



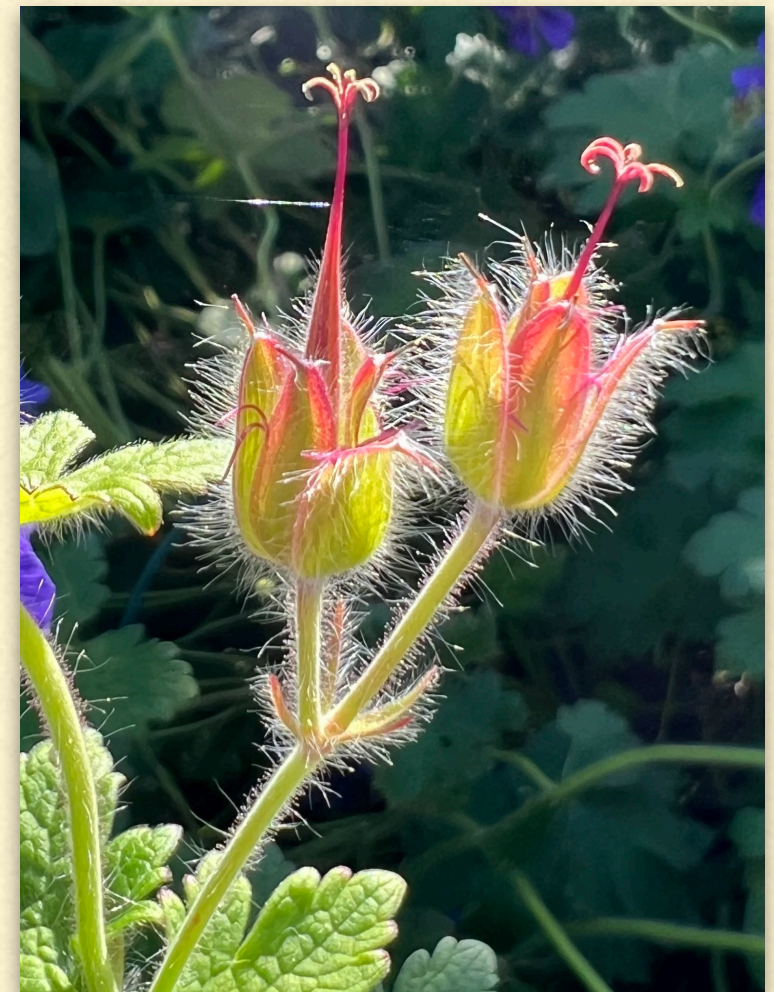
Yoga Therapy for hEDS
**Yoga practices and possibilities
for people with hEDS**

Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

Again... Some possible areas to explore in yoga therapy for hEDS:

1. **Pain relief** *exploring various practices, seeing what seems to help*
2. **Proprioception** *strengthening awareness of body movement and body positioning, focused on the Somatic Nervous System*
3. **Interoception:** *clarifying and calming internal signals from the Autonomic Nervous System*
4. **Strengthening muscles** *to protect joints*
5. **Stretching muscles gently** *to mid-range or less*
6. **Postural alignment** *for better breathing*
7. **Balance** *and help with vertigo, dizziness*
8. **Digestion**, *gastric issues*
9. **Allergies and congestion** *(with Mast Cell Activation Syndrome)*
10. **Healthy circulation** *(especially with Chronic Venous Insufficiency)*
11. **Mental clarity and emotional well-being**
12. **Good rest, restored energy**



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for pain relief)*

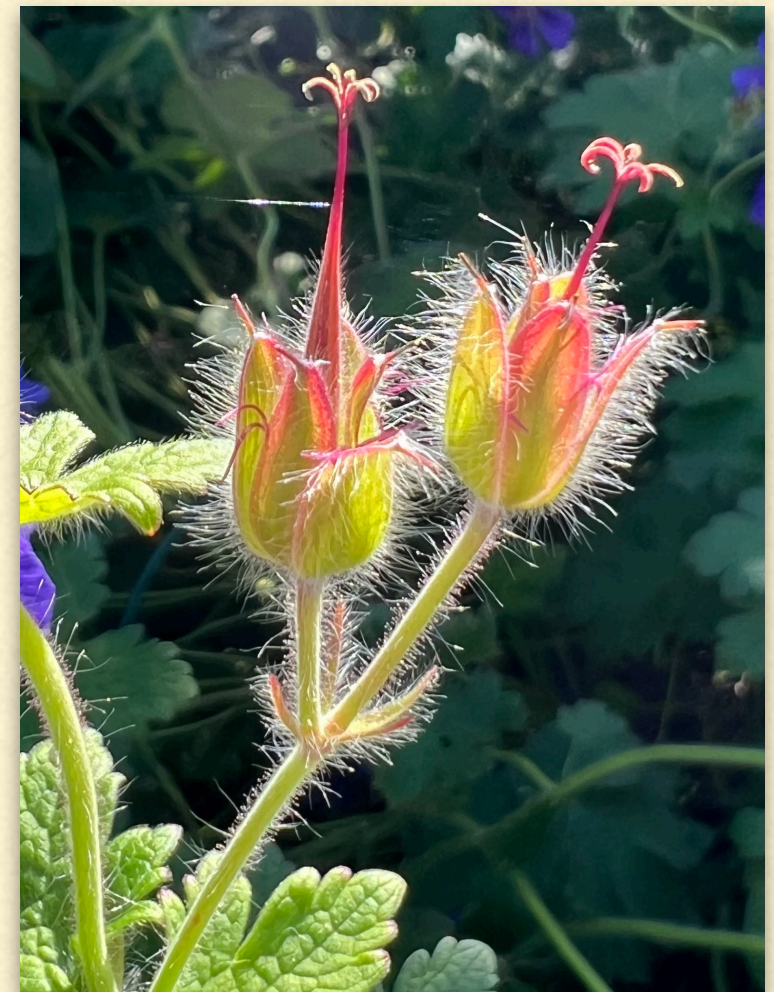
1. Pain reduction.

One way to relieve some of the pain from hEDS may be to release chronic muscular tension through *pandiculations*:

In a pandiculation you contract and then very slowly release a muscle, or a set of muscles, a few times—in order to release tension and teach the muscle to stay more released when resting.

Particular pandiculations are designed to help ease pain from specific conditions caused by the lax connective tissues and vulnerable joints of hEDS.

The following pages include a series of pandiculation sequences relevant to hEDS, from The Pain Relief Secret by Sarah Warren.



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Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for pain relief)*

Pandiculation sequence 1 for headaches:

*Constructive rest, diaphragmatic breaths, slow exhalations
Body scan, notice any areas of tightness, head position*

Arch release, flatten release x3

**Flatten, & hands behind head, lift head, face flat towards sky
Repeat with head turned to one side 2x then the other 2x**

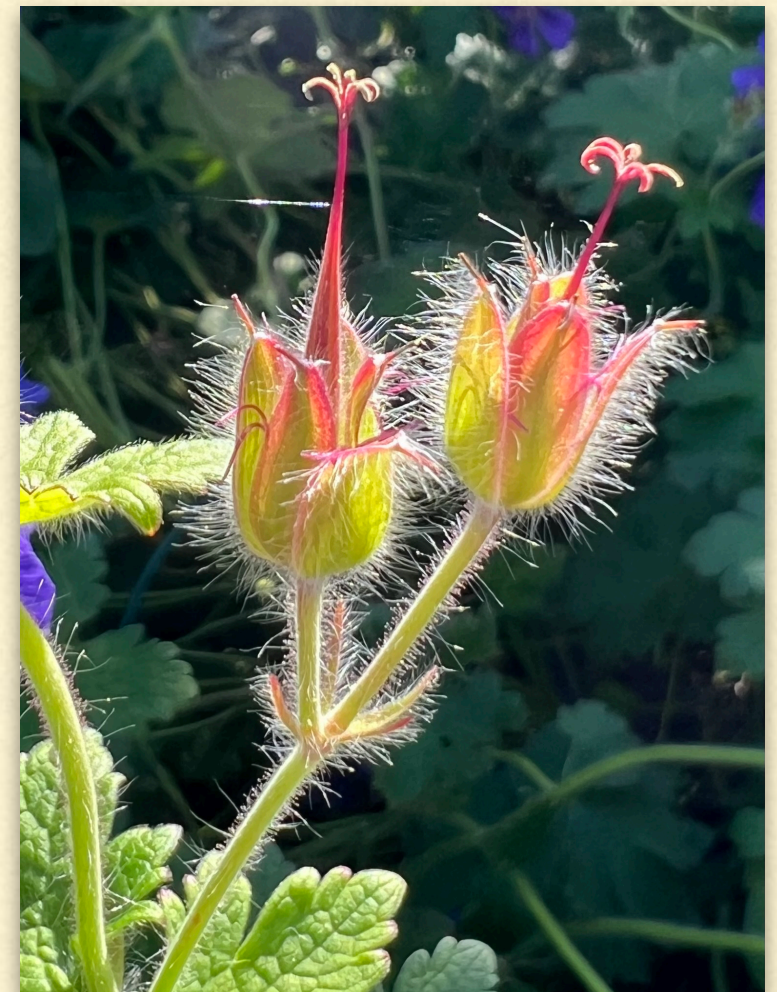
Hands behind head, contract shoulder to ear, slow smooth release 2x
each shoulder (to release upper traps) Okay if head turns a bit...

Hands still behind head, depress & release shoulder blades
Hug shoulders, take any movement you like.

Hands behind head, elevate shoulders, flatten back, lift chin then release...

Depress shoulders, tuck chin, arch back, then release.

Slide right shoulder blade towards hip, left shoulder blade towards ear,
slowly release, switch sides.



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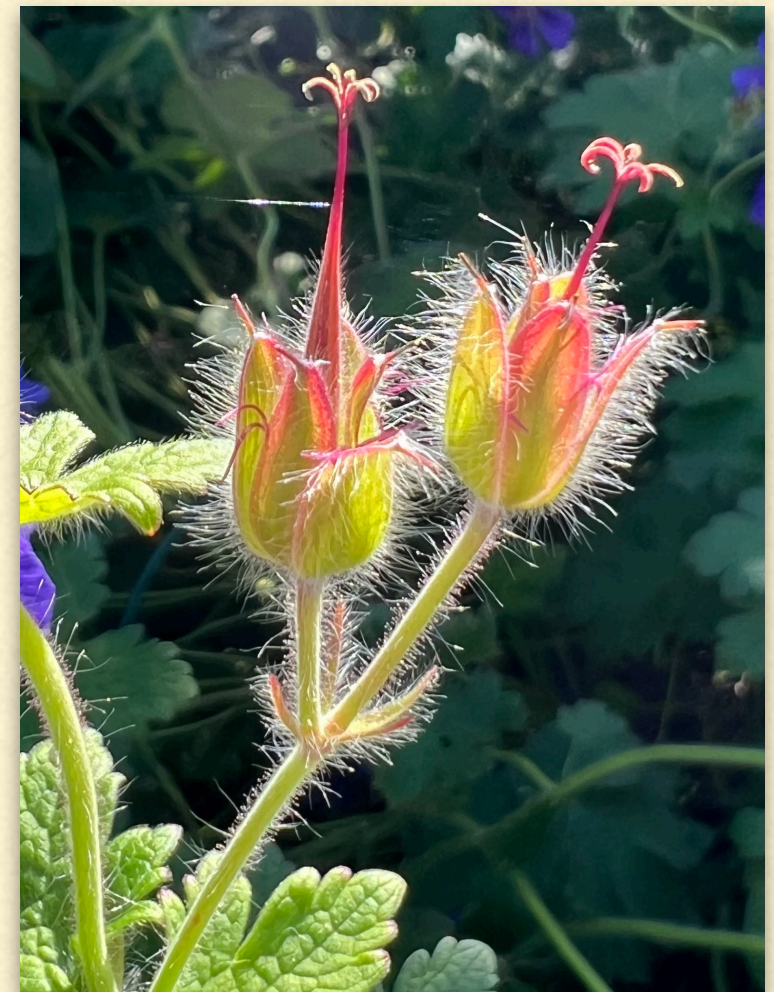
Pandiculation sequence 2 for headaches:

*Constructive rest, diaphragmatic breaths, slow exhalations
Body scan, notice any areas of tightness, head position*

Beachball hug: Arms reach up, elbows out to sides, hugging beach ball, fingers about 6" apart. Start hugging the ball, fingers moving towards each other, muscles on front of chest contracting, shoulders protracting towards ceiling. Slow slow release, arms coming out and down to floor through a count of 12. Retract shoulder blades, slowly release. Repeat, feeling shoulder blades moving.

Face exercises, supine w eyes closed:

- Lift eyebrows, forehead muscles tense, release to count of 8, repeat
- Squeeze eyes shut, feel contraction, release to count of 10, repeat
- Relax whole face
- Wide smile, feel contraction, release to count of 8, relax, repeat
- Purse your lips make kissy face, release to count of 8, relax, repeat



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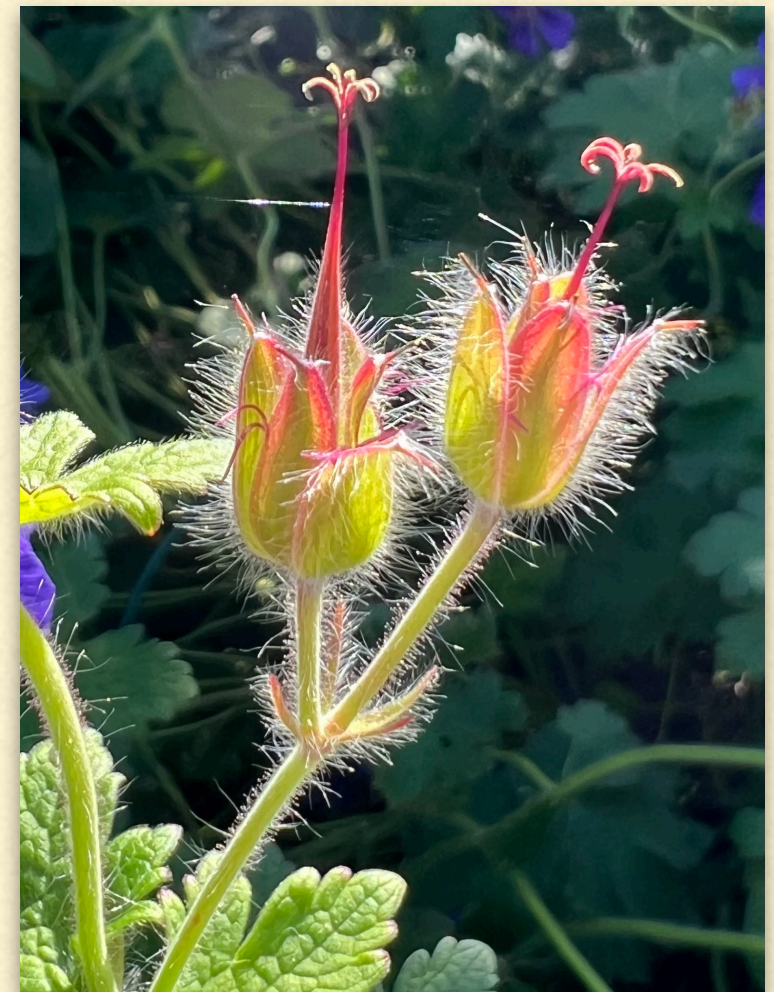
Pandiculation sequence for TMJ pain, part 1

Standing body scan: you might notice your low back and pelvis... then upper back, shoulders, chest, neck. Maybe notice any areas of tightness. If you like, you could notice how you're holding your head. Straight forward? Tipped up or down, or to either side?

Lying on back, knees bent (**Constructive Rest**), diaphragmatic breathing
Very slow arch/release, flatten release x 3

Interlace fingers behind head. Imagine dinner plate on face, don't let it tip. Flatten low back to ground. Slowly lift head, with face parallel to ceiling. Slow slow release back to the ground. If there's any back pain, please stop. Repeat 3x. Repeat with head turned to one side 2x, then the other side 2x.

Beachball hug: Arms reach up, elbows out to sides, hugging beach ball, fingers about 6" apart. Start hugging the ball, fingers moving towards each other, muscles on front of chest contracting, shoulders protracting towards ceiling. Slow slow release, arms coming out and down to floor through a count of 12. Retract shoulder blades, slowly release. Repeat, feeling shoulder blades moving.



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Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for pain relief)*

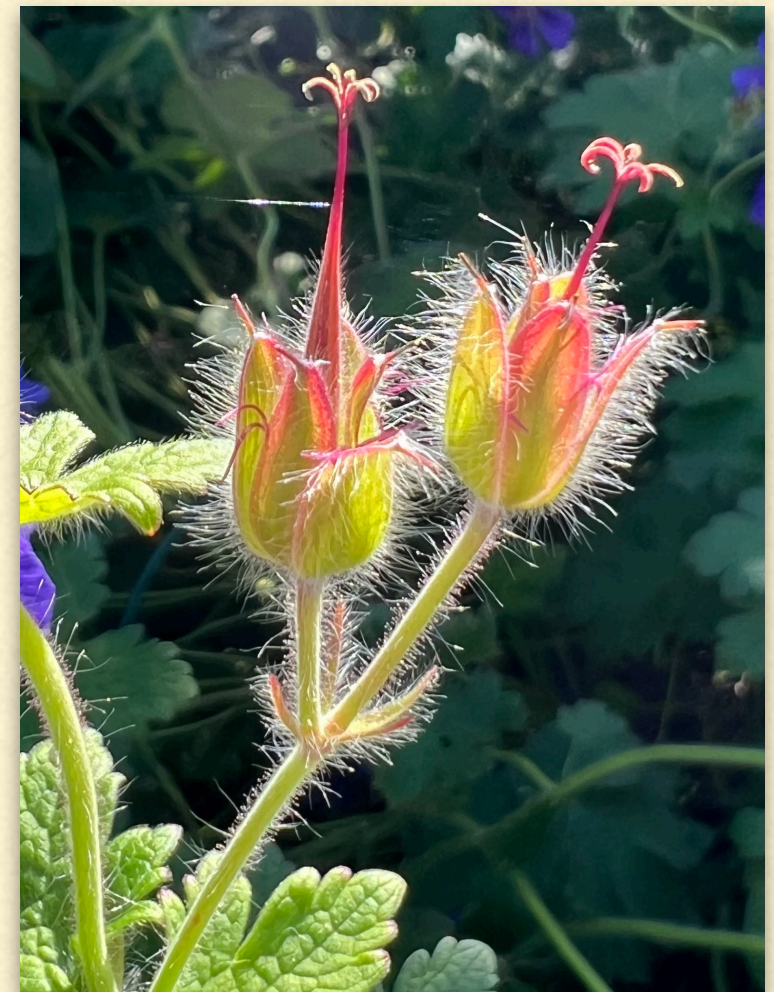
Pandiculation sequence for TMJ pain, part 2

If you like, you might **clench your jaw, release to slow count of 4**, completely relax jaws, space between upper and lower teeth. Then maybe **over count of 12 open jaws all the way, then release to count of 12, relax.** Repeat.

Shift jaw to right—notice which muscles you use to do this. Release to slow count of six. Shift jaw to left—notice muscles; release to slow count of six. Repeat, then completely relax jaws.

Open mouth, jaw down. Jaw to the right, towards upper lip & nose, then left, then down, in circles. Repeat, then completely relax. Repeat circling x2 to left, relax.

Slowly **come to a relaxed standing position**, eyes closed. You might notice how you feel in your lower back, upper back, shoulders, chest, and your neck. Maybe notice how your face and jaw feel. **Try to remember this feeling**, of letting the muscles in your face and jaw be released.



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Pandiculation sequence for pain from Thoracic Outlet Syndrome

From **constructive rest**, arms at sides...

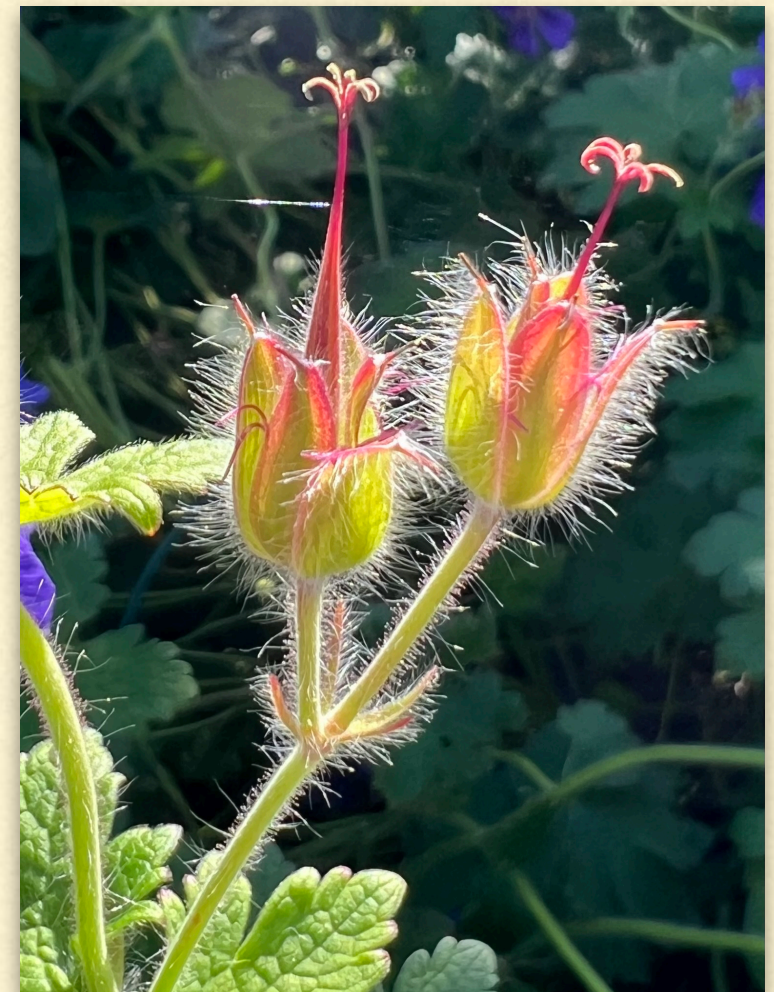
You might see how it feels to **internally rotate your arms, backs of your hands pressing into your hips, shoulders pressing off the floor**. Slowly release to neutral.

Then you might see how it feels to **press your shoulders into floor, arms rotating out and up to open wings in external rotation, shoulders pressing the ground...** slow releasing back to neutral.

If you like you could add in an arch in your back with external rotation of arms, flattening your low back into the ground with internal rotation.

Beachball hug: Arms reach up, elbows out to sides, hugging beach ball, fingers about 6" apart. Start hugging the ball, fingers moving towards each other, muscles on front of chest contracting, shoulders protracting towards ceiling. Slow slow release, arms coming out and down to floor through a count of 12. Retract shoulder blades, slowly release. Repeat if you like, seeing if you can feel your shoulder blades moving.

Standing body scan.



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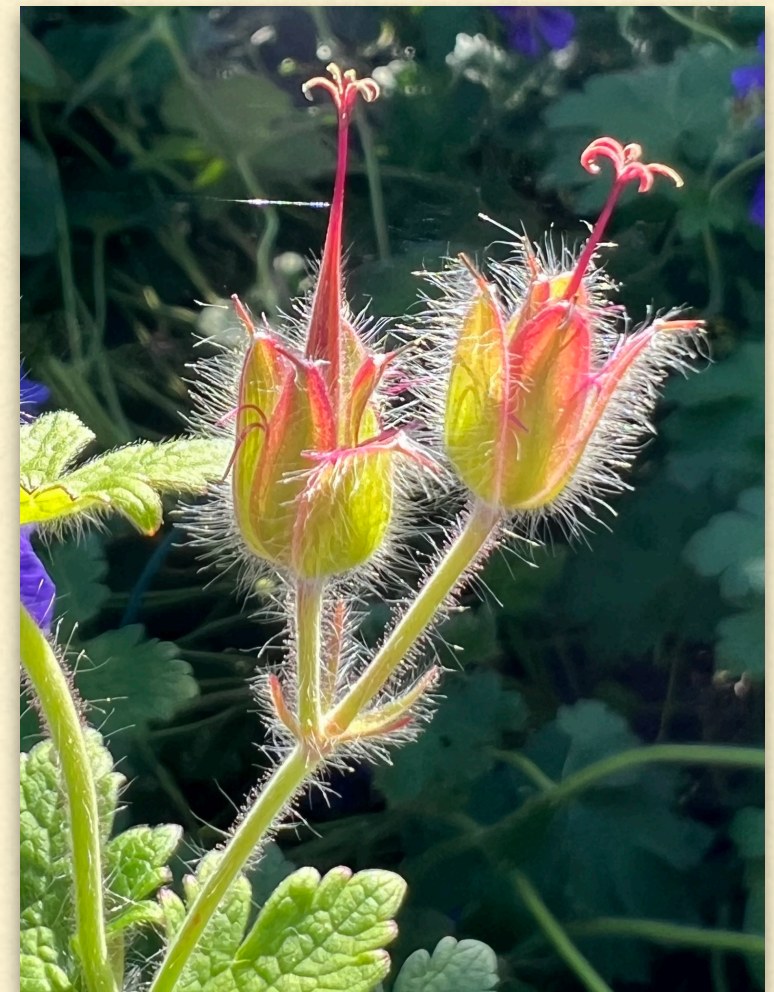
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for pain relief)*

Pandiculation sequences for Carpal Tunnel pain, part 1:

*Standing body scan, with eyes closed. **As you scan you might see if you feel any differences from one side your body to the other.** You might notice how your feet feel on the floor, and how your weight is distributed. Notice how your hips feel. Does it feel like one hip is higher than the other. Notice how your shoulders feel. Does it feel like one shoulder is higher than the other? Do you notice any tension in either of your shoulders?*

Then you might **lie on your side in 90/90 leg position, with your affected arm on top.** See if you'd like to rest with your head on your bottom arm or on a pillow, so that your head and neck can be in line with your spine.

Side curls: If you like, you might then reach your affected arm up over your head, bringing that hand over your bottom ear. Taking a deep inhale, on the exhale you might lift your head, bringing your shoulder towards your hip in a side curl. You might hold the side curl for a moment, and see if you feel your muscles contracting along your side. Then very slowly release, to a count of 8, and relax; repeat.



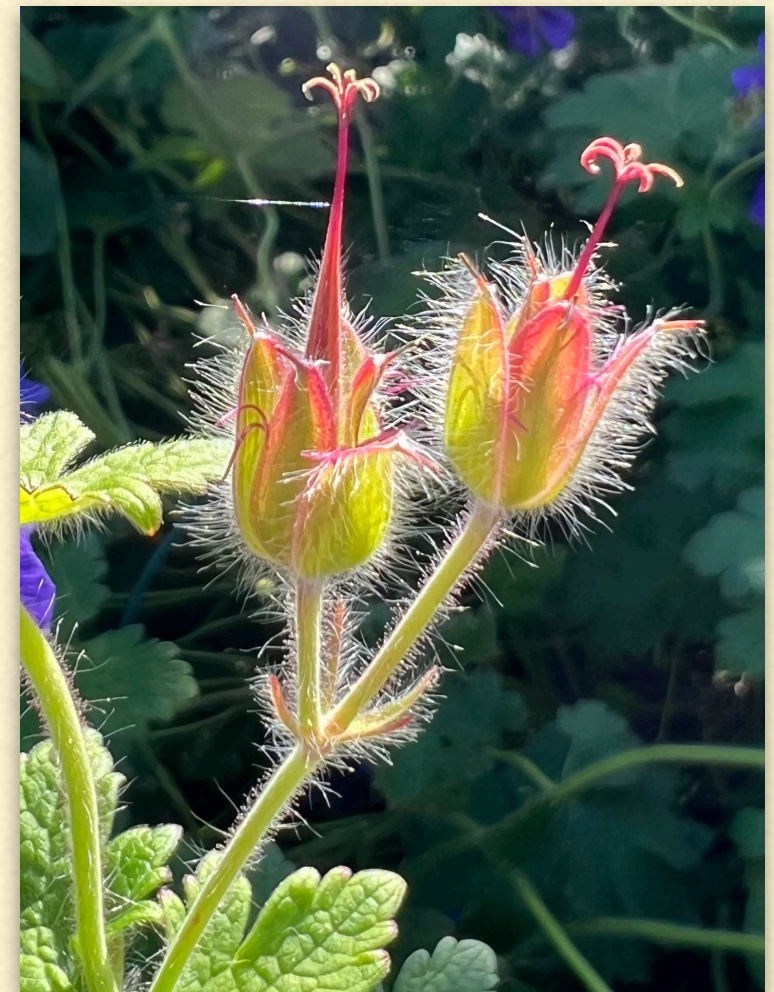
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Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for pain relief)*

Pandiculation sequences for Carpal Tunnel pain, part 2:

Side-lying gentle twist to side-lying diagonal curl: Still lying on the same side, you might bring your affected hand to the back of your head, take a diaphragmatic breath, then exhale slowly, releasing your bent elbow out to the side, coming into a twist. Inhale up and out of the twist, then bring the arm pit of your affected arm towards your bottom hip, coming into a **slight diagonal curl**. Slowly release back to the twist to a count of 12. Repeat if you like. Then come onto your back with knees bent, to rest completely.

