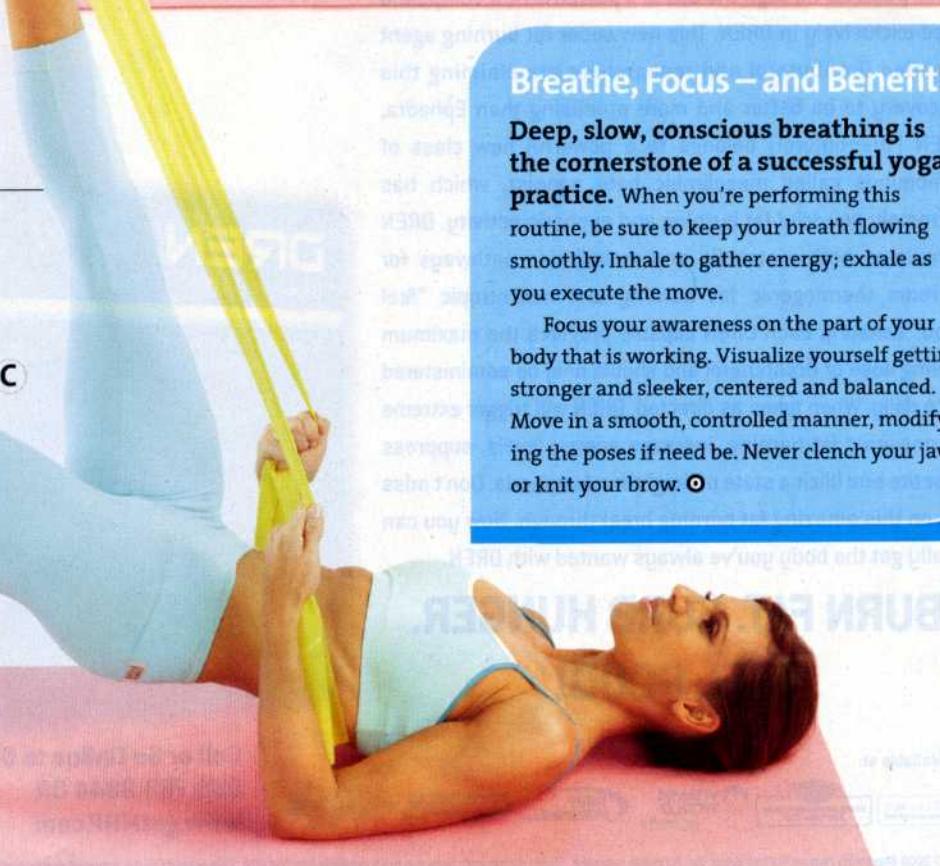
**beginner tip:**  
Keep your hips on the floor.



A



B



C

### Breathe, Focus – and Benefit!

Deep, slow, conscious breathing is the cornerstone of a successful yoga practice. When you're performing this routine, be sure to keep your breath flowing smoothly. Inhale to gather energy; exhale as you execute the move.

Focus your awareness on the part of your body that is working. Visualize yourself getting stronger and sleeker, centered and balanced. Move in a smooth, controlled manner, modifying the poses if need be. Never clench your jaw or knit your brow. ☉