From constructive rest, you might now bring your affected arm down along your side, bending your elbow so that your **forearm comes to a 90 degree angle out to the side, and your palm is up**. If you like you could bring that **shoulder towards the ceiling and inwards, feeling the muscles on the front of your shoulder contract; your elbow stays on the ground but your forearm lifts up til your fingers point to the sky**. **Release** your shoulder to a slow count of 12, until your hand returns to the ground.



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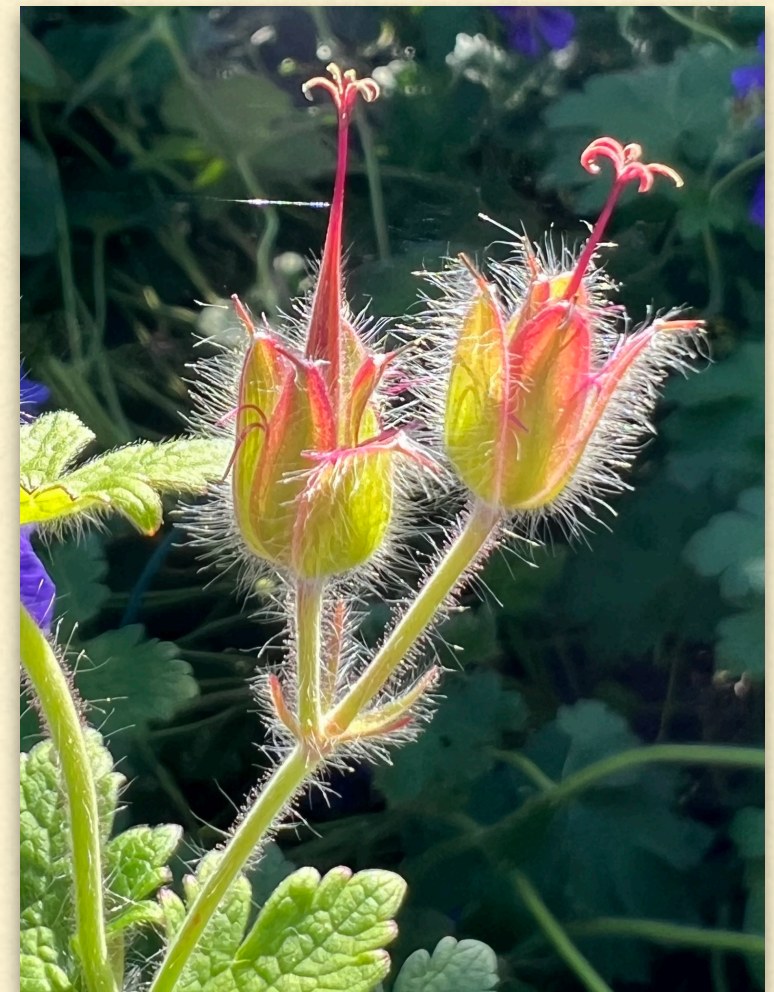
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Pandiculation sequences for Carpal Tunnel pain, part 3:

You might now take this same **affected arm to cactus arm position on the ground, palm up**. If you rotate your shoulder forward you might again feel the muscles on the front of your shoulder **contract**. Again your forearm comes up until fingers point to sky; then slowly release, to 12.

If you want to continue you might **press your affected arm straight towards ceiling, palm facing in, protracting your shoulder, contracting muscles on front of your shoulder**. Slowly release your shoulder back to ground, count of 12. Repeat.

Now you might **lift your affected arm with the elbow bent a bit so your arm curves in a bit over chest**. You might feel your shoulder protract, then slowly release to bring your forearm to ground, elbow slightly bent, palm up. From there if you like you could **squeeze that same shoulder blade in towards your spine**; slowly releasing to a count of 12. Repeat, and rest.



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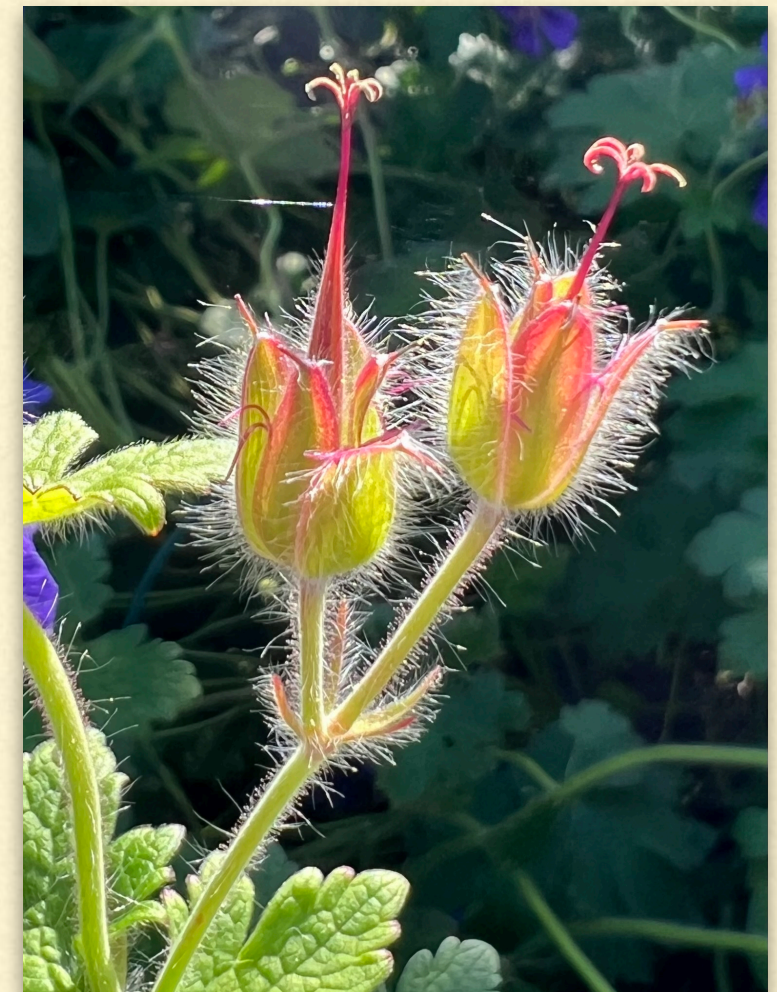
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for pain relief)*



Pandiculation sequences for Carpal Tunnel pain, part 4:

If you like you could let your **affected arm now rest on the floor by your side, with your palm facing up.** Slowly lift your affected hand and forearm off floor to a count of 8, until they reach a 45 degree angle at the elbow. Keeping this forearm lifted, to a count of 8 you might now flex that wrist and contract your fingers into fist... To another count of 8 returning this hand to neutral. For a count of 8 you might extend your wrist, then to a count of 8, return to neutral. Lower your forearm back to the ground, to a count of 12.

Finally... sitting upright, you might **bring the thumb and pinkie of your affected hand together.** Bring thumb and pinkie of other hand together between those of affected hand. Use these finger to press fingers of affected hand apart, as they resist; count of 8... Rest, then repeat.



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Pandiculations for chronically tight back (green light pattern):

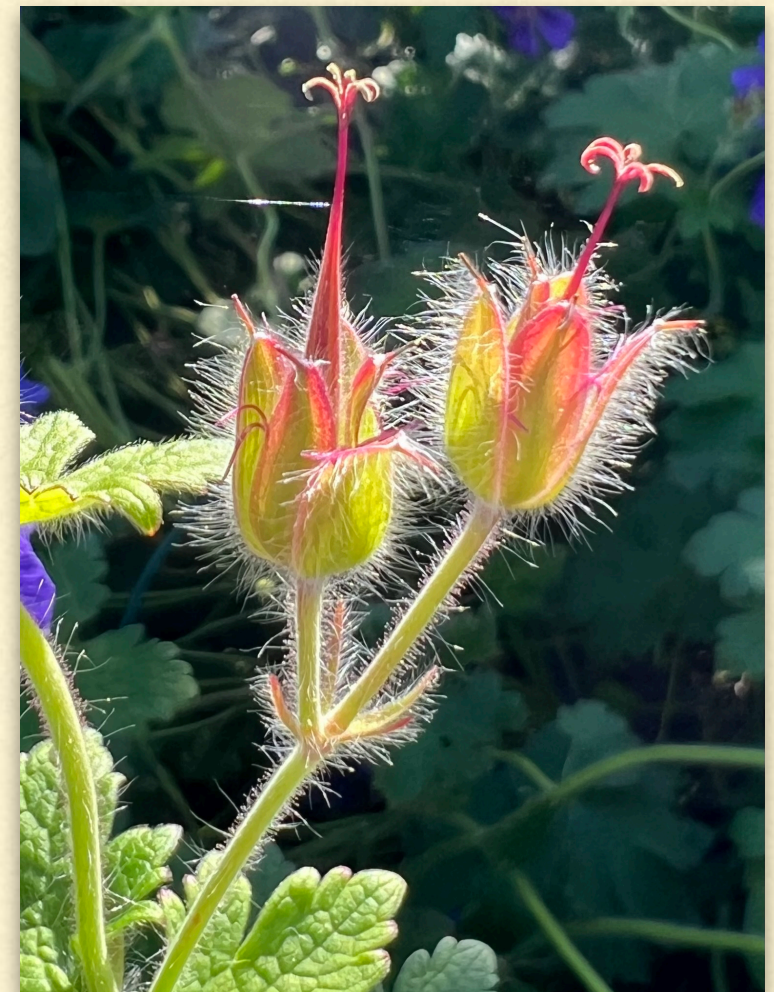
Arch and release: from standing or sitting, lying face up, face down, or on one side.

Pandiculations for chronically tight chest / abs (red light pattern):

Flatten or forward curl and release: and release: from standing or sitting, lying face up, face down, or on one side.

Pandiculations for chronically tight side, scoliosis (cringe pattern):

Side curls, contracting and slowly releasing obliques, QLs, erector spinae.



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Pandiculations for pain from Iliopsoas Syndrome

Standing body scan, noticing pelvic position, without changing anything.

Constructive rest, diaphragmatic breaths...

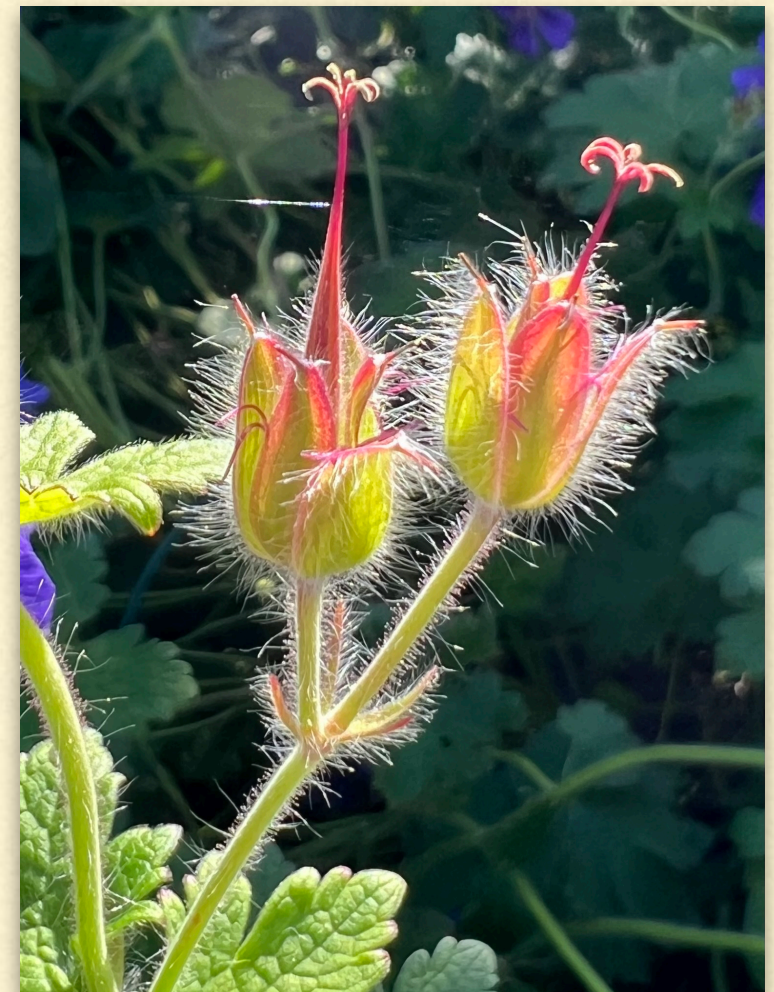
Arch release, flatten release. Arch & tuck chin; flatten and lift chin.

Iliopsoas release: keeping low back flattened the whole time

With your right hand behind your head, your right elbow out to the side, and your left arm resting by your side on the ground. Inhale and then on the exhalation strongly flatten your low back into the ground, lifting your head and your bent right knee. See if you can feel your muscles contract, then slowly release to a count of 8. Repeat 1 or 2 times.

Next you might slide your right foot out until **halfway straightened**, and **repeat** the sequence 1 or 2 times. Finally you might **straighten your leg completely and repeat** 1 or 2 more times.

Relax in constructive rest. Repeat entire sequence on left side, finishing with another body scan.



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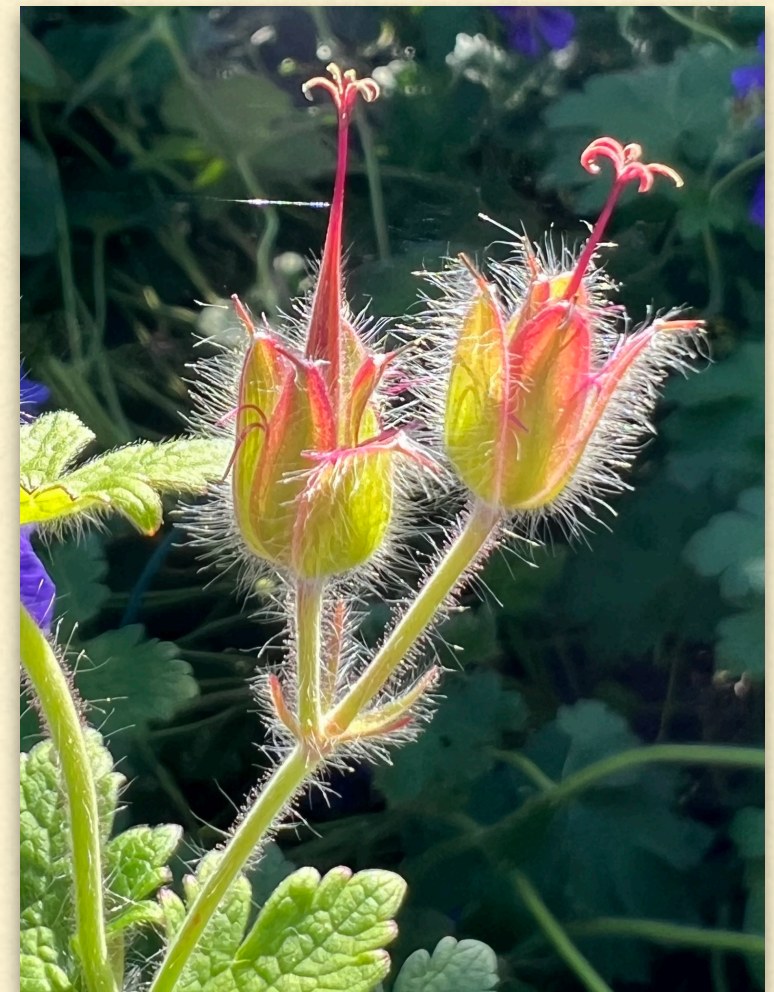
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Pandiculations for pain from Sciatica and Piriformis syndrome:

You might begin by lying face up in **constructive rest**, knees bent, doing some arch/release, flatten/release pandiculations.

Straighten both legs for moment, then draw one knee towards your shoulder. Keeping both shoulders on the ground, rotate onto the hip of your straight leg, coming into a very gentle twist, with your bent knee on top, off the ground.

If you like, **you might slowly lower your bent knee towards the ground, then slowly bring it back up—which will contract your piriformis and gluteal muscles.** As you still more slowly and smoothly release your knee downwards again to a count of 8, this will pandiculate those muscles. Rest. Repeat on the same side, then 2x on the second side.



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Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for pain relief)*

Pandiculations for pain from Plantar Fasciitis and flat arches, part 1

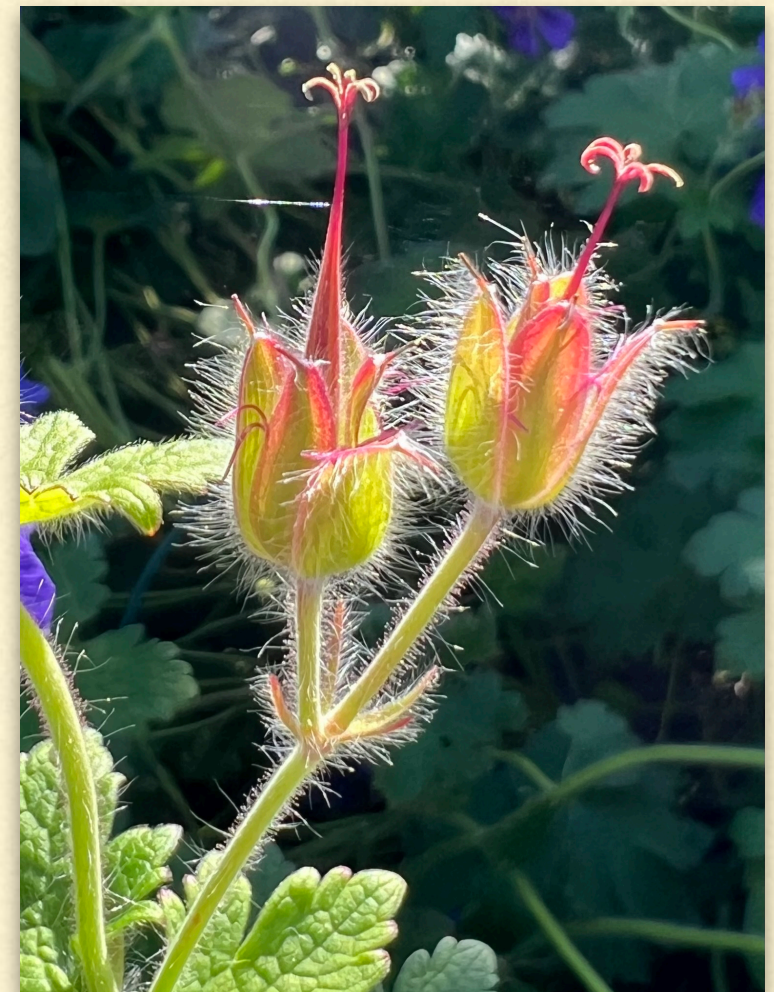
If you like, you could begin with a body scan from standing—giving special attention to what you might be able to feel in your hips, legs and feet. Then:

You might stand facing a wall, from about 3 feet away, reaching your arms forward to **press your hands into the wall, finding an angle where you can feel a mild stretch on the backs of your legs.**

From there you might **slowly lift your heels, and see if you feel your calf muscles gently contract. Then lower your heels, count of 10. Repeat.**

If you like you could bring your **heels inward, toes outward, repeat 2x.**
Then maybe bring your **heels outward, toes inward, repeat 2x.**

You might then lie in **constructive rest, for a body scan.**



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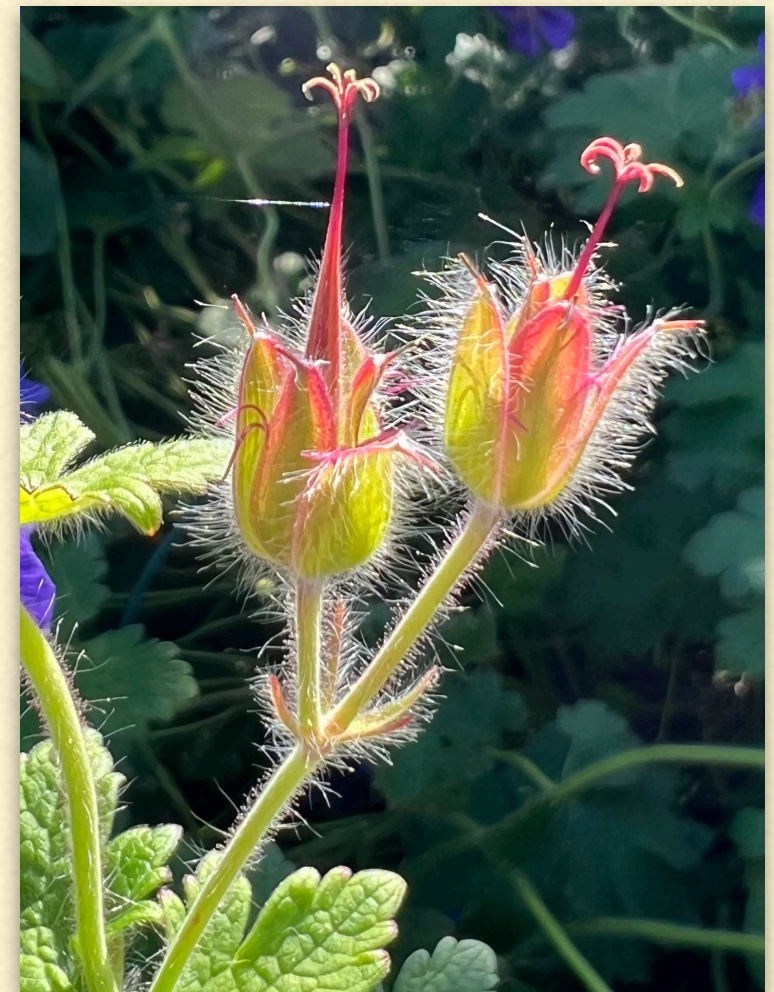
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Pandiculations for pain from Plantar Fasciitis and flat arches, part 2

From constructive rest *if this doesn't feel intense:* you might lift your legs, mostly straightening them, until your torso and legs form an L. To a slow count of 20, see how it feels to lower your legs towards your head; it's okay if your knees bend. Very slowly you might lift your legs back up, gently straightening them, to a count of 8.

If this exercise feels okay, you might repeat it 2 x. Then gently bend your knees, bringing the soles of your feet to the ground. Notice any sensations in your lower back... and rest.



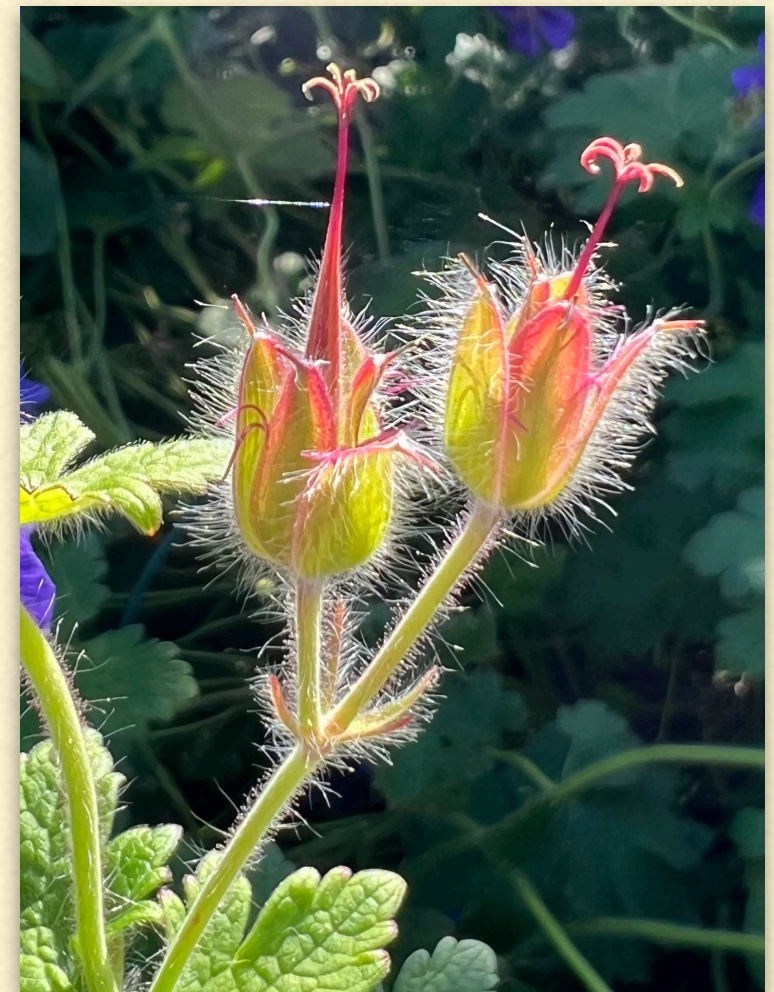
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Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for pain relief)*

Pandiculations for pain from Plantar Fasciitis and flat arches, part 3

If you'd like to do more, you might sit in a chair with your right ankle on your bent left knee, in **sitting Figure 4 position**.

With the **fingers of your right hand under the ball of your right foot**, you might see how it feels to **press the ball of your foot against your hand as your hand resists**, pressing until gradually your ankle extends, toes pointed, into plantar flexion. **Then let your hand begin to pull your foot back, as your foots resist**—until you're pointing your heel, and your ankle is in dorsiflexion. Repeat a few times, then relax the muscles of your foot.



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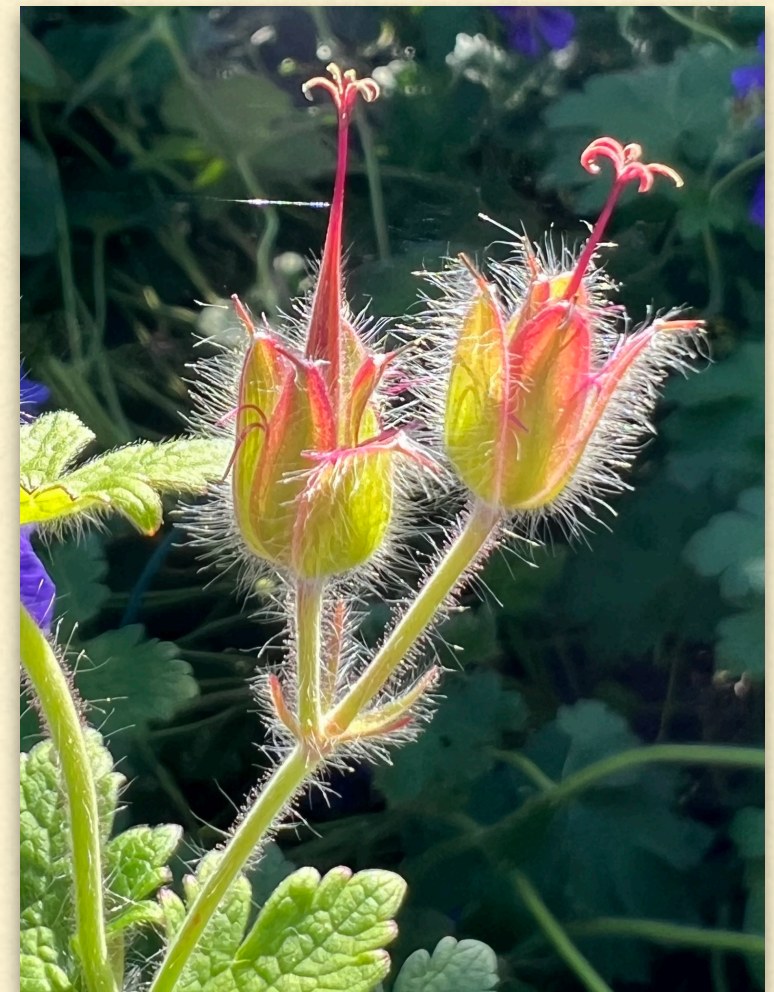
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for pain relief)*

Pandiculations for pain from Plantar Fasciitis and flat arches, part 4

Still sitting in Figure 4, now you might try bringing your right hand to the top of your right foot. Slowly allow your hand to press your resisting foot into plantar flexion (toes pointed). Then slowly allow your foot to press into your resisting hand, coming into dorsiflexion (**heel pointed**). See if you can do this with smooth, controlled movements. Repeat a few times, then relax.

If you like **you might repeat this sequence with your left ankle and foot.**

Rest. Then come to standing to check in with what you can feel in your feet, ankles and legs; you might take a slow meditative walk around the room, and see how that feels.

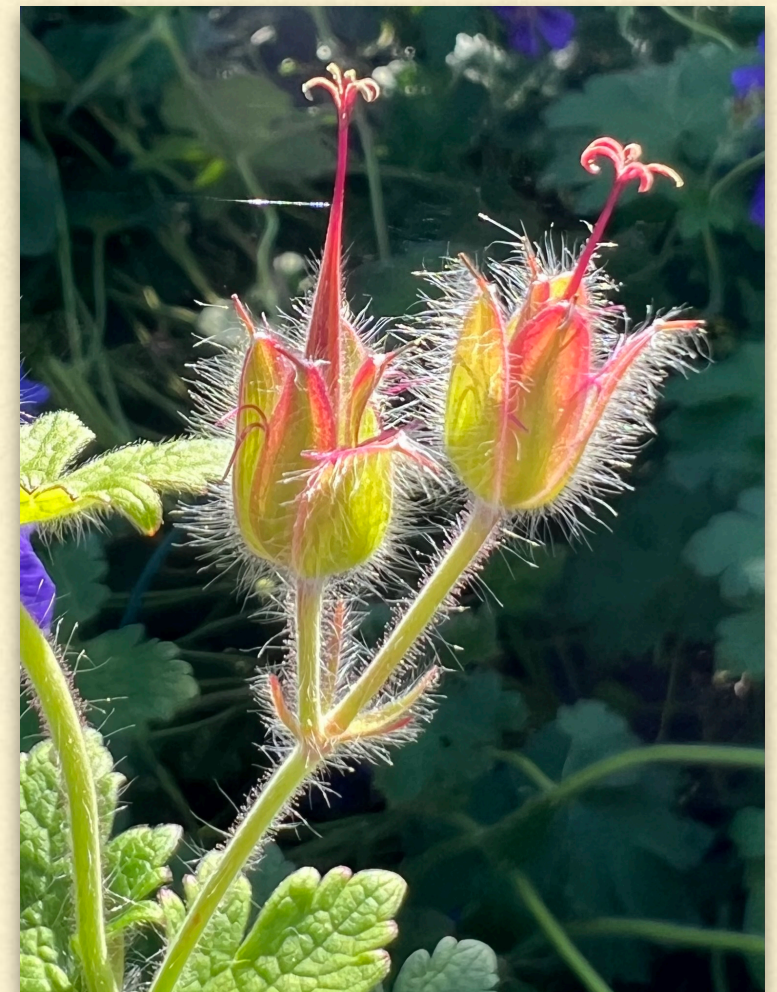


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Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for pain relief)*

There are many other yoga practices that can be used to relieve pain from hEDS. These include:

- **Gentle self massage** (*effleurage, supportive myofascial, lymphatic, abhyanga oil massage*)
- **Legs up positions** (*for people with Chronic Venous Insufficiency, with painful pooling of blood in their legs*)
- **Regulating Autonomic Nervous system, energy & circulation through pranayama, marma, mudras, yoga nidra, Gunas, and energy audit**—*helping a person assess things that deplete or restore their energy*
- **Dinacharya** (*daily self care practices, such as abhyanga oil massage, gentle tongue scraping, dry brushing or oil pulling*)



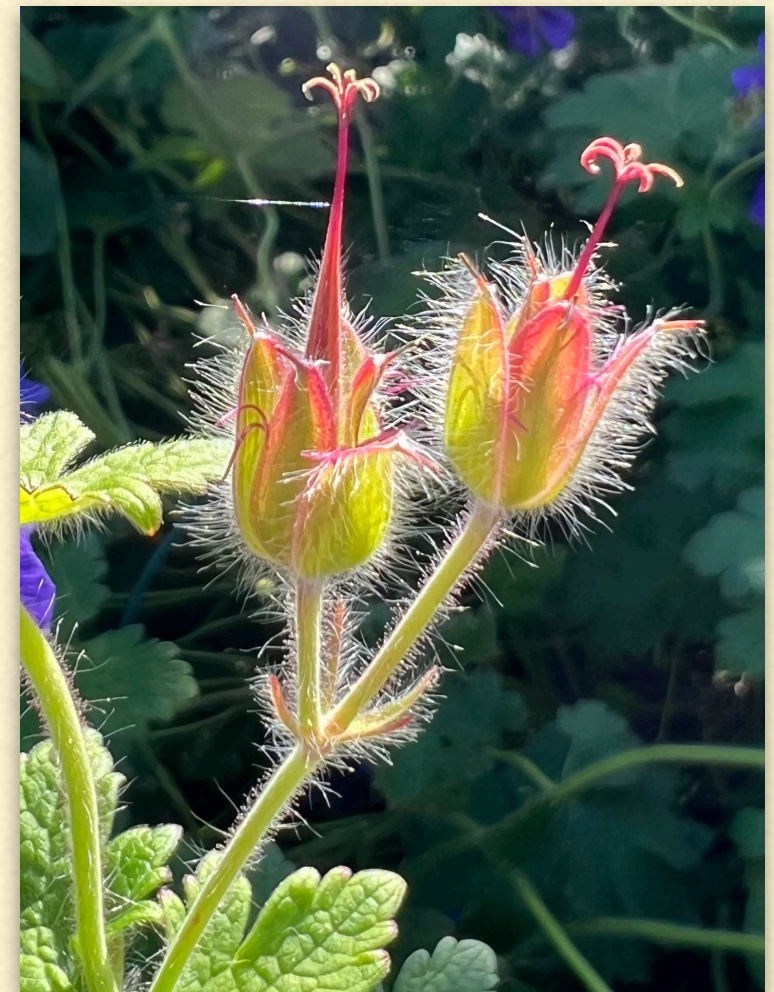
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Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for pain relief)*

Marma Chikitsa (marma therapy) may also feel more accessible than asanas (yoga postures) for some people with chronic pain. *Generally the suggestion is to massage marma points by circling around each one in one direction, then the other, then gently press them while taking slow easy breaths in and out.*

Marma Chikitsa for headaches:

- **Adhipati** *(the crown, or middle of the top of the head)*
- **Shivarandhra** *(the back of the top of the head)*
- **Kapala** *(on the hairline, in the center at the top)*
- **Ajna** *(third eye, middle of the forehead)*
- **Shankha**, *(the temples, next to the hairline)*
- **Bruh Agra, Bruh Madhya, Bruh Antara** *(eyebrows, sweeping strokes)*
- **Nasa Mula** *(between the eyebrows)*
- **Manyamula** *(top of the back of the neck, center, just below skull)*



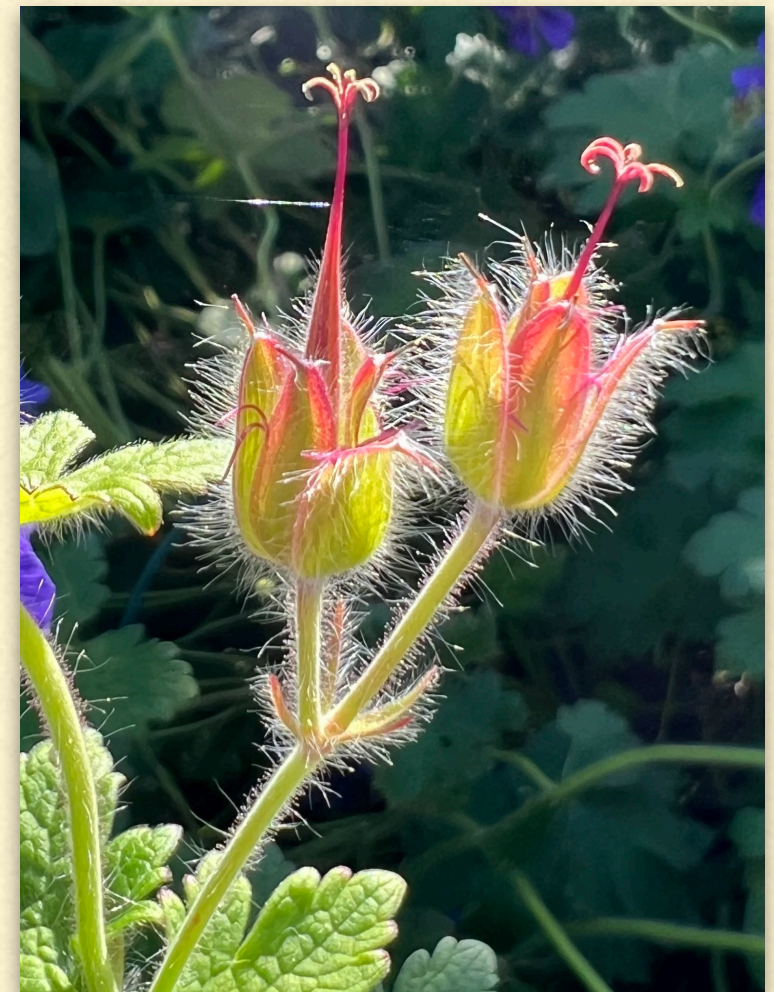
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Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for pain relief)*



Marma Chikitsa for neck pain:

- Shivarandhra
- Manyamula
- Vidhuraam to Manyamani:
*massaging six points on the back of
the neck in long sweeping strokes,
from Manyamula down the two
sides of the spine*



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for pain relief)*



Mudra for headache pain:

Mahasirsha Mudra is the primary hand gesture for headache relief, specifically targeting tension headaches, migraines, and sinus congestion, releasing muscular tension in the face, jaw, and neck while balancing energy flow to the head.



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Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (for pain relief)

Mudras to help relieve various kinds of pain

For some people with chronic pain mudras may feel more accessible than other practices, again, as long as they don't cause discomfort in their hands. Each position could be held 2 - 3 minutes.

Prithvi mudra: seal of the earth, for pain in bones & other tissues

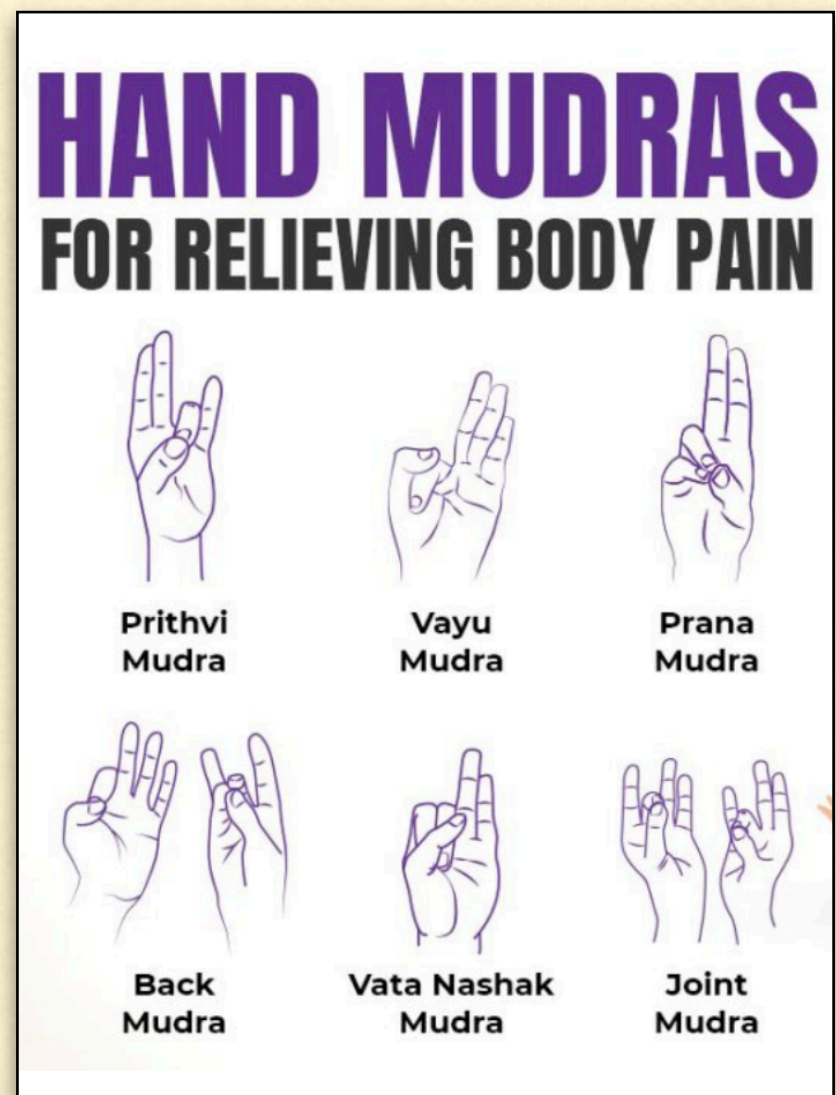
Vayu mudra: to calm Vata, stomach pain, indigestion, joint pain

Prana mudra: used to alleviate chest pain and to help prana / energy flow smoothly through the body

Back mudra: meant to soothe back muscles and spinal cord

Vata Nashak mudra: used to reduce Vata, and to relieve joint pain, menstrual cramps, and constipation

Prithvi mudra (right hand) + **Akash mudra** (left hand): for joint pain



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Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for pain relief)*

Ayurvedic treatments for physical pain include:

Herbal Remedies

Ashwagandha: To reduce inflammation, strengthen muscles, and alleviate stress.

Guggulu and Shallaki (Boswellia): Potent anti-inflammatories that may reduce pain and improve mobility.

Turmeric (Haridra) and Ginger: To boost circulation and provide natural pain relief.

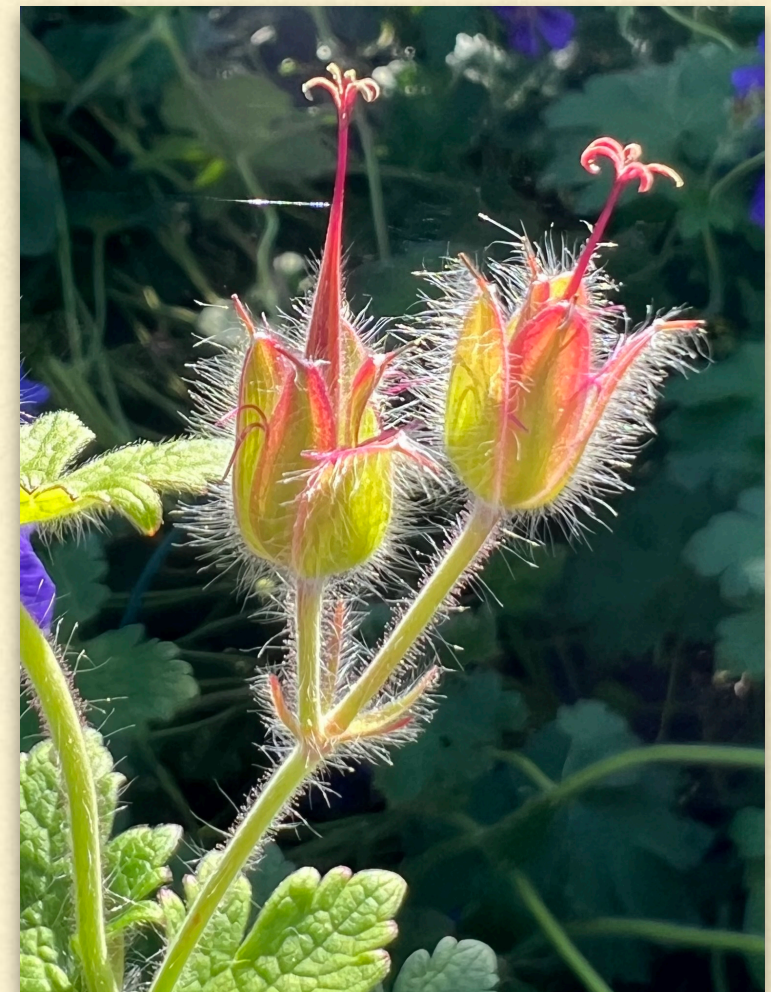
Nirgundi: To ease swelling and enhance flexibility in affected areas.

Lifestyle and Diet

Diet: Include anti-inflammatory foods like omega-3 fatty acids, ghee, and spices (turmeric, ginger); avoid processed foods, sugar, and cold dairy.

Exercise: Gentle yoga poses like lotus, cobra, and boat pose are used to help maintain flexibility.

Self-Care: Daily self-massage with warm oil and alternating hot/cold compresses may provide immediate relief.

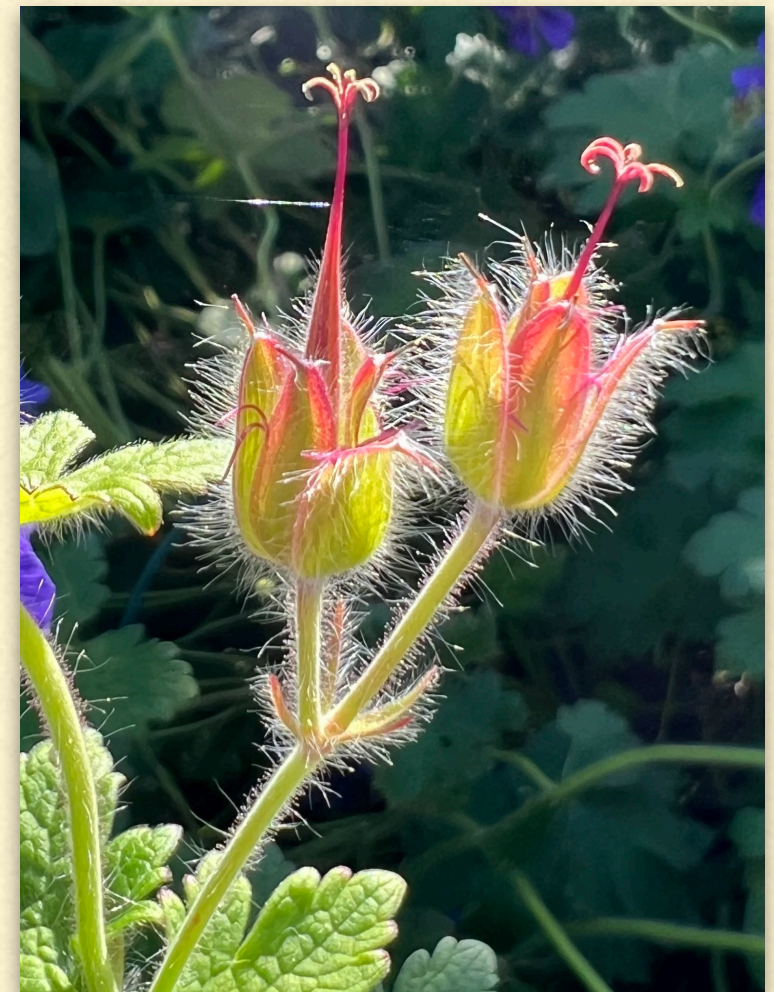


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Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for proprioception)*

2. Proprioception: *learning to feel sensations and information from muscles, joints, and body position in space*

- Proprioception can be practiced while lying on the ground, supine, prone or side-lying, by giving attention to feeling in turn each of the areas where your body is in contact with the ground.
- Proprioception can also be strengthened through pandiculations.
- **And, through asana practice**, if a person feels able to do this, with reminders to bring attention to specific areas of their body and notice what they might be able to feel there in the moment.
- **Stabilizing movements** may help some people feel into their bodies better—pushing a part of their body into different surfaces, like the ground, a chair, a wall, etc,
- **Gentle self-massage or proprioceptive touch** can also help.



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Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for proprioception)*

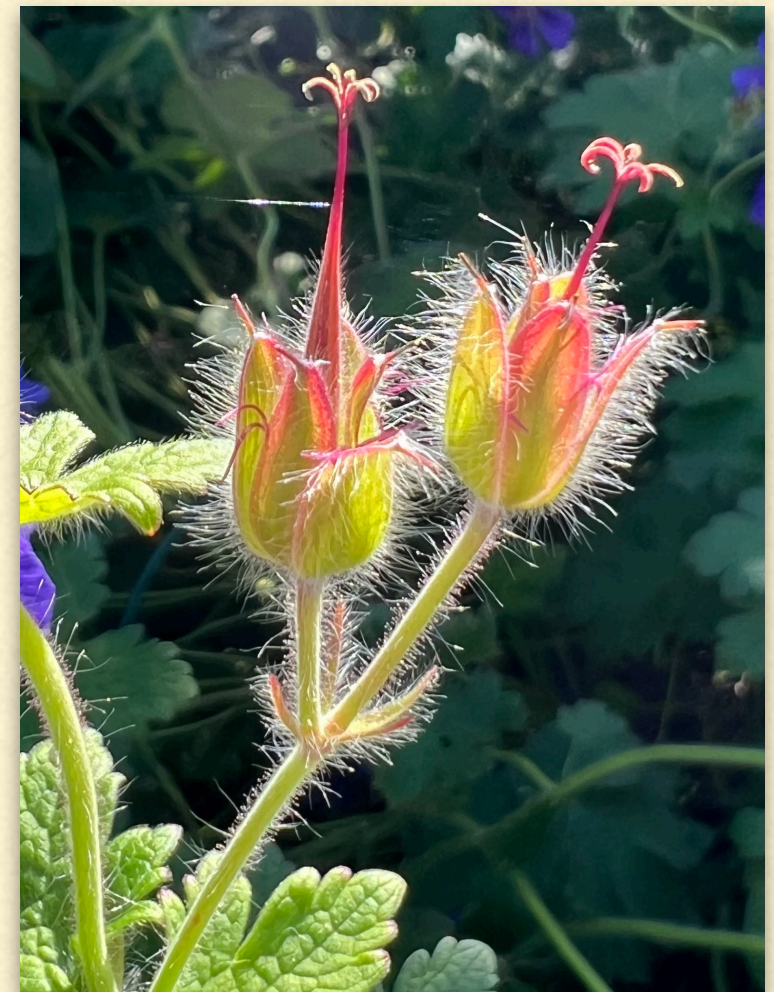
More for developing proprioception:

Floor Mapping (Body Scan): Lie on your back and systematically check contact points with the floor, such as shoulder blade placement, pelvic weight distribution, and head tilt, *where possible releasing into the support of the ground.*

Alphabet Writing: With knees bent and back flat, extend an arm or leg and slowly "write" the letters of the alphabet in the air *to improve joint control and awareness of movement paths.*

Put a yoga strap around your bottom ribs to help you feel your ribs, including your back ribs, and develop proprioception of this area. This can be useful in reminding your body to *breathe into the full circumference of your rib cage: back, sides and front.*

Put an eye pillow on top of your head when in upright positions, and press up into it as another way to help proprioception.



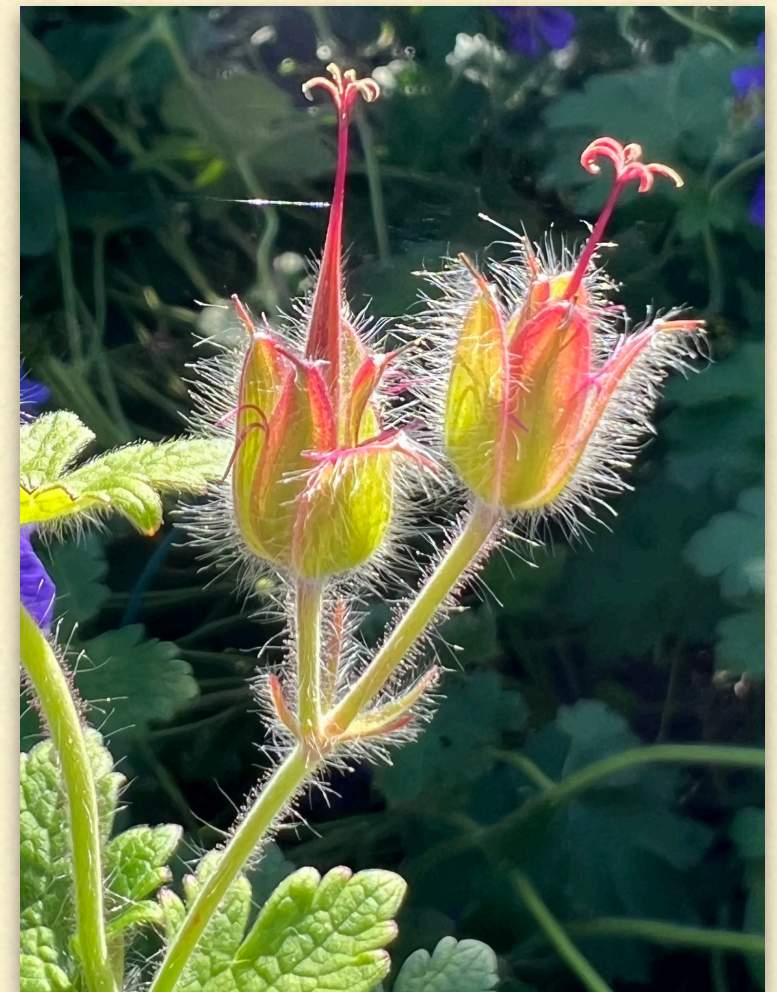
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Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for proprioception)*

Proprioception can also be developed through:

- **Practicing control of movement at mid-ranges**, then experimenting and learning to maintain control through slightly larger ranges of motion.
- **Noticing if your available range of motion is the same as the range of motion that you can control—and sticking with the range that you can control.** *End range movement is harder for muscles to control.*
- **Working with movement variety within the same asanas**
For example with bridge: try feet together, feet wider apart, block between knees, strap around knees...
- **“Doing new movements, and doing the same old movements in new ways, are powerful tools to stimulate growth and clarity in your brain’s body maps.”**

—Libby Hinsley, PT, DPT, C-IAYT



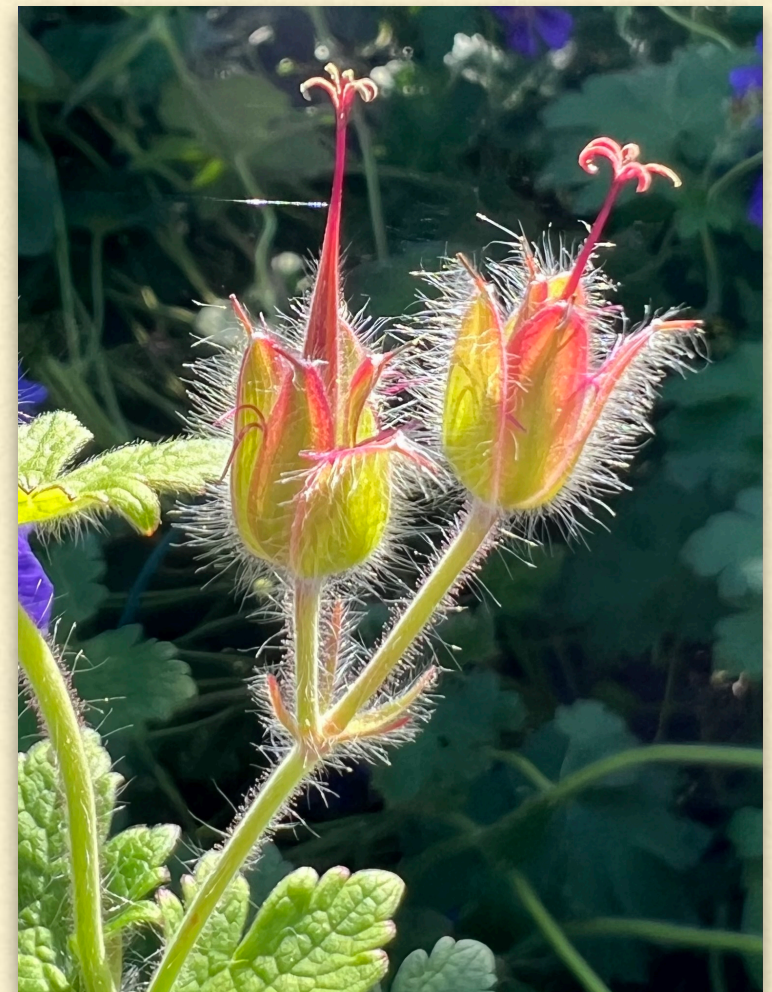
Clare Norelle, 2026

Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for proprioception*)

"Slowness of movement is the key to awareness, and awareness is the key to learning... Slower movement leads to more subtle observation and map differentiation, so that more change is possible."

— Psychiatrist Norman Doidge



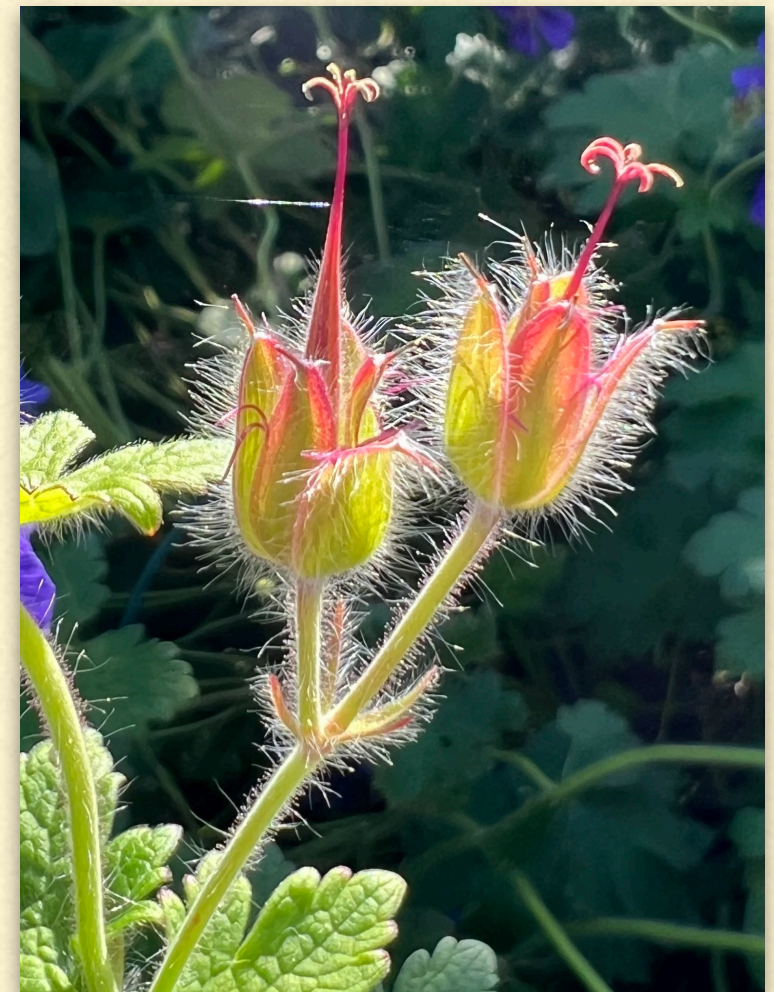
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for proprioception)*



Marma Chikitsa to support proprioception:

- **Shivarandhra** *(the back of the top of the head; stimulates the parietal lobe, where proprioception is processed)*
- **Manyamula** *(top of the back of the neck, center, just below skull; used to treat dizziness and strengthen steadiness)*



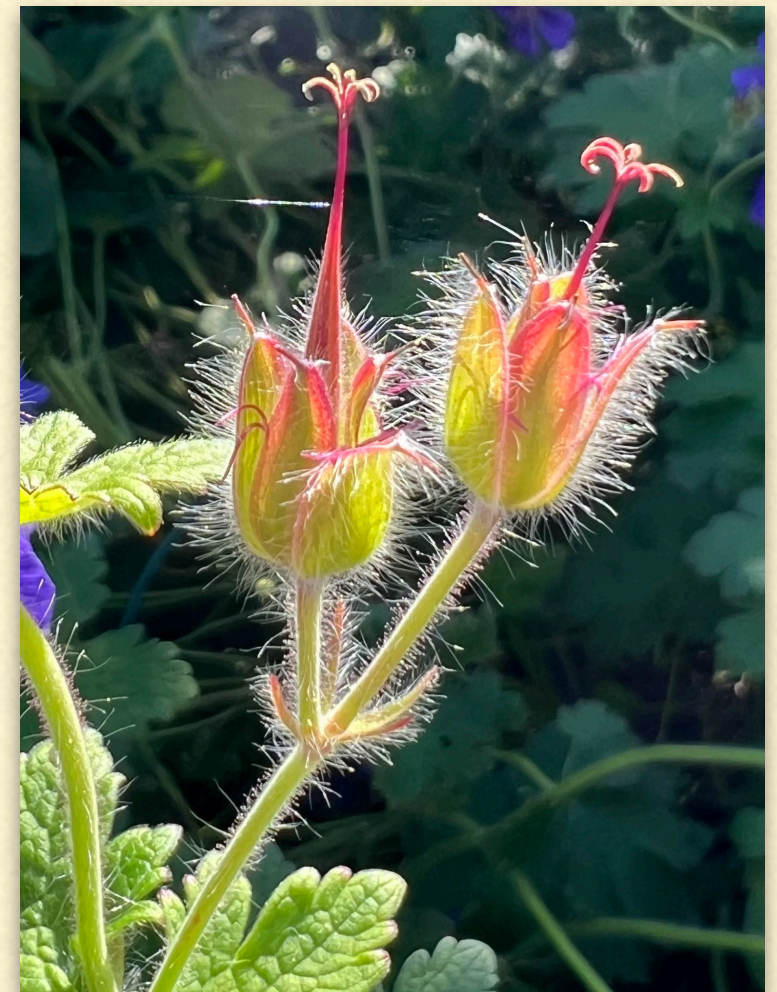
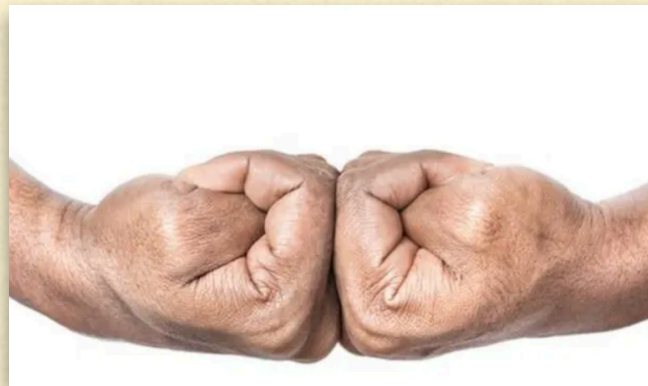
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for proprioception*)

Mudras to strengthen
proprioception:

Prithvi Mudra is said to
increase stability by calming the
nervous system and enhancing
the body's sense of position

Brahma / Purna Mudra has
been shown in clinical studies to
improve the ability to feel the
positions of the joints



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

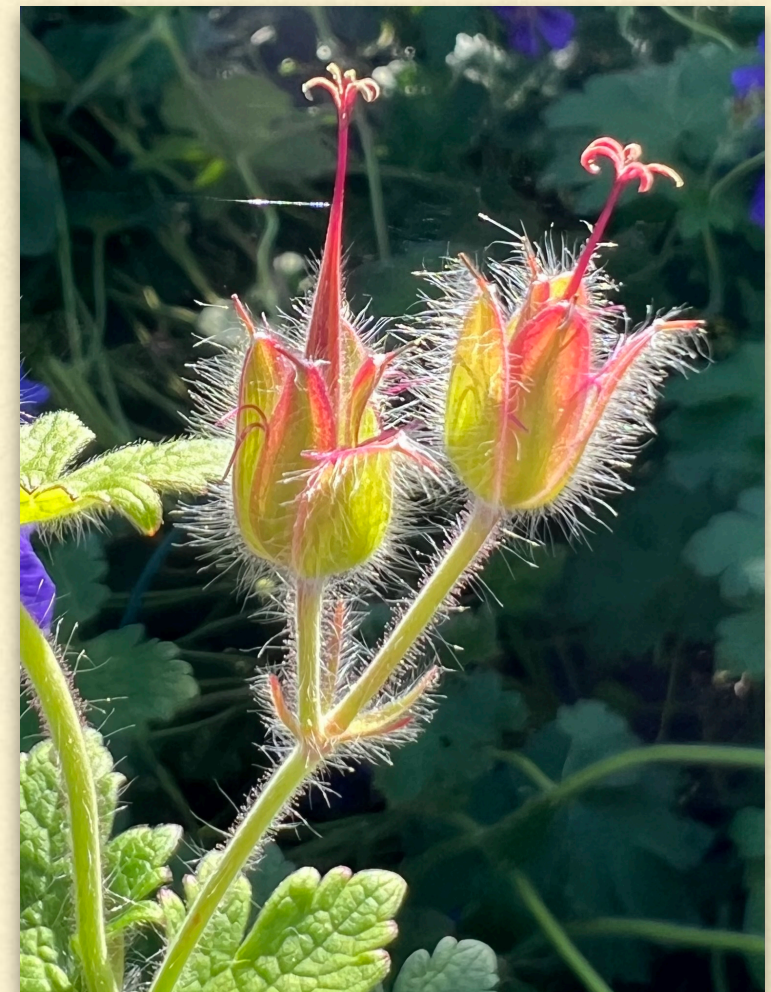
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for interoception)*



3. Interoception & the Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)

To begin clarifying intense and confusing inner sensations that people may experience with hEDS—or even shut-down numbness — it can be helpful to **work with trying to feel and identify different states of the Autonomic Nervous System, through the Gunas (states of being):**

- **Rajas - Sympathetic Nervous System activation** (*sensations of speed and volatility, in heart rate, body, breathing, emotions, etc*)
- **Tamas - Dorsal vagal activation** (*sensations of inertia, heaviness, numbness, in heart rate, body, breathing, emotions, etc*)
- **Sattva - Ventral vagal activation** (*sensations of balance, calm, clarity & connectivity, in heart rate, body, breathing, emotions, etc*)



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

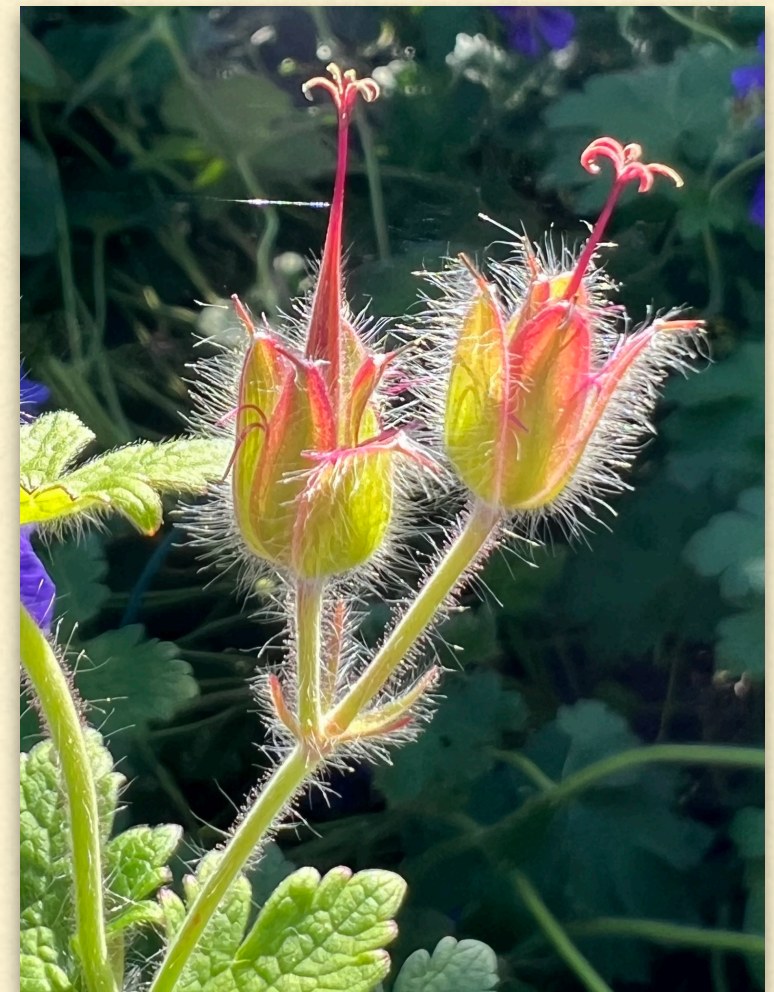
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for interoception*)

The Community Resiliency Model (CRM) explores these responses of the Autonomic Nervous System in more detail, through a wide variety of practices that can be used in yoga sessions as well — aimed at **helping people learn to center themselves in Sattva**.

In CRM these states (Gunas) are called High Zone (Rajas), Low Zone (Tamas) and Resilient Zone (Sattva).

To learn more about how CRM works to develop awareness of interoception and the ANS:

<https://clarenorelle.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/The-Community-Resiliency-Model-simple-practices-to-support-mental-health-and-well-being.pdf>



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for interoception*)

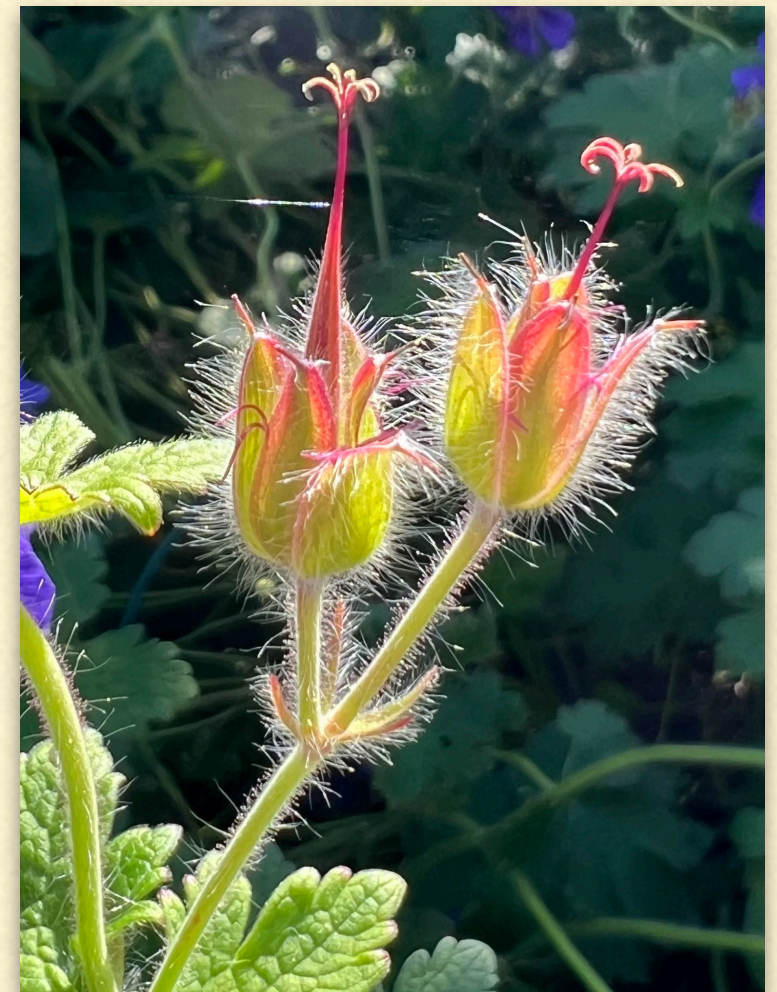
“Not knowing how we feel lies at the heart of so much of our suffering, because those inner sensations often drive our behavior.

We engage in so many behaviors because we ignore or don't understand the body's messages.

Maybe I eat more because I don't feel good, and I don't know that I don't feel good. Maybe I'm not even aware I'm trying to fill this hole which might be emotional or physical pain, or it might be loneliness.

But then I have to deal with the fallout of those behaviors for myself and others.”

—Kristine Kaoverii Weber—MA, C-IAYT, eRYT500



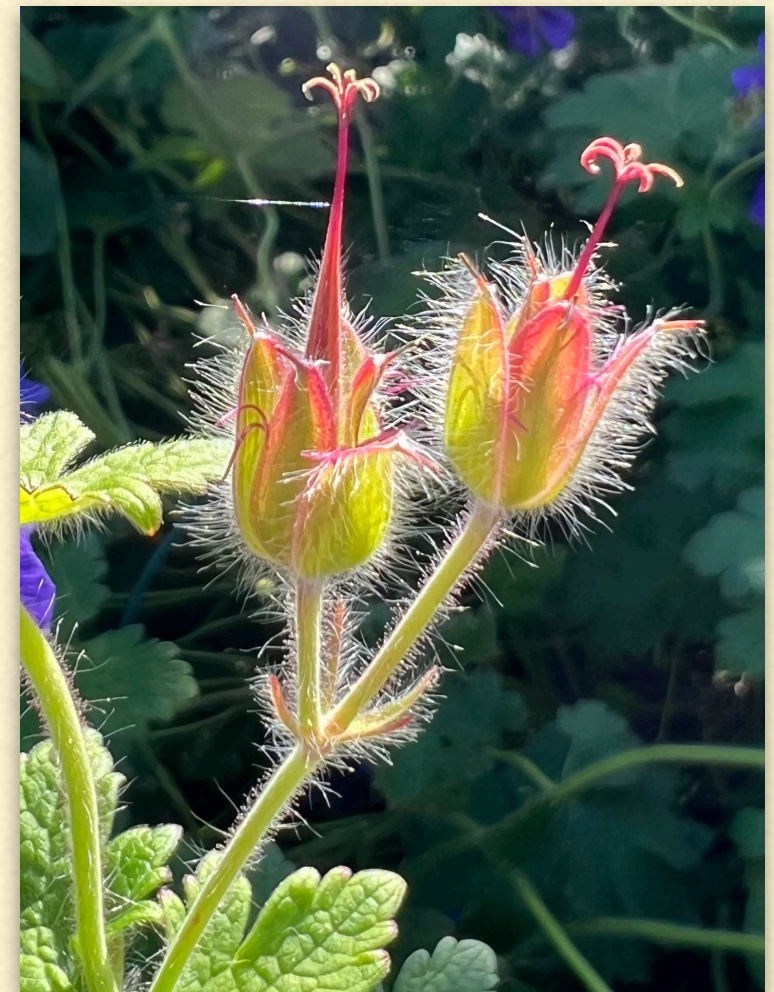
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for interoception*)

In learning to calm the Autonomic Nervous System and clarify interoception, it may be helpful to reconsider inner sensations that feel disturbing:

- Might this sensation that feels like dread be occurring in my body in part because I haven't eaten or slept well?
- Might this signal some other neurochemical reaction in my body?
- Or might this be implicit memory of something that happened in the past, maybe not especially helpful for helping me respond to what's happening now?

At least some of the time, inviting curiosity about interoceptive sensations can remove from them the weight of a specific interpretation. This may allow them to change and pass on naturally, without the body and mind tensing up around them or getting stuck in them.



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for interoception)*

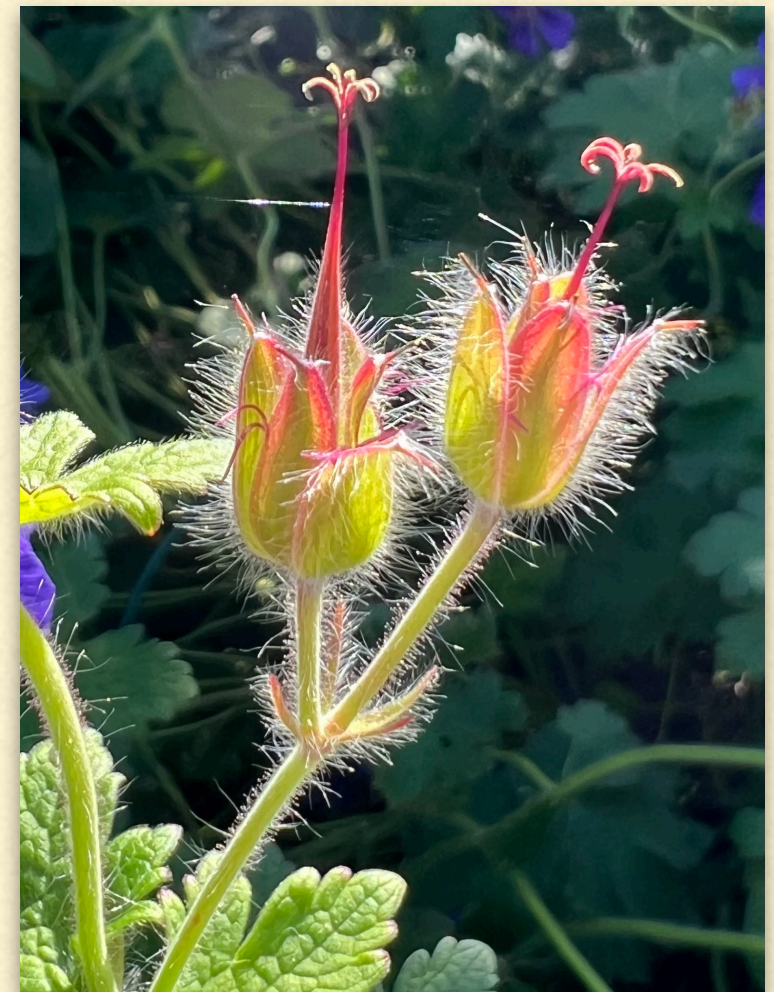
Finding and feeling Sattva

For some people, **pranayama practices** such as 4/6 breathing and **brahmari breathing** can help them calm the ANS and become more centered in Sattva, or the ventral vagal response of the nervous system.

For others, **merely paying attention to breathing** can feel **activating or upsetting**—taking them away from sattva and into rajasic reactivity or tamasic withdrawal.

Using weighted objects on the body can also feel **calming** for many **people**—eye pillows, sand bags, weighted blankets, etc.—but not for everyone.

Again, rather than telling people what they will feel with any practice meant to be calming, it can be more helpful to **invite people to notice which kinds of things feel calming for them**—helping them practice **being curious about this, giving extra attention to any sensations that might feel neutral or pleasant** *(as this in itself tends to calm the ANS)*

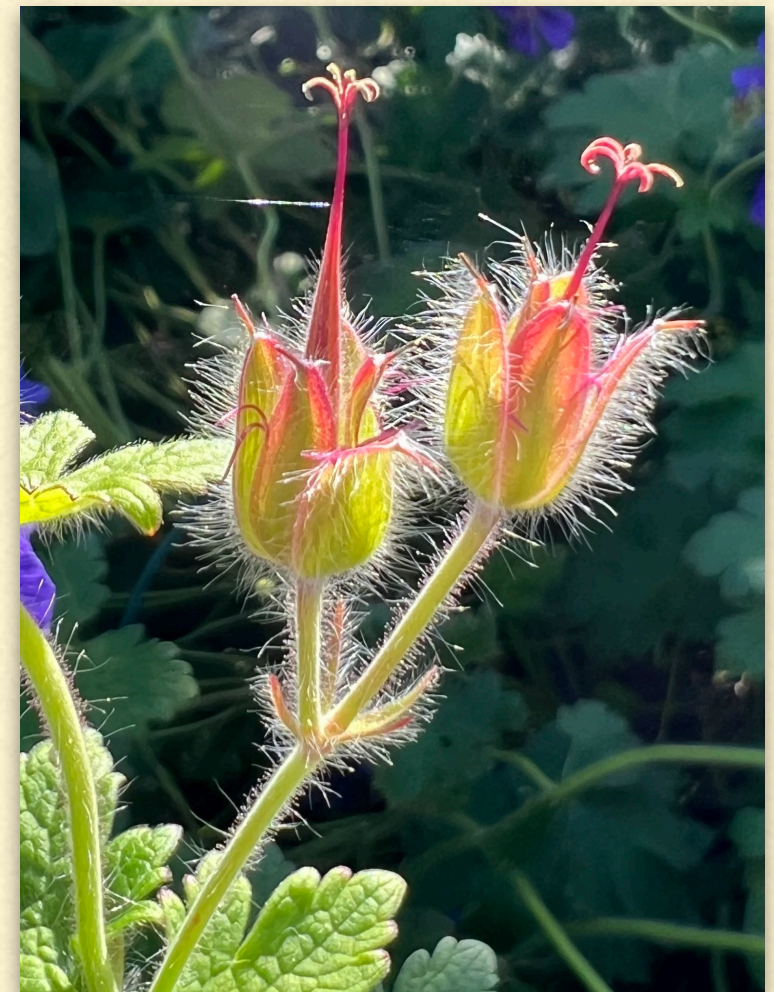


Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for interoception)*

Marma Chikitsa for interoception *could focus on calming the Autonomic Nervous System, then attending to internal sensations, learning to distinguish different ones:*

- **Brahmarandhra** *(front of the top of the head, to feel positive emotions)*
- **Urdhva Gandha** *(two sides of the bridge of the nose, to calm feelings like grief, guilt, trauma, and fear)*
- **Nasa Mula, Nasa Madhya, Nasa Agra** *(between eyebrows; bridge of nose; tip of nose—to calm feelings of anger, irritability, aggression.)*
- **Vidhura to Manyamani** *(massaging six points on the back of the neck in long sweeping strokes down the two sides of the spine, to stimulate the vagus nerve and calm stress, fear, overwhelm, restlessness, grief)*
- **Bruh Agra, Bruh Madhya, Bruh Antara** *(eyebrows, sweeping strokes, to calm anger, frustration, grief and fear)*

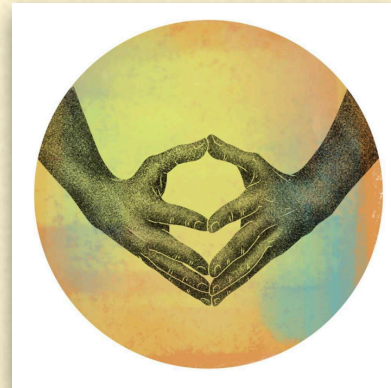


Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for interoception*)

Mudras to clarify and calm interoception

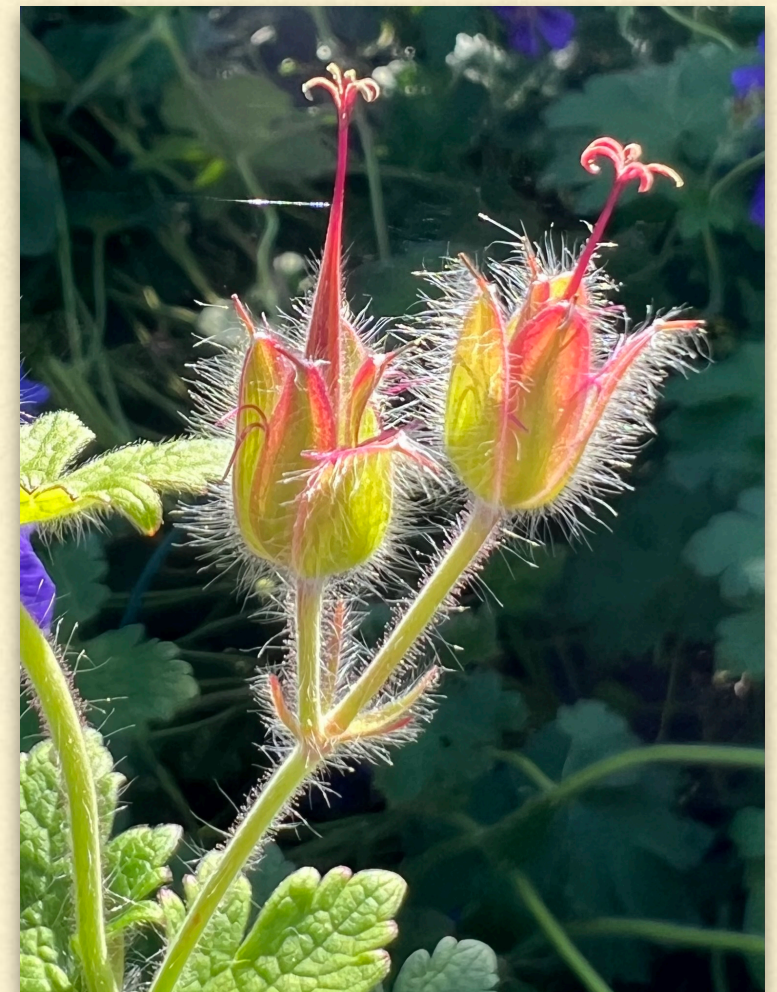
Hakini Mudra: *Formed by touching the tips of all fingers together to create a pyramid shape; used to still the mind, to awaken intuition and enhance inner awareness.*



Shankhavarta Mudra: Encircle the Thumb: *Wrap four fingers of your right hand completely around thumb of your left hand. Bring the tip of your right thumb to touch the tip of your extended left middle finger. Keep the remaining fingers of your left hand (index, ring, and little) gently extended and parallel to the middle finger, resting against the back of your right hand. This mudra is used for tuning into the inner guidance system and enhancing intuition.*



Anjali Mudra: *The prayer pose with palms and fingertips touching: placing hands in this position on the chest or lap helps ground the practitioner and heightens sensory awareness.*



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for muscle strength)*



4. Strengthening muscles to stabilize joints

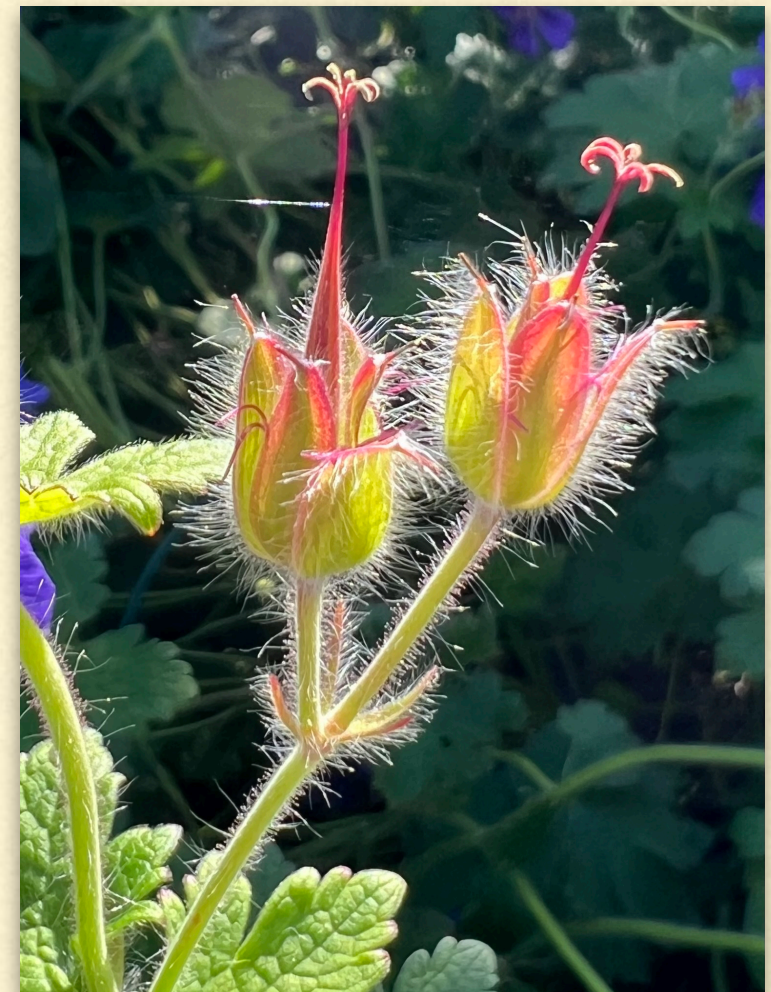
You might practice all three kinds of muscle contractions:

Concentric= when a muscle shortens. As in lying on your side and lifting your top leg...

Eccentric=when a muscle lengthens under a load while still contracting and trying to resist or slow down—as in slowly lowering your leg from the side lying leg lift...

Isometric= using muscles to hold you steady in a posture without moving. Holding plank position at the wall... or from standing with hands on a chair or counter...or from the ground.

Isometric contraction on both sides of a joint is a co-contraction, recommended for stabilizing joints in hEDS:
“Hug the muscles to the bone”



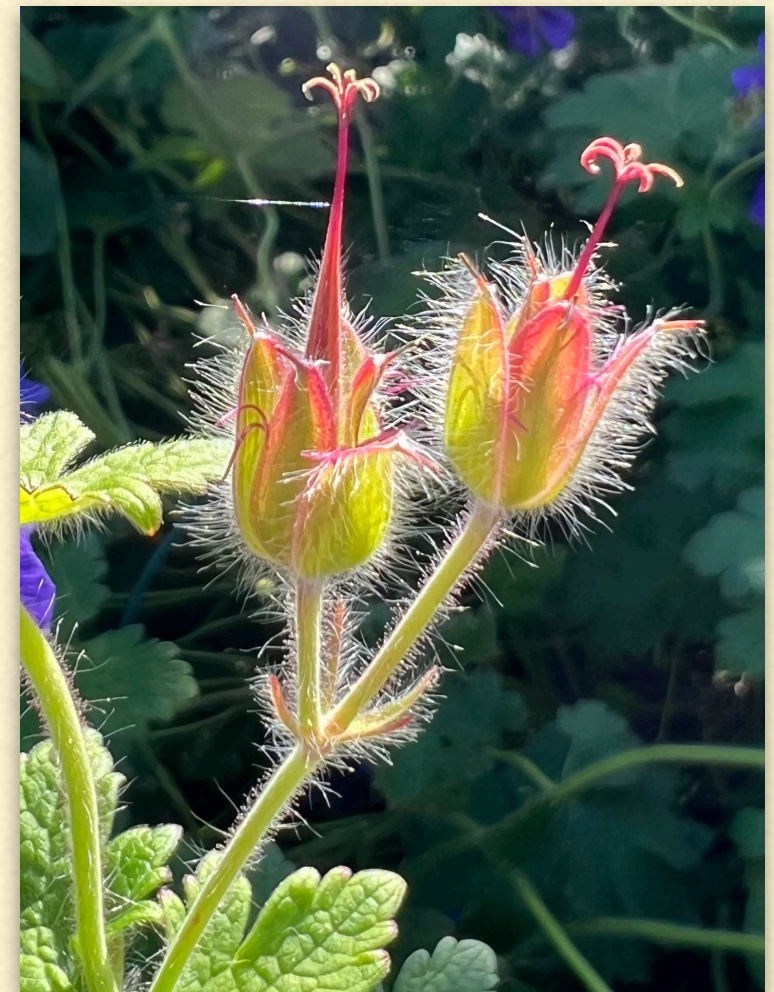
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for muscle strength*)

Strength exercises are good for hEDS because they...

- Improve the health of muscles, ligaments, tendons & bones
- Reduce risk of injuries
- Provide additional support to joints

*To cultivate core stability: plank, side plank, balancing plank
(bird dog) low bridge, low locust*



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

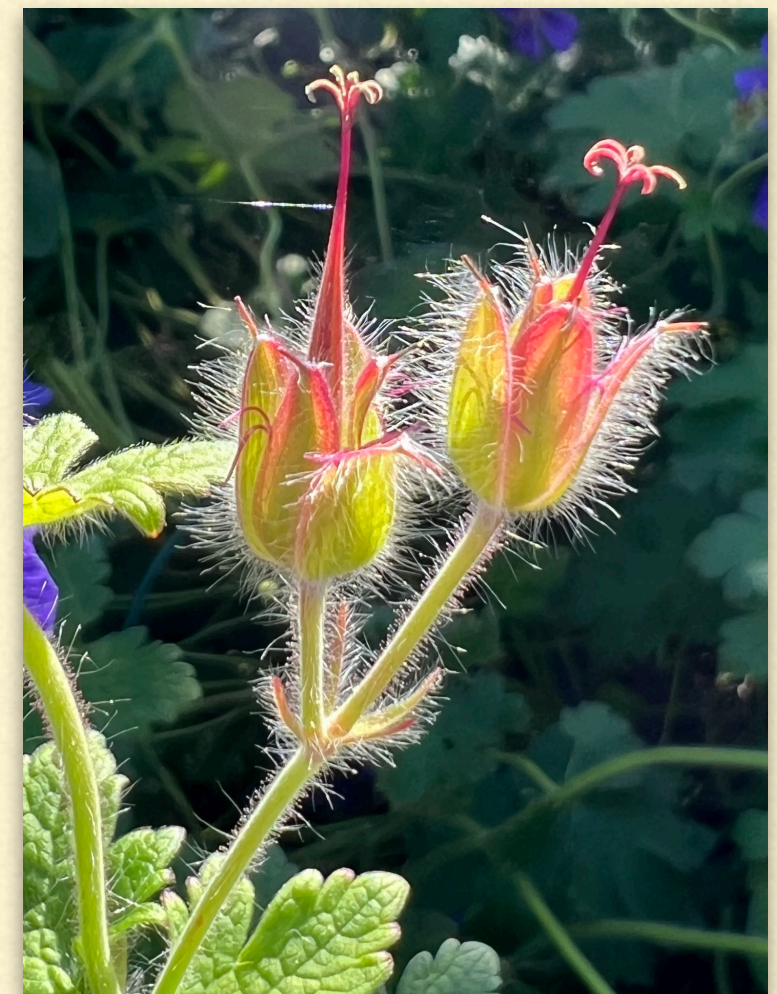
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for muscle strength*)



More for strength and stability, as symptoms allow:

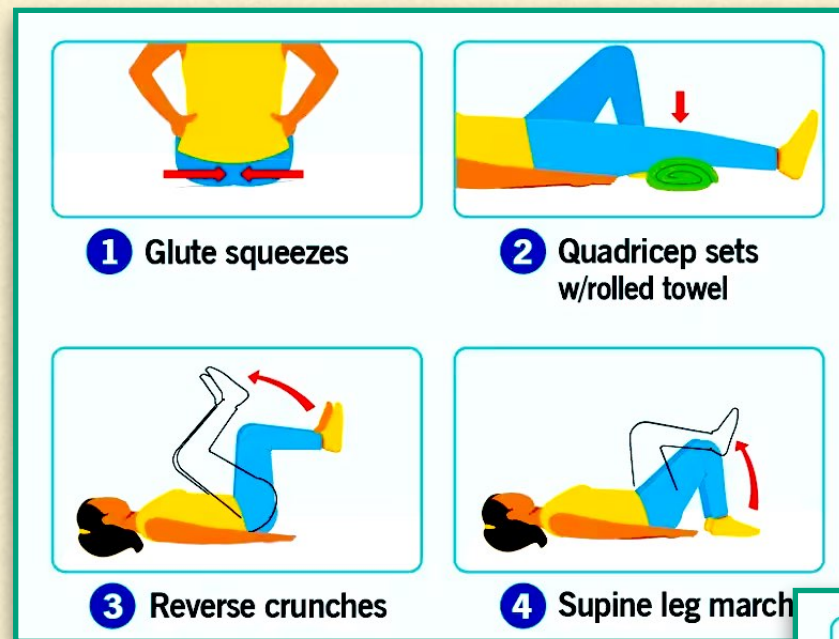
- Sit-to-stands from a chair
- Sitting in a chair or lying supine, loop resistance band around foot with knee bent, then straighten leg gently, pushing into the band
- Bicep curls holding small weight or can of beans :0)
- Strengthen shoulders with resistance band or small weight (careful not to push into subluxation)
- Supine Heel taps: Lie on your back and place your arms by your sides. Engage the abdominals and draw the navel toward your spine. With your knees bent at 90 degrees, lift them up to 90 degree angle from hips. With control, lower your right foot to touch the floor with your heel before returning it back to 90 degrees. Do the same movement with your left leg and continue to alternate tapping the right and then the left heel onto the floor.

Begin with a number of repetitions you feel won't cause a flare up, starting low; stop if anything makes your pain increase.

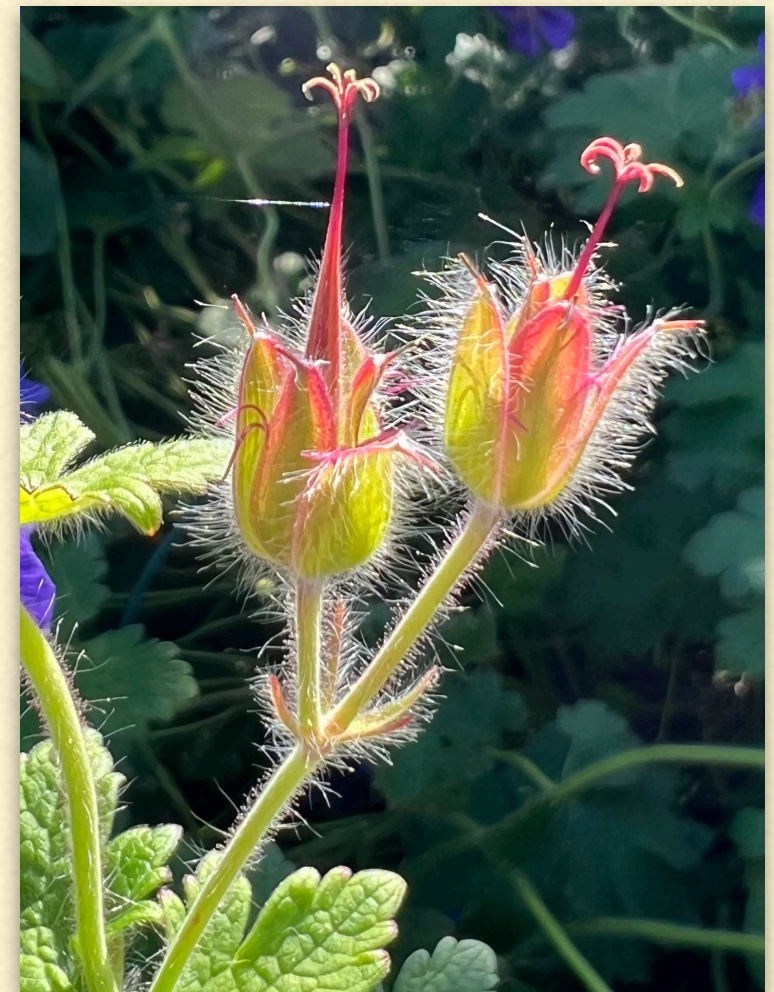
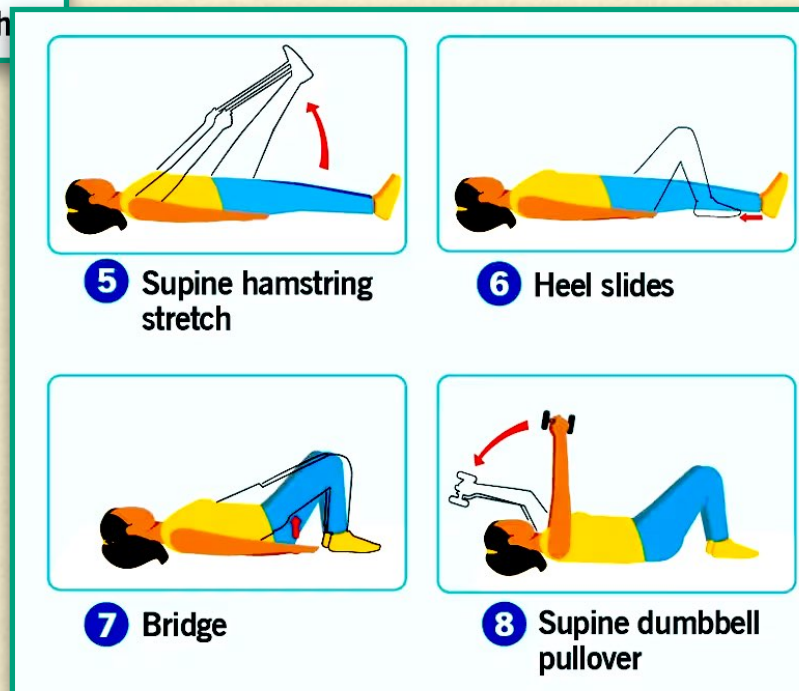


Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for muscle strength)*

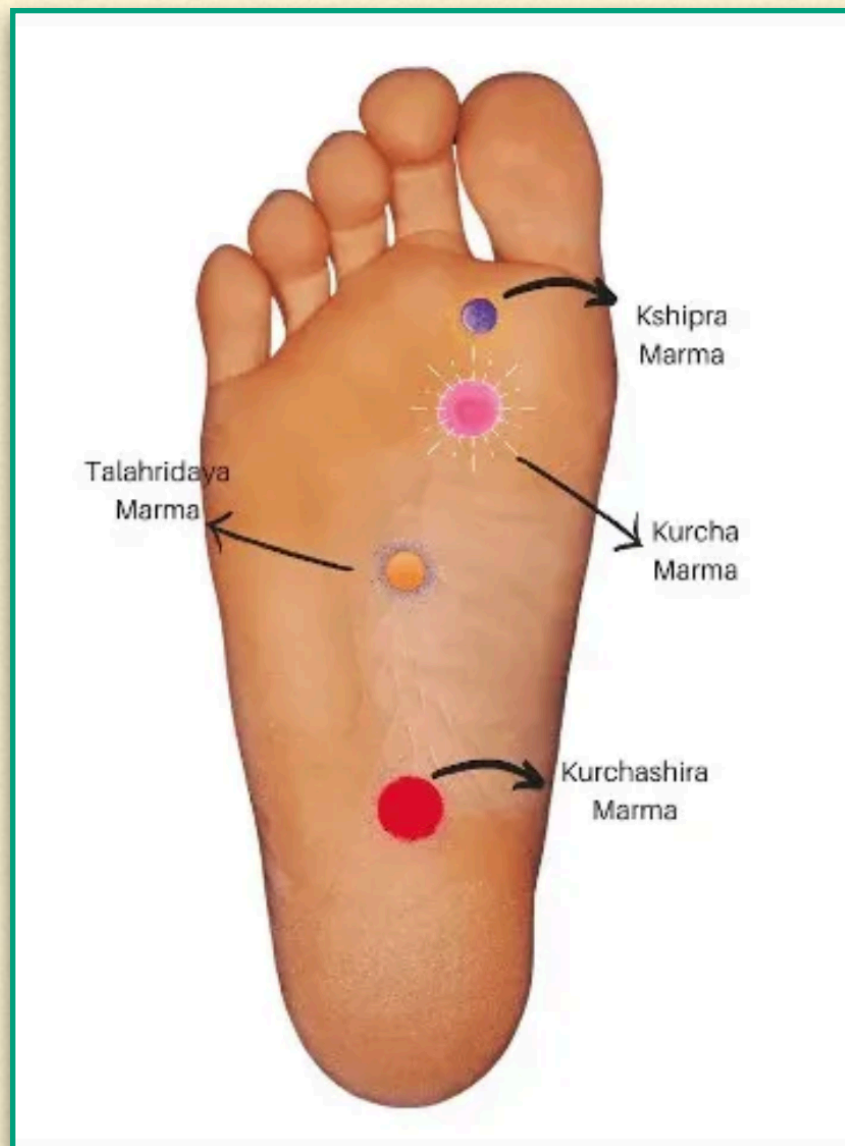


Some supine movements,
mostly for strengthening, for
people with POTS or Orthostatic
Intolerance who need to practice
from lying down (*with hEDS
taking extra care not to go
beyond mid range movements*)



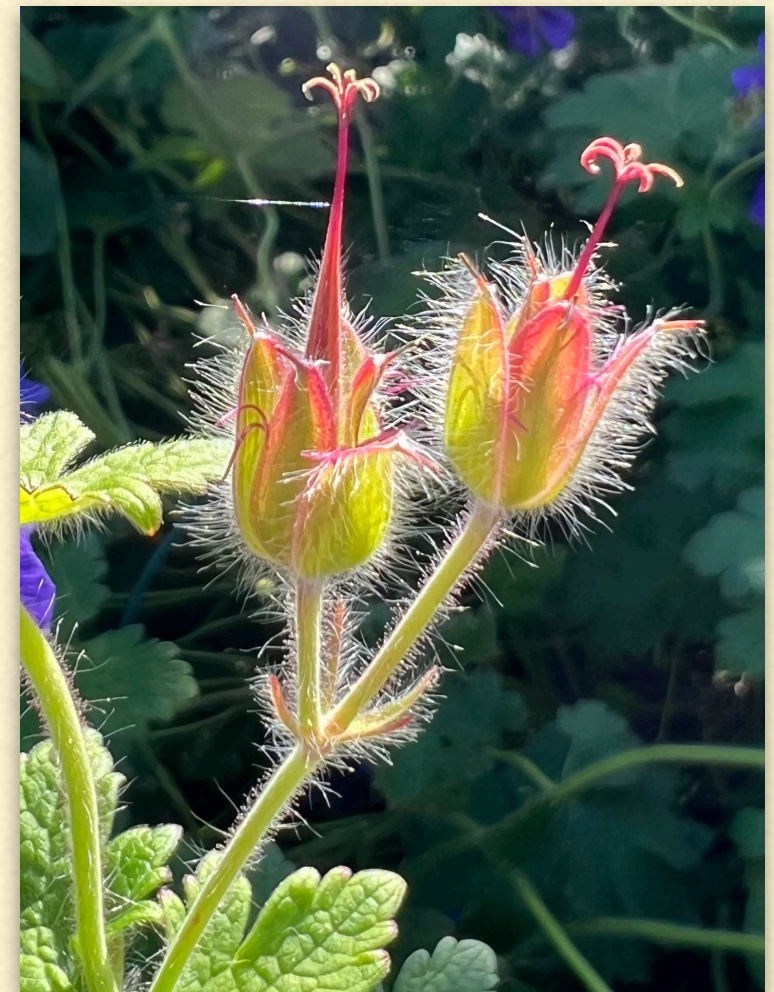
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for muscle strength*)



Kurchashira marma points—just in front of the heels on the soles of the feet—are **used to stimulate Mamsavahah Srotas**, the Ayurvedic channels responsible for the transportation and nourishment of muscle tissue (*mamsa dhatu*).

Kurchashira of the feet are also used to support good posture, and like the Kurchashira of the hands are used to improve digestion as well.



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

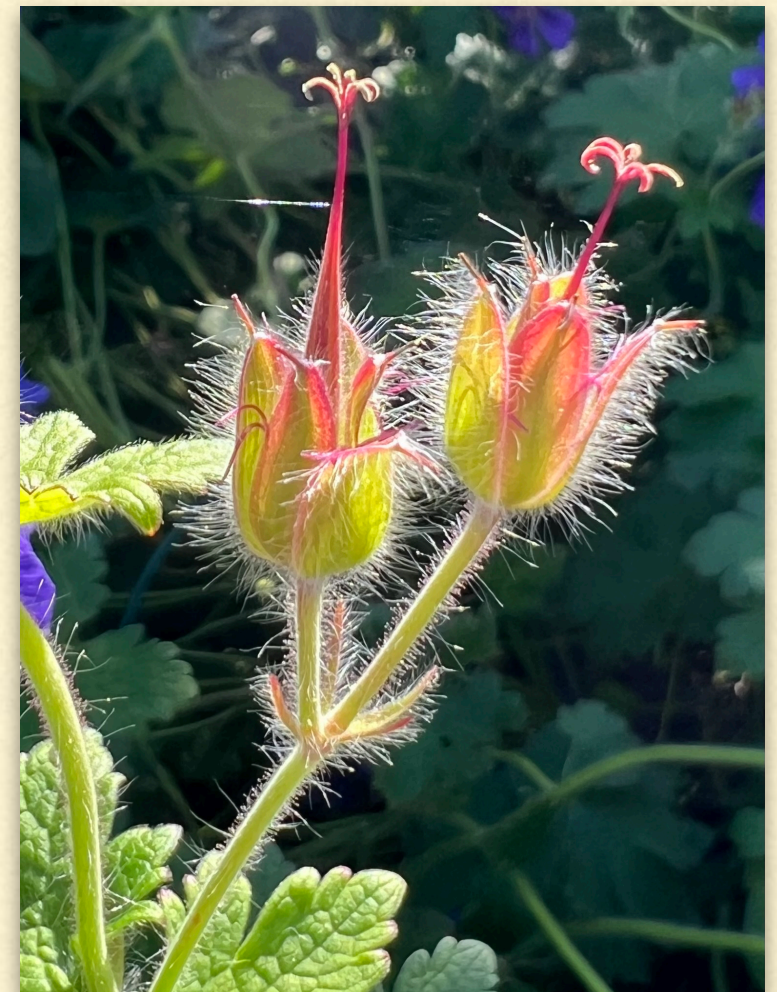
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for muscle strength*)



Ganesha Mudra physically strengthens the chest, arms, and shoulders while energetically activating the Anahata (heart) chakra to promote emotional well-being.

Palms together in front of your chest in *Anjali Mudra* (prayer position). **Swivel your hands** so that your fingertips point toward opposite elbows; ensure your right palm faces your heart and your left palm faces outward.

Bend your fingers and slide your hands across each other until your **fingers are interlocked in a hook grip**. Your thumbs should rest on the pinky fingers of the opposite hand. Keep your **hands at heart level**. **Exhale and gently pull your hands apart with sustained isometric force**.

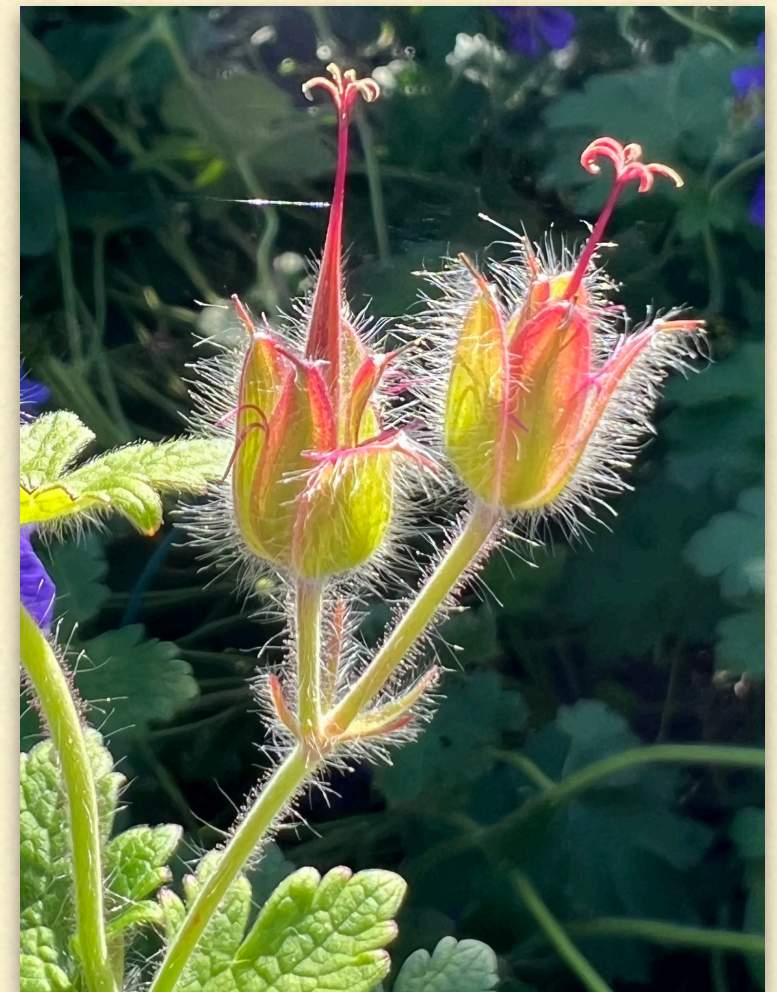


Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for muscle strength)*

Prithvi mudra, also known as the **Earth Mudra**, is said to strengthen the body by increasing the earth element while reducing the fire element.

This mudra specifically targets the structural foundation of the physical body, so it's used for building muscle mass, bone density, and overall physical stamina.

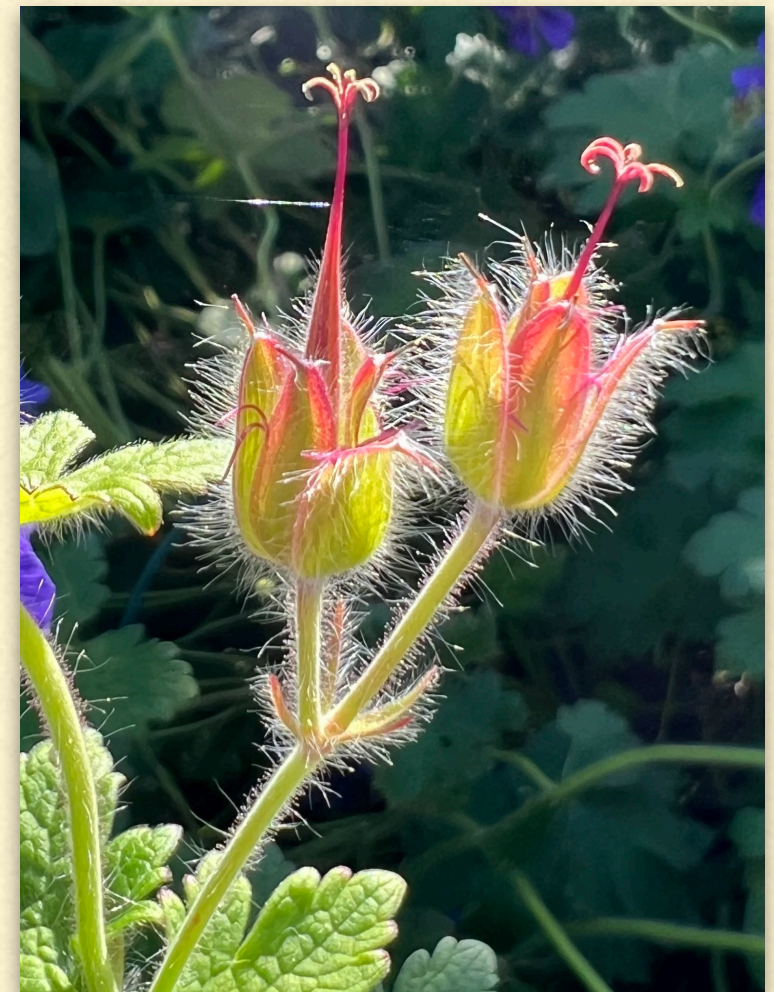


Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for muscle strength)*

Ayurvedic support for physical strength focuses on balancing Vata dosha, strengthening Mamsa Dhatu (muscle tissue), and enhancing Ojas (vital essence) through specific herbs and lifestyle practices.

Ashwagandha is widely recognized as a potent adaptogen that improves muscle mass, reduces fatigue, and enhances recovery, while **Shalit** provides essential minerals and fulvic acid to boost endurance and energy levels.



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

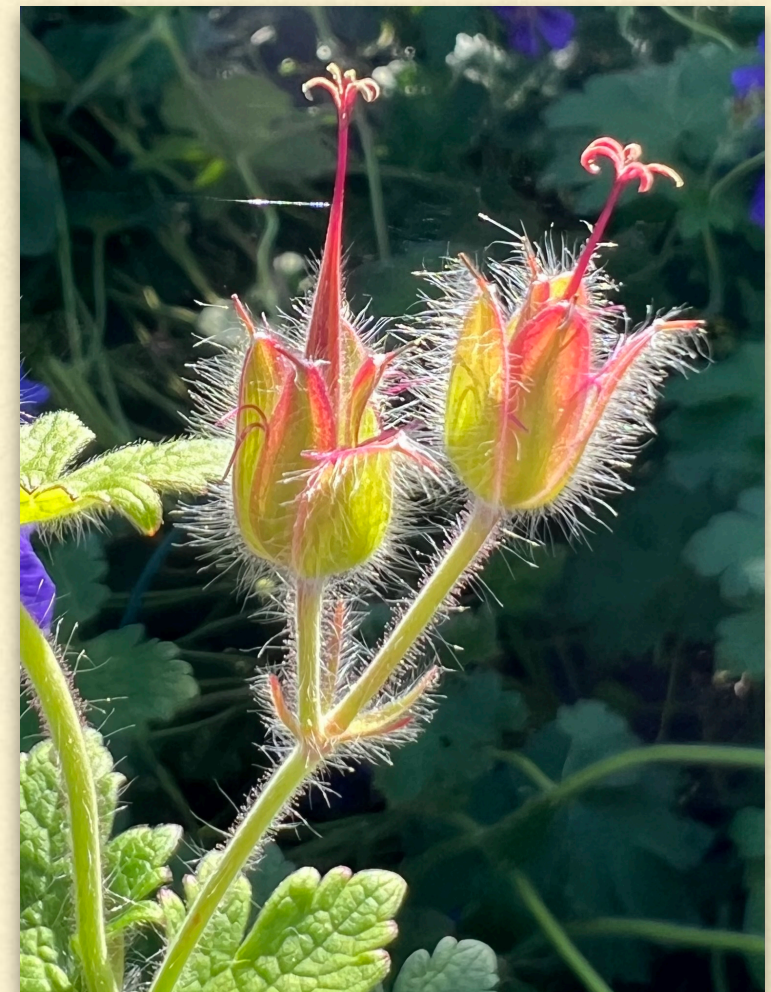
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for gentle stretching)*

5. Gentle mid-range stretches, with motor control

“Stretching a muscle moves its attachment sites away from each other, lengthening the muscle. **The stretch places tension (a pulling force) on the tissue. In effect, stretching is tension...**”

Add resistance to stretches to help hypermobile people feel the stretch without needing to go to the end of their range of motion, where they may be easily injured. You can use a strap or resistance band for this, or push against a wall.

- Gentle mid-range stretches
- Dynamic stretches (moving in and out of a gentle stretch)
- Isometric stretches (contracting muscles while they're lengthened)
- Active static stretches (as in holding legs lifted from supine and using muscle contraction on fronts of legs to stretch backs of legs)
- *For people with hEDS it may be good to avoid most passive static stretches.*



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for gentle stretching)*

*To develop more awareness of mid-range movements
you might experiment with cow and cat, for example—moving in and
out of extension and flexion once or twice at full range, trying the same
movement at 25 percent, then maybe 50 percent.*

**“With hEDS, learn to ‘Babygate’ yourself!
Hanging out in mid ranges...”**

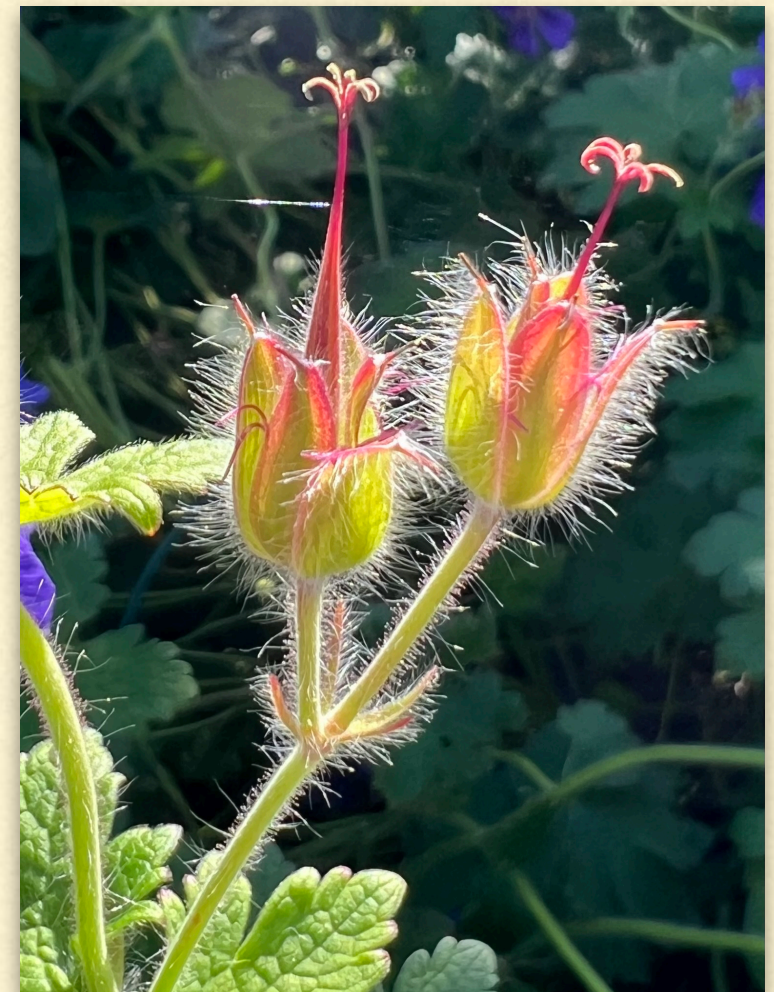
This can help in developing motor control.

**“Motor control is the ability of your brain and body to
communicate such that movement is:**

- purposeful
- regulated
- well-coordinated...

Think of it as stability in motion.”

—Libby Hinsley, PT, DPT, C-IAYT



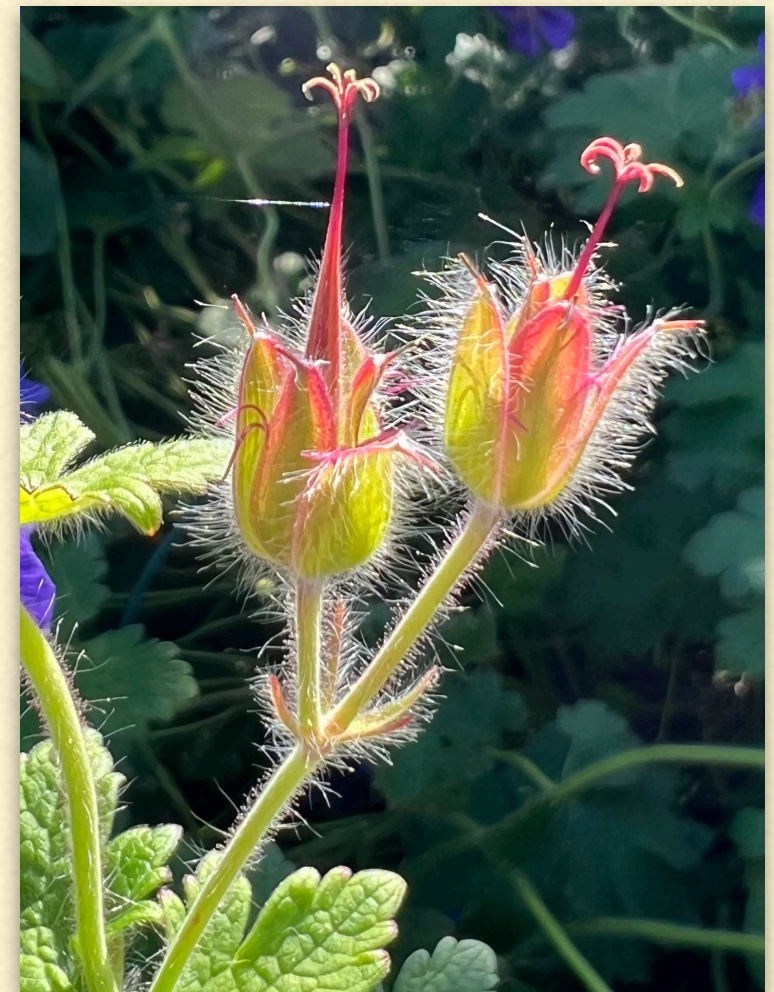
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*posture for breathing*)

6. Postural alignment for breathing—static, then dynamic

- For many people with hEDS breathing can be limited by weak connective tissues in the trunk. When upright it can be helpful to practice creating a good zone of apposition, vertical ribcage centered over a level pelvis, to aid breathing.
- *This alignment can be especially difficult to feel for people with hEDS, but it can be learned, and will support them in breathing well.*
- From finding a good zone of apposition in standing mountain, they might practice maintaining this alignment while moving:
 - in and out of Warrior 1
 - in and out of Chair position
 - practice returning to it slowly, from arched or flexed torso

*For people with POTS or other Orthostatic Intolerance (difficulty being upright because of Dysautonomia) **the zone of apposition alignment can be explored from a supine position instead.***



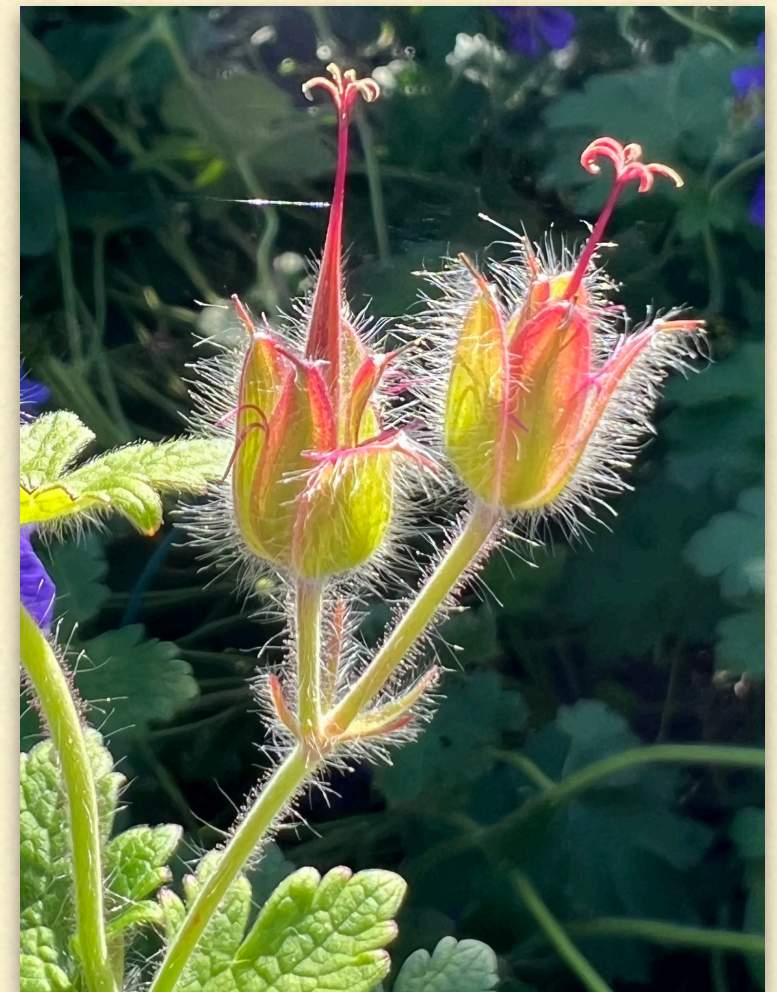
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*posture for breathing*)

To practice postural alignment and creating a good zone of apposition while lying on your back:

- **Practice some arch/release, flatten/release pandiculations**, to feel into a fairly neutral starting position for your spine
- **Feel your “hip bones”** (where you put your hands for “hands on hips” — the Anterior Superior Iliac Spine, or ASIS) **Check that fronts of the “hip bones” are at the same height from the ground as your pubic bone.**
- Check that your **rib cage feels neutral, lined up with pelvis.**
- Maybe **explore a 6-point check in of supine alignment: tailbone centered, two sides of the back of the pelvis balanced, two shoulder blades balanced, neck and head centered.**

To feel and practice this dynamically, you might repeat the arch/release, flatten/release, returning each time to postural alignment of pelvis and rib cage.



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

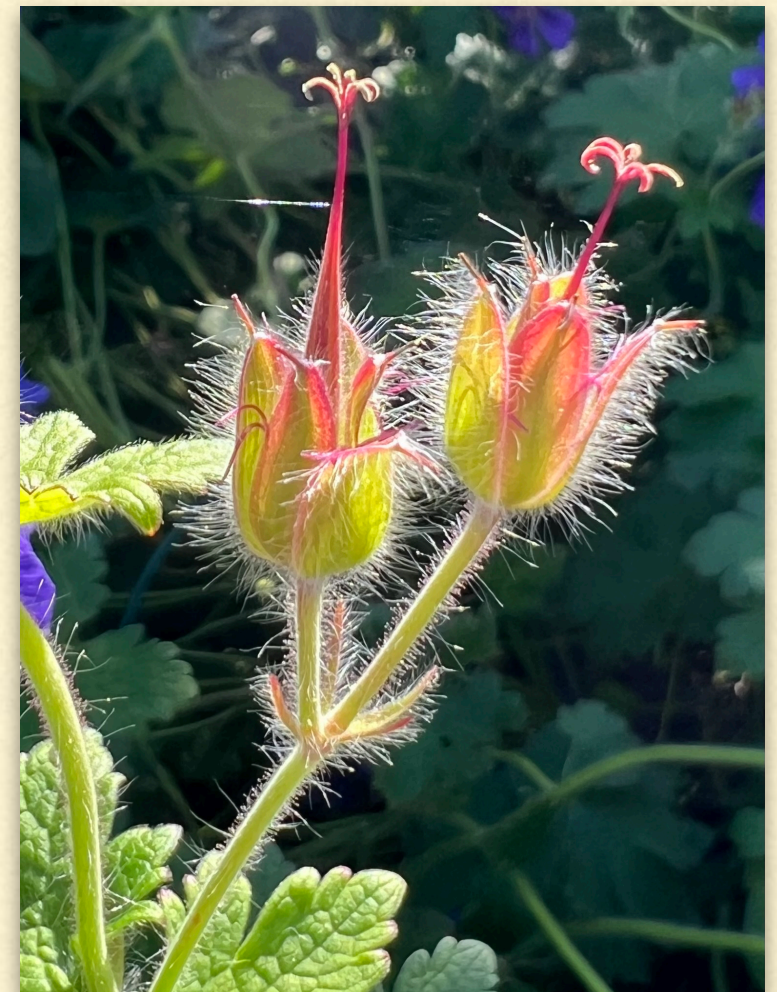
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for balance)*

7. Balance

Balance can be hard for people if they have Dysautonomia or POTS, and sometimes hard simply because of hEDS exhaustion.

- When possible they might **practice balance from standing on one leg and “stacking the cookies” — stacking up their body over the foot on that side, like a tube of Girl Scout cookies***. With the other leg lifted slightly they might bend the knee of the leg supporting them, to lower and lift their body if they feel able to, maintaining the stacked alignment.
- Practice balancing asanas, maybe with a hand against a wall or on a counter for support.
- Balance can also be practiced from hands and knees in Table position, through Balancing plank / Bird dog, or to some extent from supine, with Dead Bug movements and a stabilized core.

**Thank you to my yoga therapist colleague Donna Addkison for this :0)*

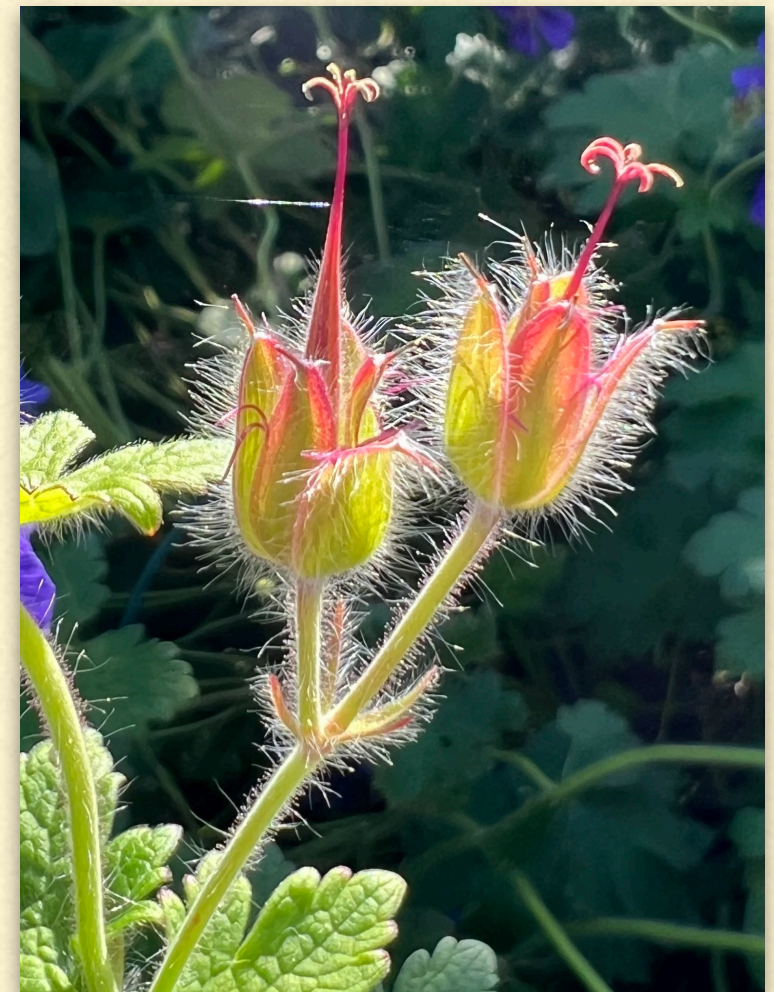


Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for balance*)

Marma Chikitsa for balance, and to help with vertigo and dizziness (the same marma points as for proprioception):

- **Shivarandhra** (*back of top of the head, stimulates the parietal lobe to help with proprioception and balance*)
- **Manyamula** (*top of the back of the neck, center, just below skull*)
- **Vidhuraam to Manyamani:** *massaging six points on the back of the neck in long sweeping strokes down both sides of spine*



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

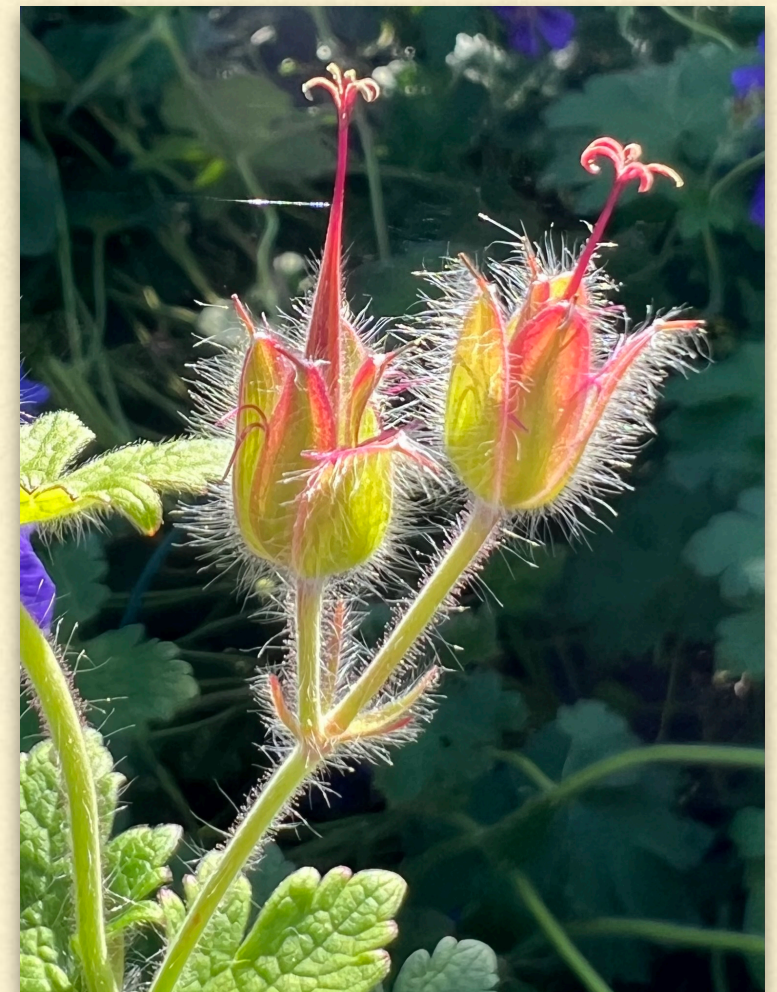
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for balance*)

Mudras that are used to
strengthen balance &
diminish vertigo...

Prana Mudra *pinky and ring finger
to tip of thumb, is used to activate
dormant energy, to enhance overall
vitality and immune function*

Prithvi Mudra *ring finger to thumb,
said to increase stability by calming
the nervous system and enhancing
the body's sense of position*

Shunya Mudra *middle finger to
thumb, is the primary hand gesture
recommended for vertigo, as it
reduces the excess space element
(Akasha) in the inner ear that
causes dizziness and imbalance.*



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

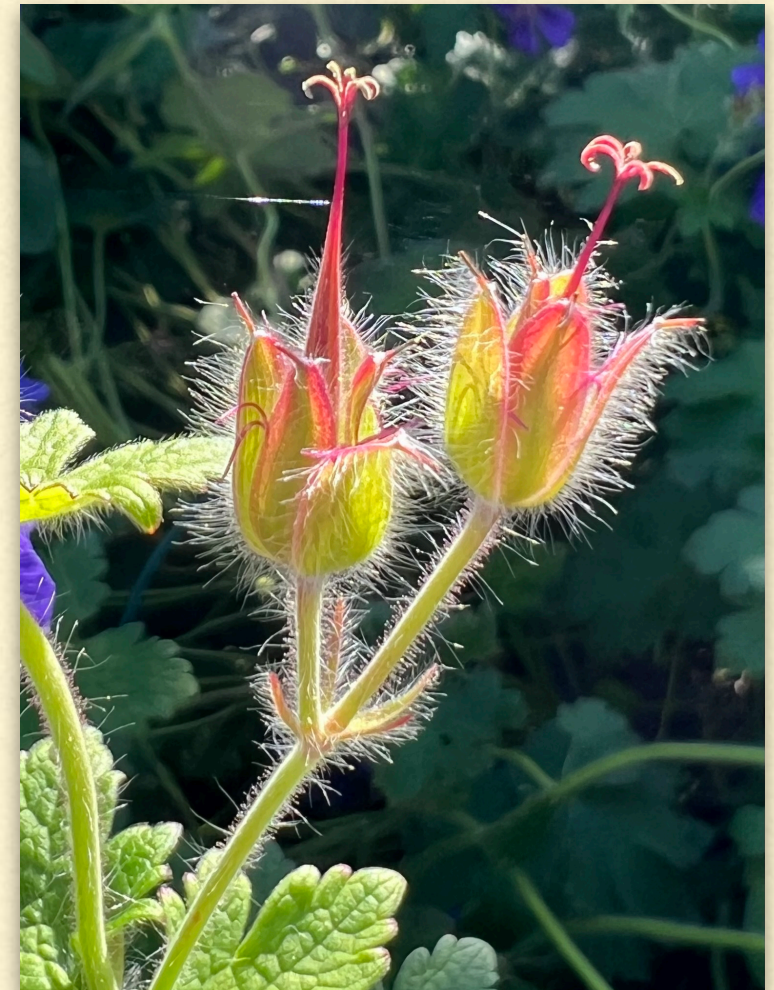
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for good digestion)*



8. Practices to support good digestion

Dietary support: if the person is unfamiliar with this but interested, you might offer this **allopathic resource with dietary recommendations for people with hEDS:**

<https://practicalgastro.com/2024/06/17/nutritional-considerations-for-hypermobile-ehlers-danlos-syndrome/>

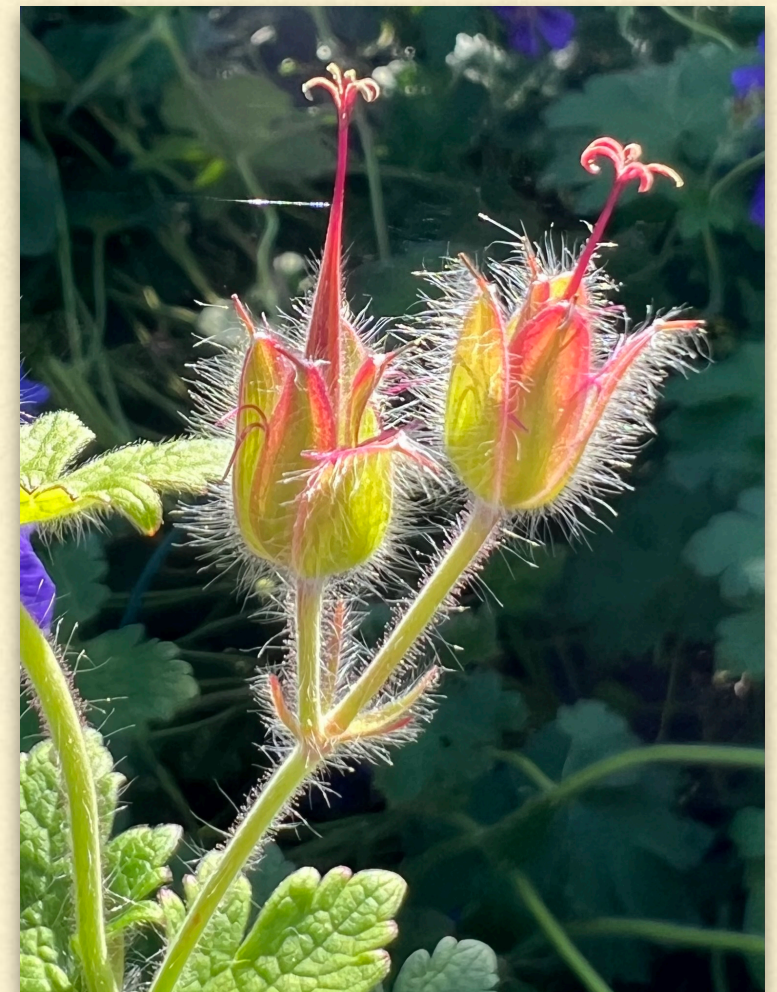


Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for good digestion)*

If a person is interested, you might also offer **basic Ayurvedic recommendations** for a **Vata-pacifying diet**:

- *Warm soups*
- *Steamed vegetables*
- *Root vegetable stews*
- *Mung beans*
- *Lentils*
- *Cooked greens*
- *Well-cooked legumes with spices*
- *Ghee, olive oil*
- *Chamomile tea, tulsi tea, golden milk*
- *Warm, oily, grounding meals.*



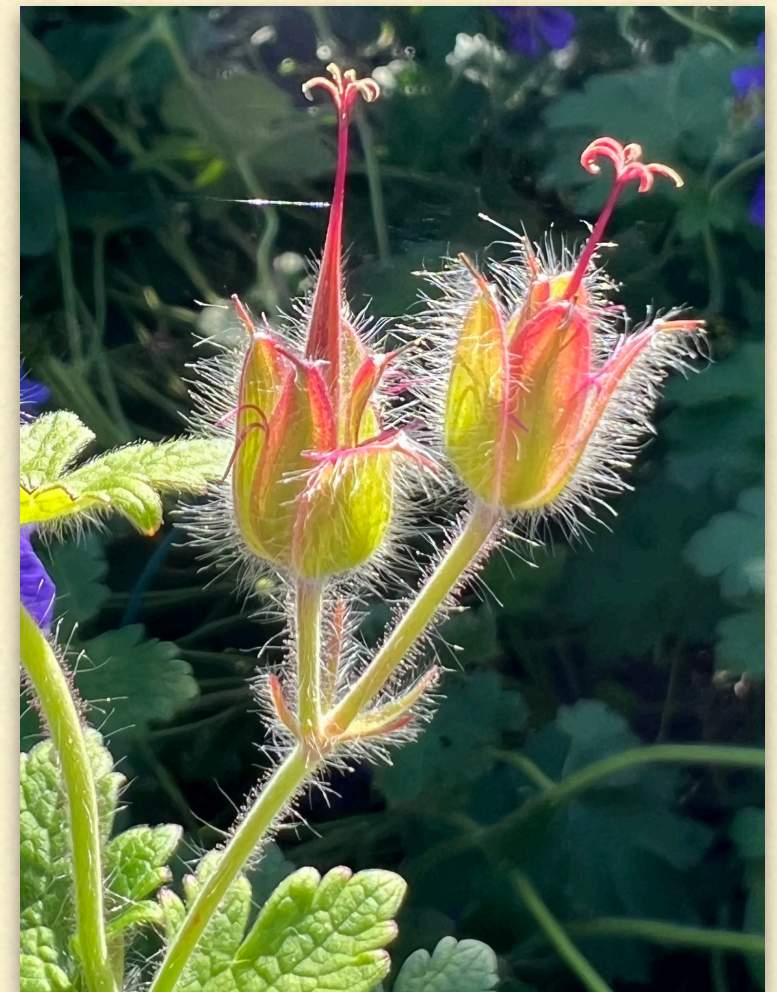
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for good digestion)*

More Ayurvedic recommendations for good digestion:

- Incorporate ginger, cumin, fennel, coriander, and turmeric into meals, to stimulate enzyme production and reduce bloating.
- Herbal Remedies: Use Triphala for colon cleansing and regularity, Ajwain (carom seeds) for gas, and warm water with lemon in the morning.
- Eat food slowly, only until 70% full *(learning to feel when this may be true can be a practice in itself, to strengthen interoception)*
- Practice gentle yoga asanas that stimulate digestion, like Pavanamuktasana and Bhujangasana; massage the abdomen in clockwise spirals from the navel outwards.
- Take walks after meals; manage stress through meditation or Pranayama.

For individualized support it's recommended to consult with an Ayurvedic doctor.



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for good digestion)*



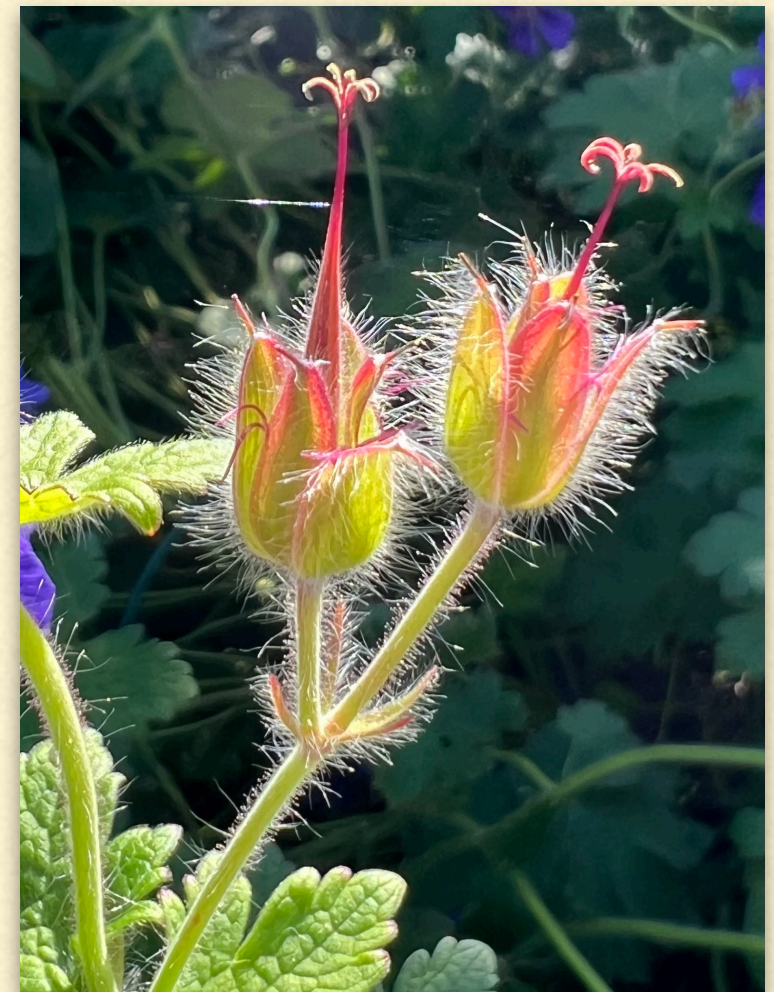
Marma Chikitsa to help with digestion and gastric issues:

Several facial marma are used to stimulate healthy digestion, which is central to Ayurvedic treatment for many ailments:

- **Shankha** *(both temples)*
- **Urdhva Ganda** *(both sides of the bridge of the nose)*
- **Kapola madhya** *(the centers of both cheeks)*
- **Ostha** *(below the base of the nose)*
- **Hanu** *(top of the chin)*

Also:

- **Manyamula** *(center of the top of the neck, for good metabolism)*
- **Nabhi Marma** *(navel: massage, spiraling clockwise & outwards)*



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

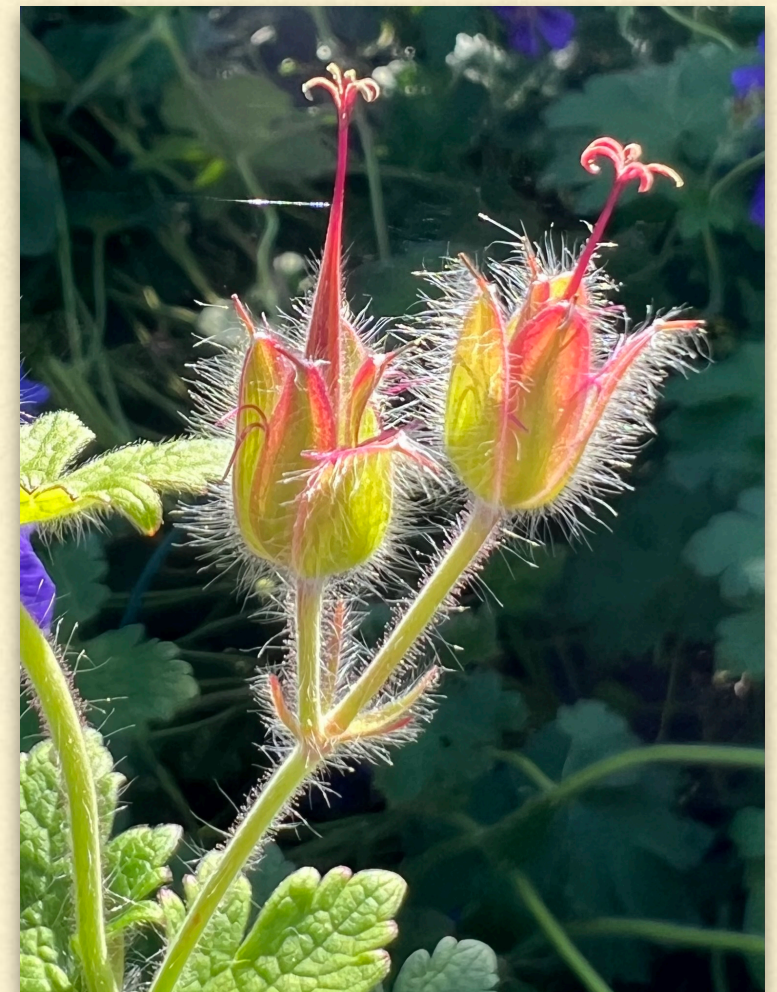
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (for good digestion)

Mudras for digestion & gastric issues:

Pushan mudra: *With right hand, outstretch your pinky and ring fingers, while pressing the tips of the thumb, forefinger, and middle fingers together. With left hand, outstretch the pointer and pinky fingers, while bringing the tips of the thumb, middle, and ring fingers together. **Used to stimulate prana vayu (receptivity), samana vaya (assimilation and digestion) and apana vayu (elimination).***

Prana mudra: Press the tips of the ring finger, little finger and thumb together, while outstretching the middle and pointer fingers. Used for calming aggravated digestion, and for supporting liver health.

Apana mudra: Press middle and ring fingers to your thumb, leaving pointer & pinky fingers outstretched. Used for purifying: cleansing blood & helping to rid the body of toxic waste, also used for constipation and flatulence.



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for nasal congestion*)

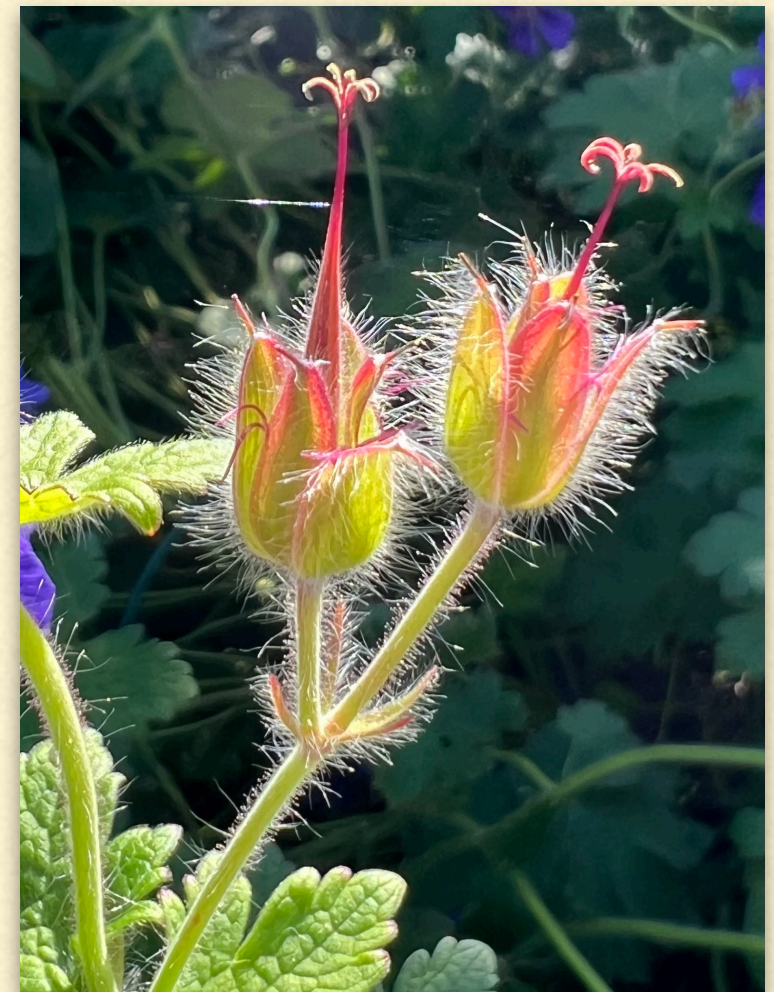
9. Practices for nasal congestion *from allergies & Mast Cell Activation Syndrome*

Asana practices:

Gentle postures and movements may increase blood flow to the face and encourage natural sinus drainage...

Certain yoga asanas gently stretch the chest and may make **breathing easier** both by promoting relaxation and by improving airflow.

Many asanas also support Immunity: Yoga is associated with anti-inflammatory effects and may help support the immune system. Some studies suggest regular asana practice could help reduce the frequency of sinus infections and contribute to overall respiratory health (*International Journal of Yoga*, 2019).

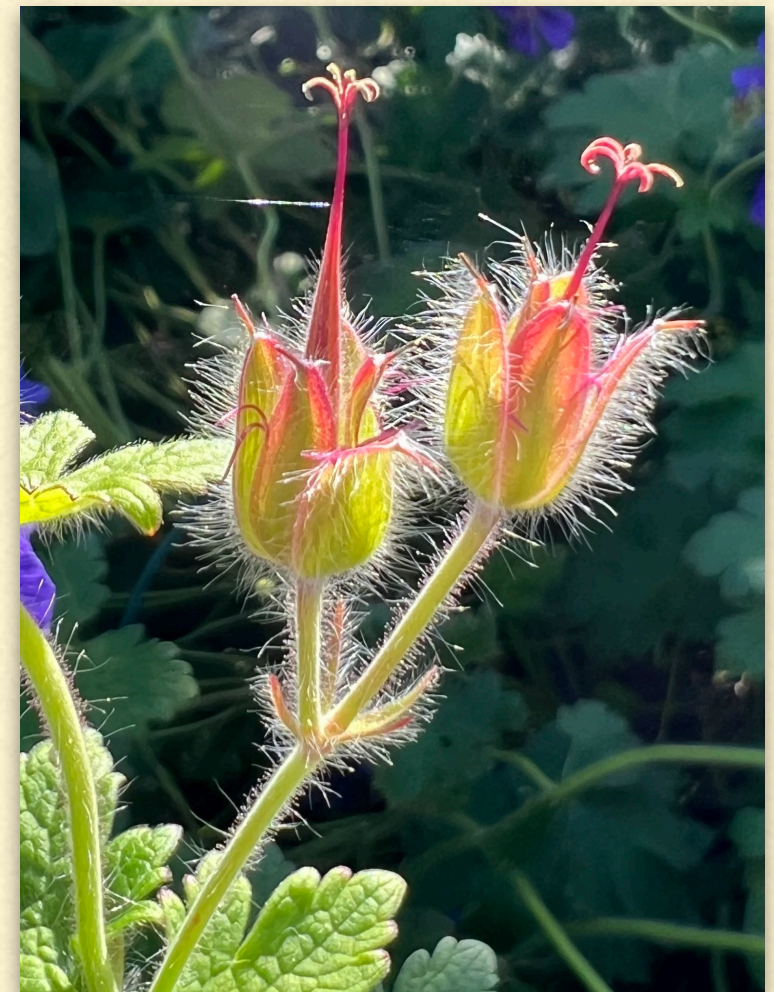


Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for nasal congestion*)

Ayurveda treats congestion as a **Kapha imbalance** caused by excess mucus and weakened digestion (Agni), requiring a holistic approach of dietary changes, herbal remedies, and physical therapies.

Key interventions include **Nasya therapy** (instilling warm oil like Anu Taila in nostrils), **Jala Neti** (saline nasal irrigation), and **steam inhalation with eucalyptus or tulsi** to clear nasal passages.



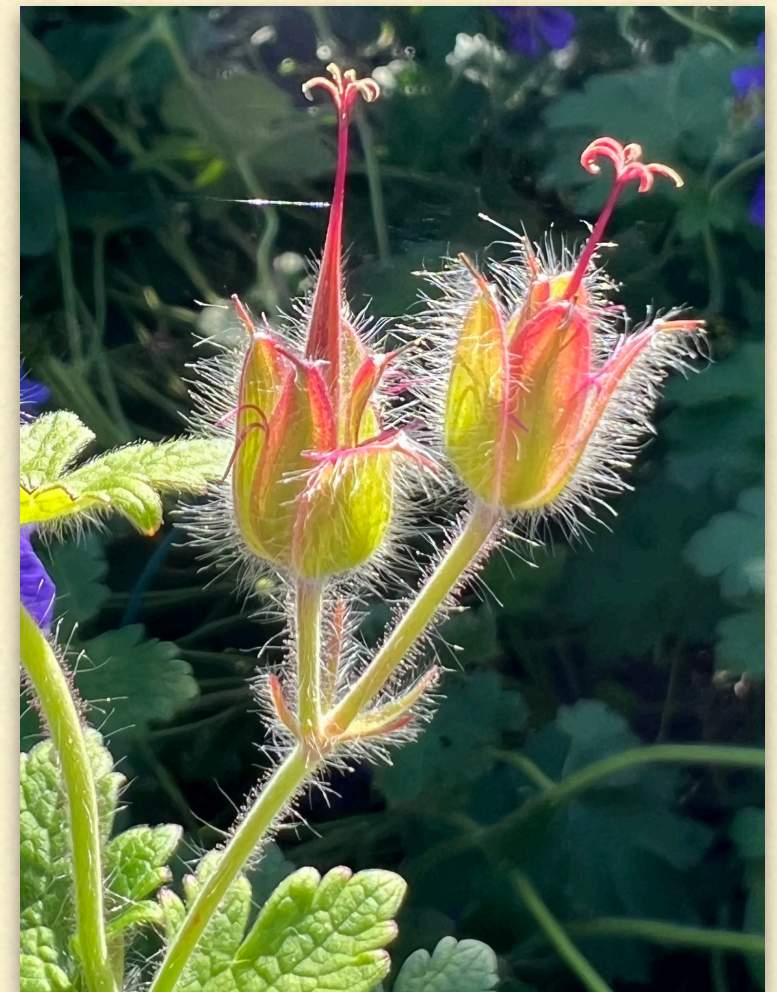
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for nasal congestion*)

Ayurvedic remedies and diet for congestion tend to focus on heating spices and light foods, to dry excess moisture:

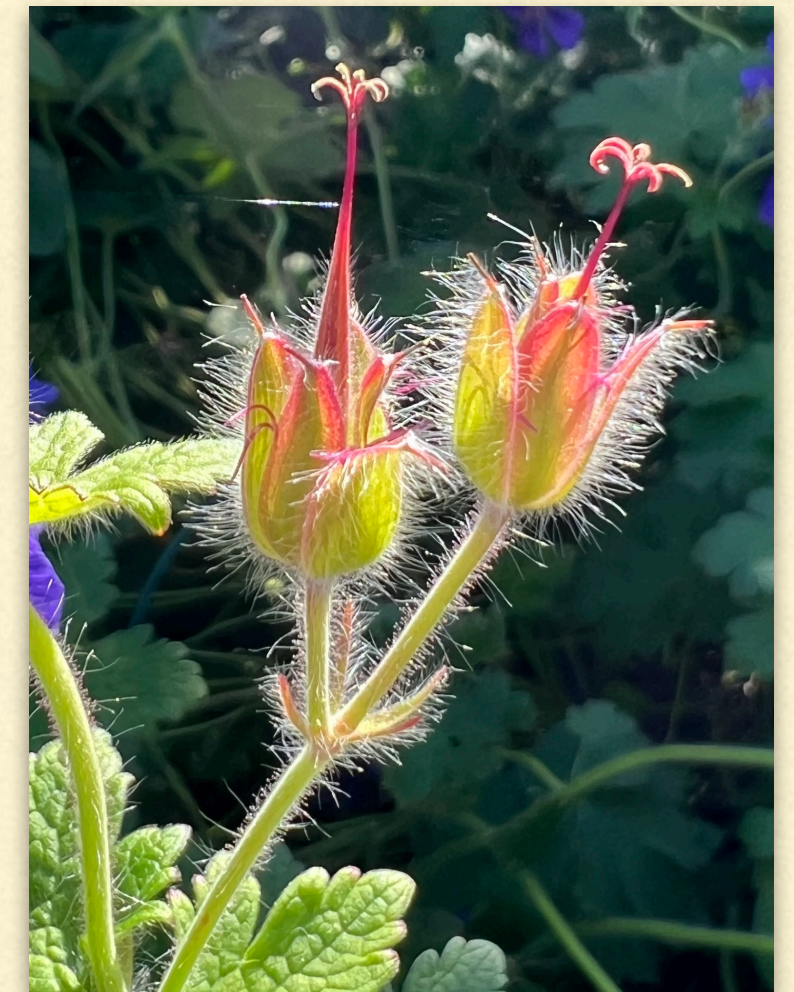
- Herbal Formulations: Trikatu (ginger, black pepper, long pepper) and Sitopaladi Churna act as expectorants to liquefy and expel mucus.
- Home Remedies: Warm turmeric milk, ginger-tulsi tea, and honey with lemon to help reduce inflammation and soothe the respiratory tract.
- Dietary Adjustments: Avoid cold, heavy, and mucus-forming foods like dairy, sugar, and raw vegetables; instead, consume warm, spiced, and cooked meals.

Lifestyle practices such as Pranayama (breathing exercises like Anuloma Viloma), Abhyanga (warm oil massage), and gentle yoga asanas (e.g., Bhujangasana) help improve lung capacity, circulation.



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for nasal congestion)*



Marma Chikitsa for nasal congestion

- **Antara vartma, madhya vartma, bahya vartma**
(Sweeping along the top of the cheekbones, from center outwards)
- **Nasa madhya** *(bridge of the nose)*
- **Urdhva Ganda** *(two sides of the bridge of the nose)*

Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for nasal congestion*)

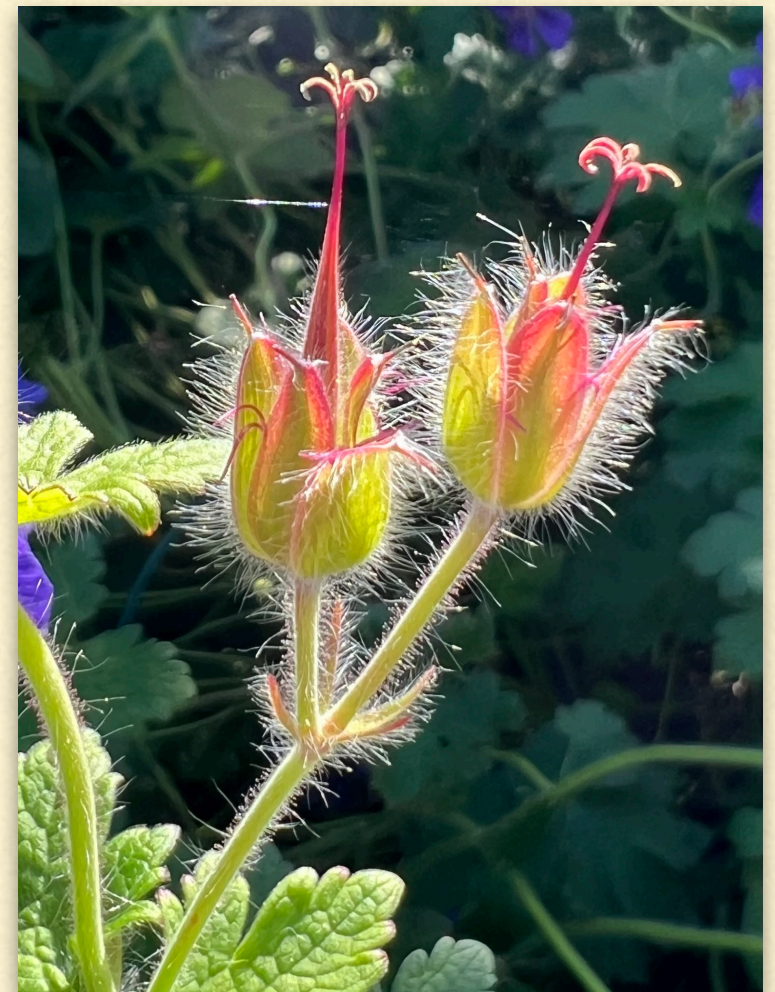
Mudras for nasal congestion

Bhramara mudra is done by curling the index finger to the base of the thumb, middle finger to tip of thumb, ring and pinkie fingers outstretched. Used to reduce allergic reactions such as the common cold, runny nose, tonsillitis, hay fever, skin rashes, itching, and sneezing.

Surya mudra takes the thumb to the joint of the bent middle finger: it's used to help maintain body temperature during the winter and prevent symptoms such as shivering, dry skin, sore throat, common cold, and joint discomfort.

Linga mudra Interlock all your fingers keeping the right thumb extended upwards. Join your left index finger and left thumb around the right thumb to form a circle. Linga mudra is believed to increase body temperature and improve respiratory efficiency.

Also: Prithvi, Apana Vaya, and Vaya mudras



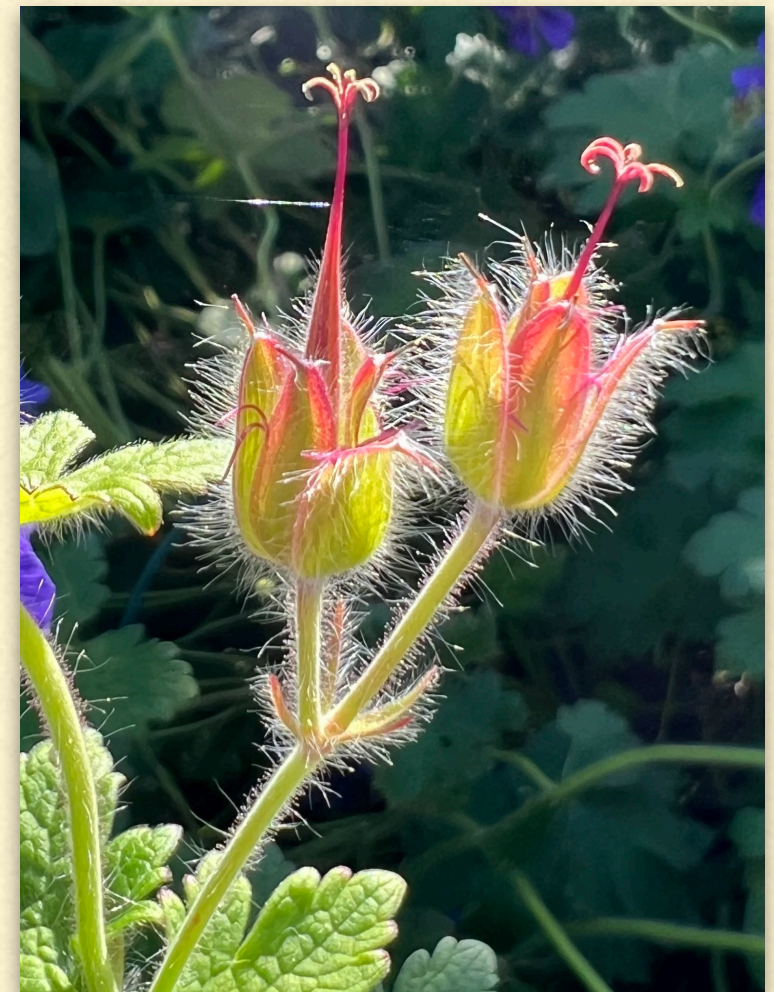
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for circulation*)



10. Practices to support good circulation

- **Lying down with legs elevated** on a couch, up a wall, or supporting one leg up at time using a yoga strap or Thera band— *especially for people who have Chronic Venous Insufficiency, these gentle versions of Viparita Karani may help; also gentle Bridge pose (Setu Bandhasana)*
- **Self-massage:** Abhyanga (Ayurvedic oil massage), effleurage, fascial listening, lymphatic drainage massage
- **Garshana:** Ayurvedic dry brushing of the skin (if tolerated)
- **Pranayama:** Nasal breathing to produce nitric oxide and promote good circulation; Anuloma Viloma may also help.

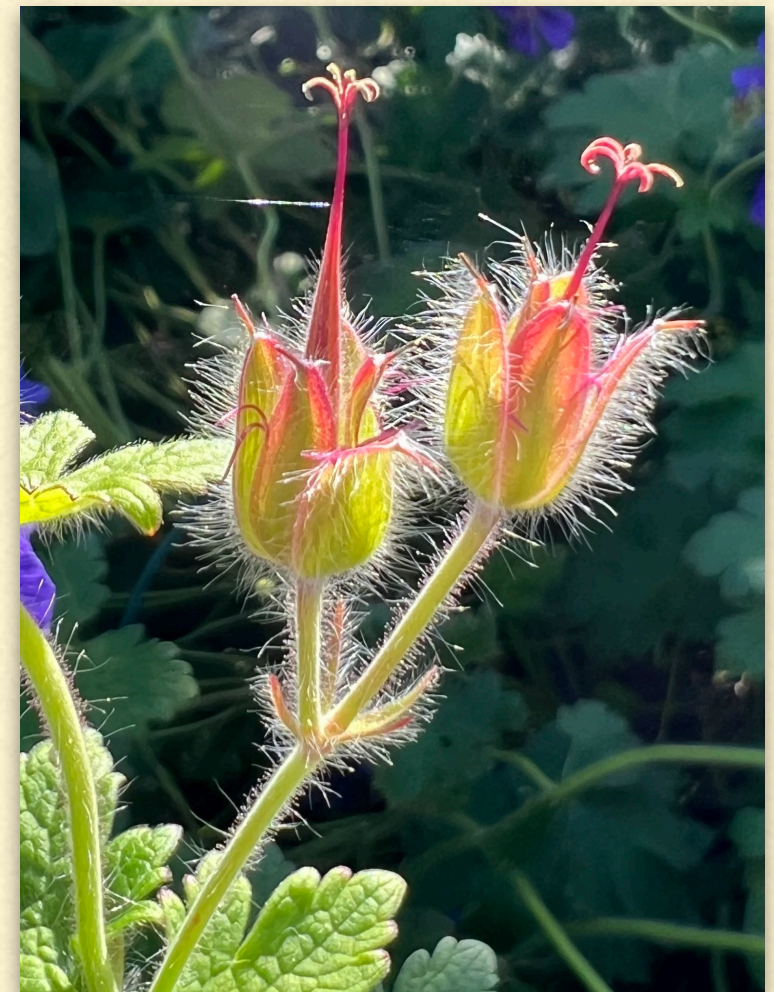


Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS (*for circulation*)

Ayurvedic herbs and spices used to support good circulation:

- **Arjuna** (*Terminalia arjuna*): A potent cardi tonic used to strengthen heart muscles, stabilize blood pressure, and support healthy blood plasma.
- **Ashwagandha** (*Withania somnifera*): An adaptogen used to reduce stress and cortisol levels, lowering sympathetic overactivity that can strain the heart.
- **Guggul** (*Commiphora mukul*): Exhibits lipid-lowering and anti-inflammatory effects, used to clear blockages and improve blood vessel health.
- **Garlic & Ginger**: Used as natural blood thinners and anti-inflammatories, to promote smooth circulation and reduce the risk of clot formation.
- **Turmeric**: Contains curcumin, which enhances nitric oxide production to help blood vessels relax and dilate.
- **Triphala**: A blend of three fruits used to detoxify the body, support digestion, and reduce inflammation, which may also help improve cardiovascular health.



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

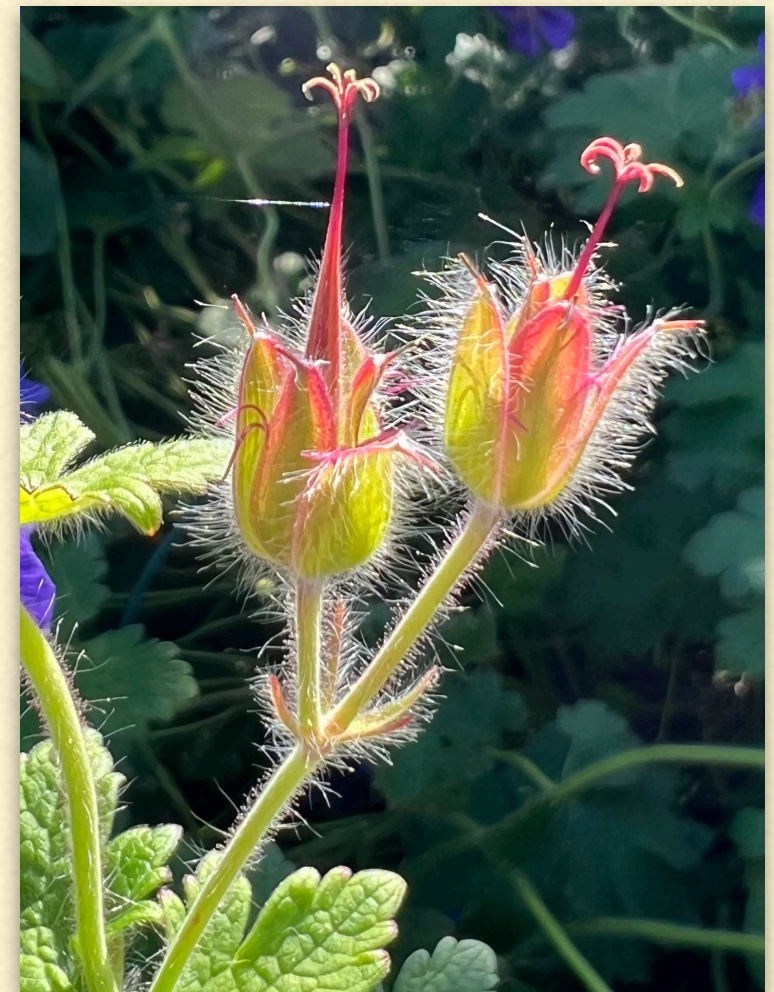
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for circulation)*



Marma Chikitsa to support good circulation:

Hridaya *(the heart center, to support the physical heart, the emotional heart, and good circulation of blood through the body.)*

Tal Hridaya *(four points, at the centers of the palms of the hands, and the centers of the arches of the feet; used especially for promoting good circulation and healthy blood pressure)*



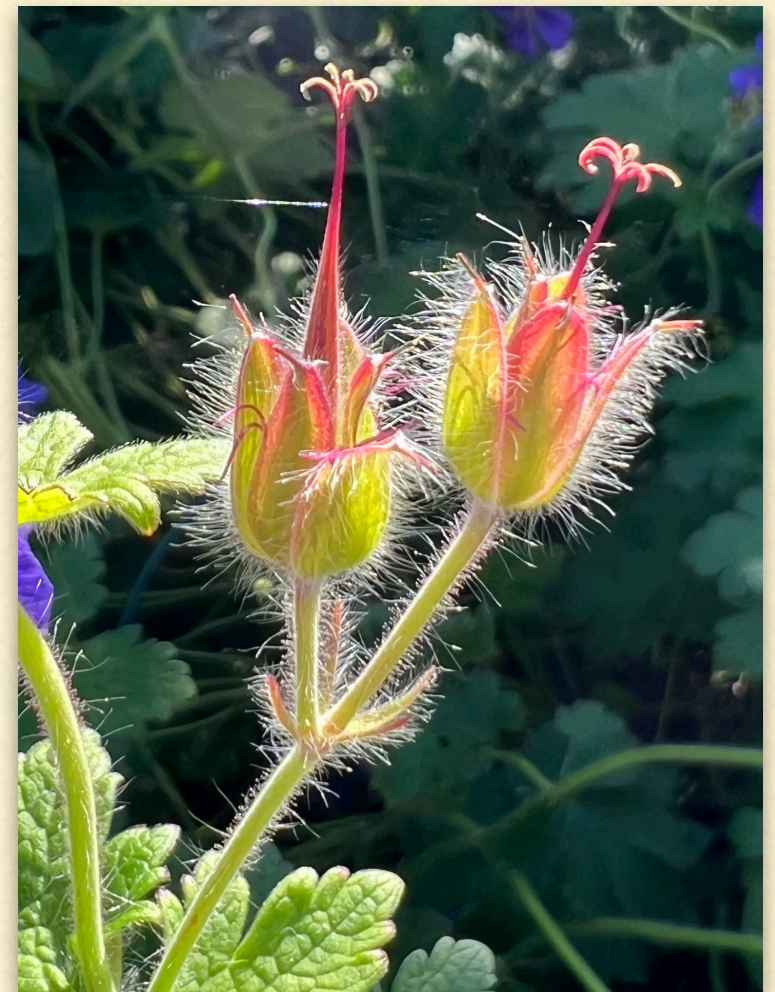
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS *(for circulation)*

**Mudras for good circulation
and heart health:**

Apan vayu mudra: Curl your index finger to the base of your thumb, bring middle and ring finger to the tip of your thumb and extend pinky. Often known as the heart mudra, this is said to prevent heart attacks, and has been used for thousands of years to promote heart health.

Vajra mudra for good circulation:
*press your thumb to the middle
fingernail, your ring finger on the other
side of your middle fingernail, and your
little finger at the side of your ring
fingernail; extend your index finger.*



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

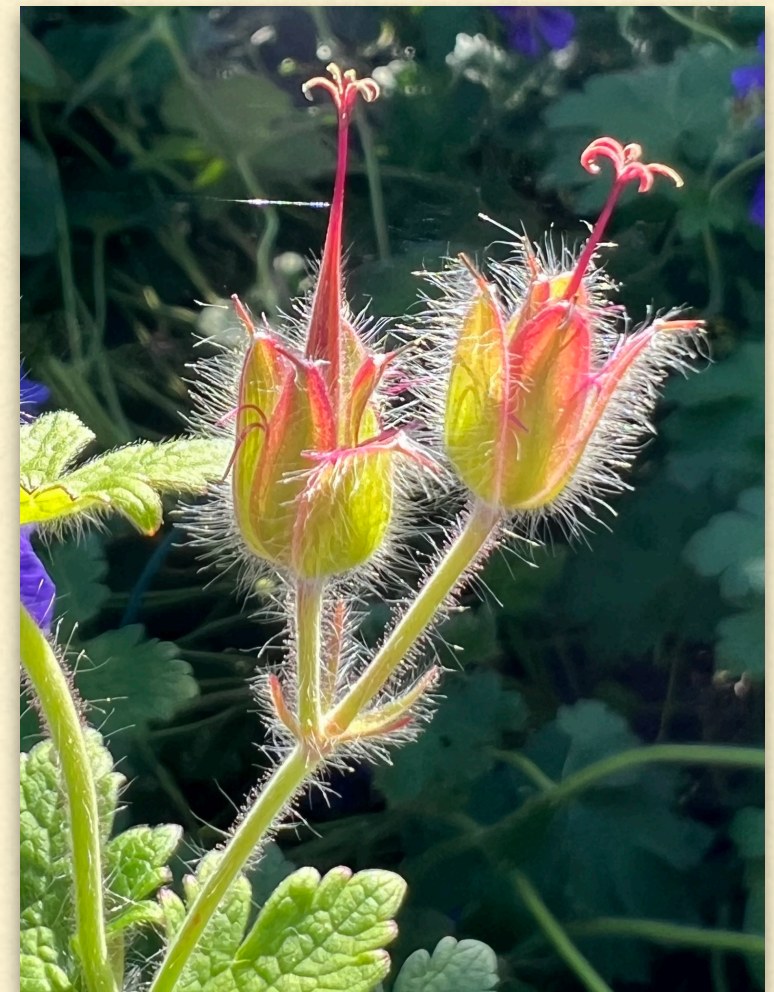
(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)

11. Practices to support mental clarity and emotional well-being

It may go without saying, but:

- decreasing pain in the body,
- calming the Autonomic Nervous System,
- supporting good digestion,
- and supporting good circulation...

...all tend to increase mental clarity and emotional well-being, and are likely to do this for people who have hEDS, too.



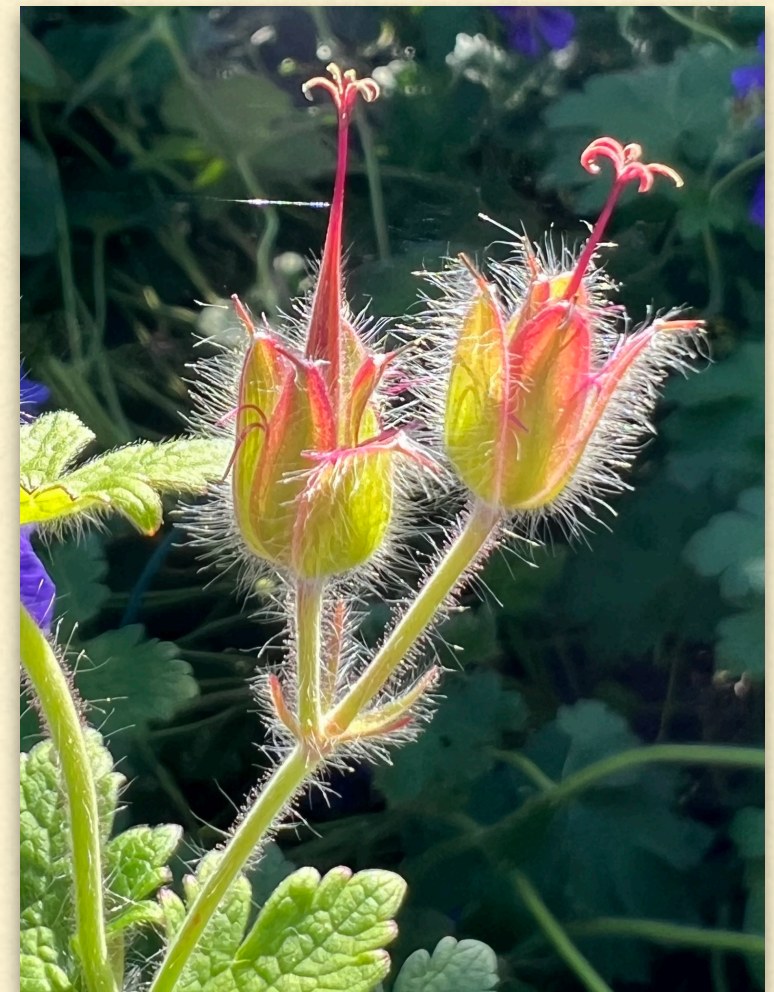
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)

Meditation practices for mental clarity

- **Vipassana (Insight) or mindfulness meditation:** *Observing thoughts and sensations without judgment, to reduce mental noise.*
- **Anapanasati (Mindfulness of Breath):** *Focusing on breath sensations to calm the nervous system and sharpen focus.*
- **Dharana (single-pointed focus):** *Focusing on one single thing for a chosen period of time: tapping heart center; feeling foot sensations while rolling a ball under one foot; gazing at a candle flame...*
- **Checkin in on the Koshas and attending to them:** *Anamaya (physical body), Pranamaya (energy body and breathing), Manomaya (body of emotions and thoughts), Vijnanamaya (body of discernment and wisdom), Anandamaya (body of bliss, all-one-ness)*
- **Visualization / guided imagery:** *Picturing peaceful scenes, to release mental stress and enhance focus*

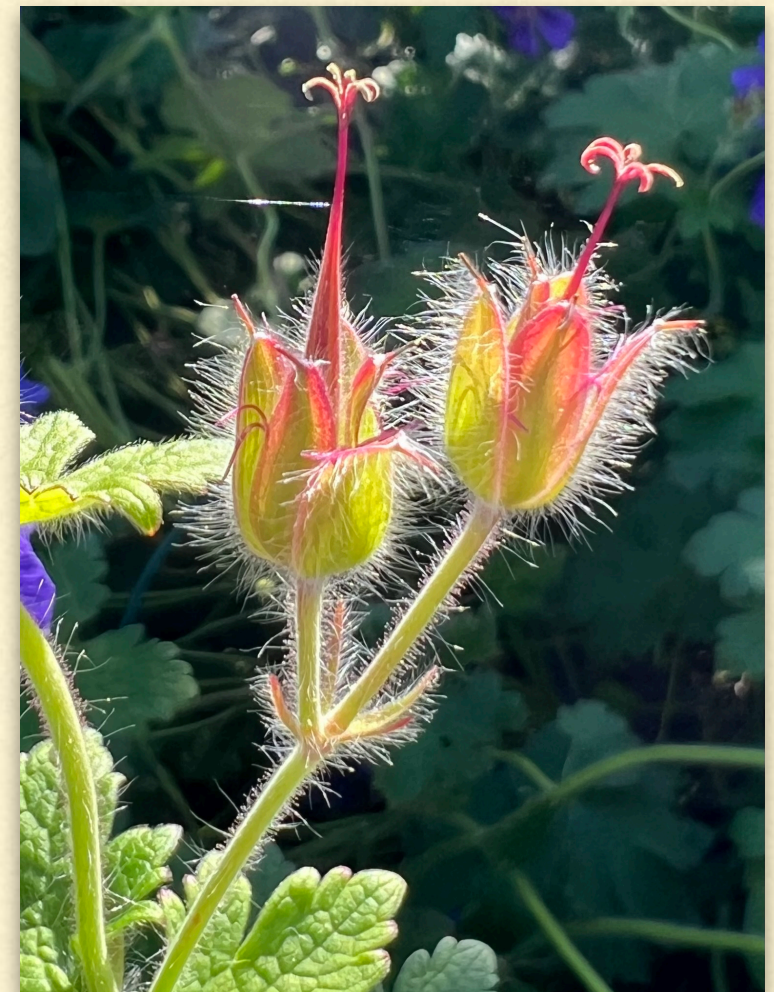


Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)

Remembering... that the long term effectiveness of many therapeutic practices depends in part on **neuroplasticity**—the way that neural pathways in our bodies and brains respond to practice and repetition by becoming stronger, over time creating new habits and new default responses within our nervous systems.



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

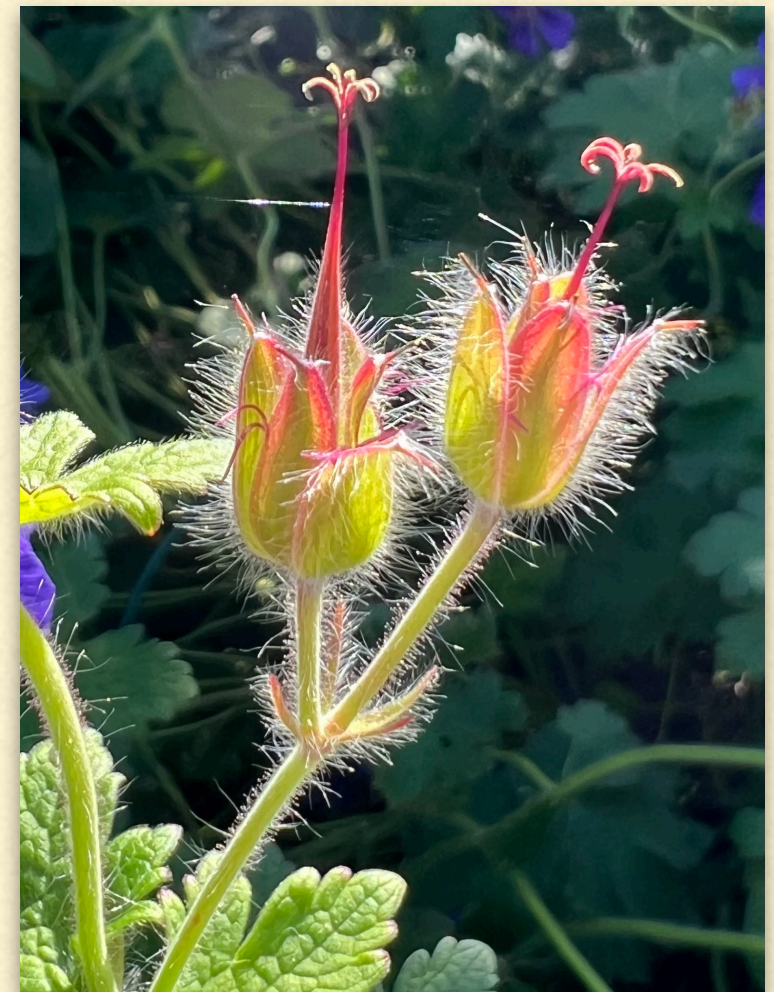
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)

For example, the more we practice a particular action

- Standing up from sitting in a chair
- Playing a particular piece on the piano
- Pitching a baseball or softball
- Standing in a posture that supports healthy breathing
- Helping our muscles contract and then slowly release tension

—the better our neural pathways tend to become at helping us do this action, until it becomes increasingly natural and automatic.



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)



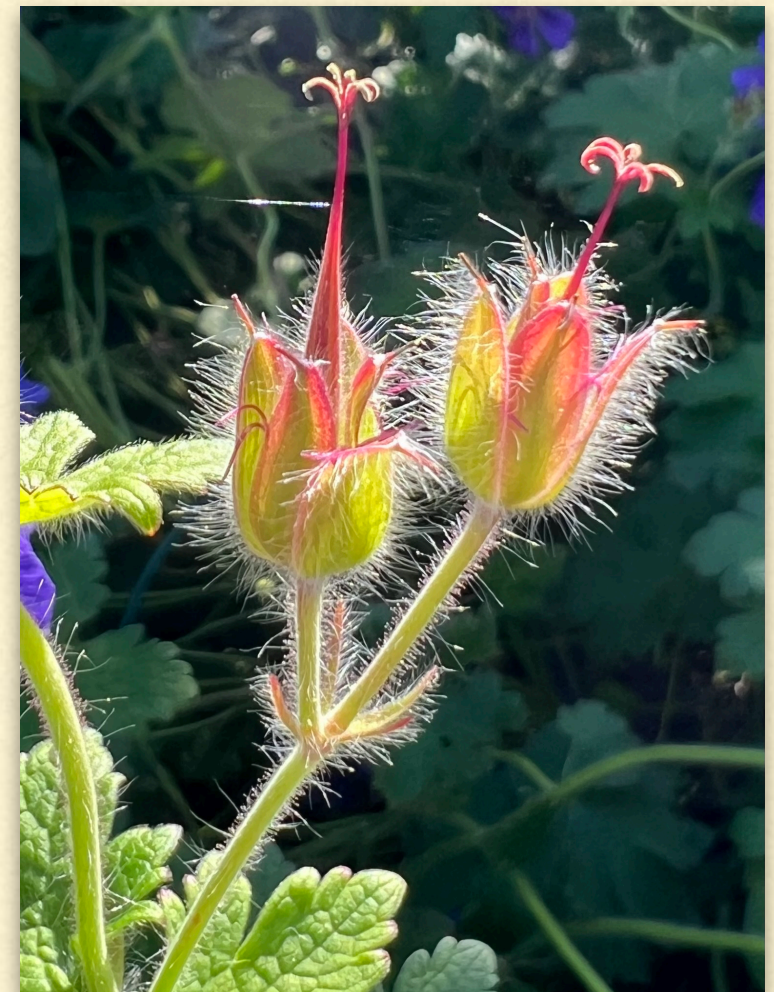
And, the more we practice a particular way of thinking about or responding to something

“I’ll have back pain all of my life.”

“This feeling in my gut means something terrible is going to happen”

“Neuroplasticity means that I may be able to change at least some responses in my body and mind, with time and repetition...”

—the better our neural pathways tend to become at responding in this way, until it also becomes increasingly natural and automatic.



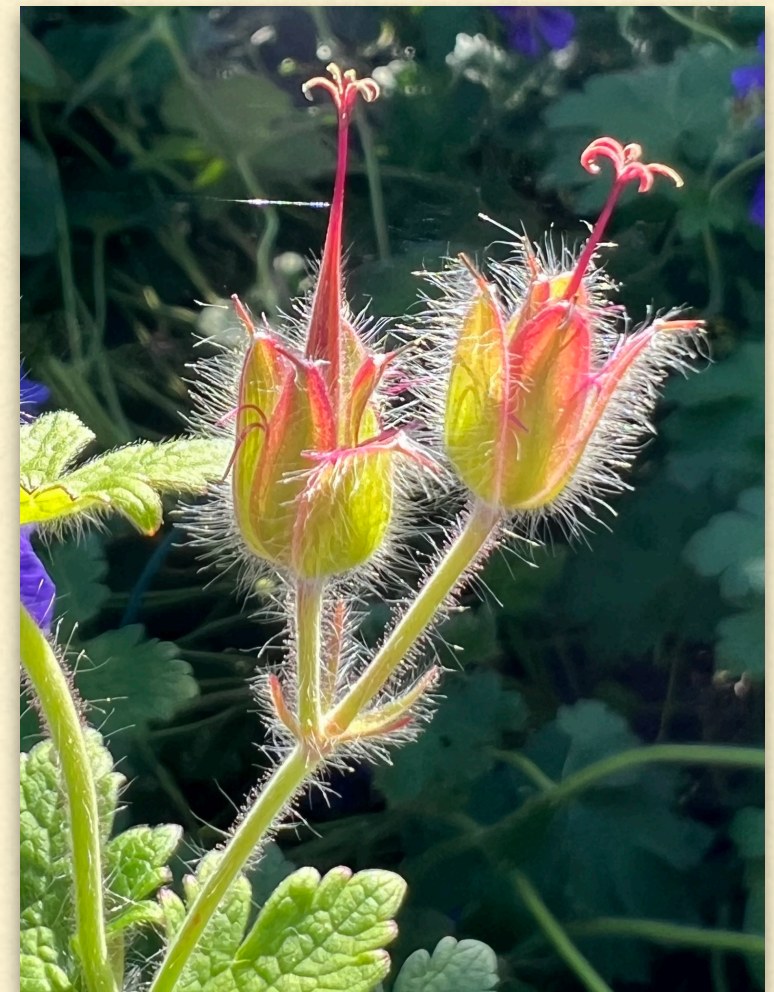
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)

Whether in offering yoga therapy for people with hEDS, or in living with hEDS oneself, it may be helpful to develop awareness of our own habits of thinking and response, and notice if they correspond with any of the kleshas—mental afflictions that diminish clarity and well being:

- **Avidya / Ignorance:** holding onto negative habits and resisting change
- **Asmita / Ego:** attachment to the ego, sense of self importance
- **Raga / Attachment:** inflexible desire for material objects, relationships, status, power, etc.
- **Dvesa / Aversion:** strong revulsion towards unpleasant things, people, and experiences
- **Abhinivesa / Clinging to life:** fear of death and desire to live forever.



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)

The Yoga Sutras suggest several possible antidotes for the kleshas:

Awareness and Witnessing: Acknowledging the kleshas without judgment; observing them in order to reduce their power to cause suffering.

Right Knowledge: Cultivating Pramana Vritti (correct understanding through perception and inference) in order to dispel avidya (ignorance), the root of all other afflictions.

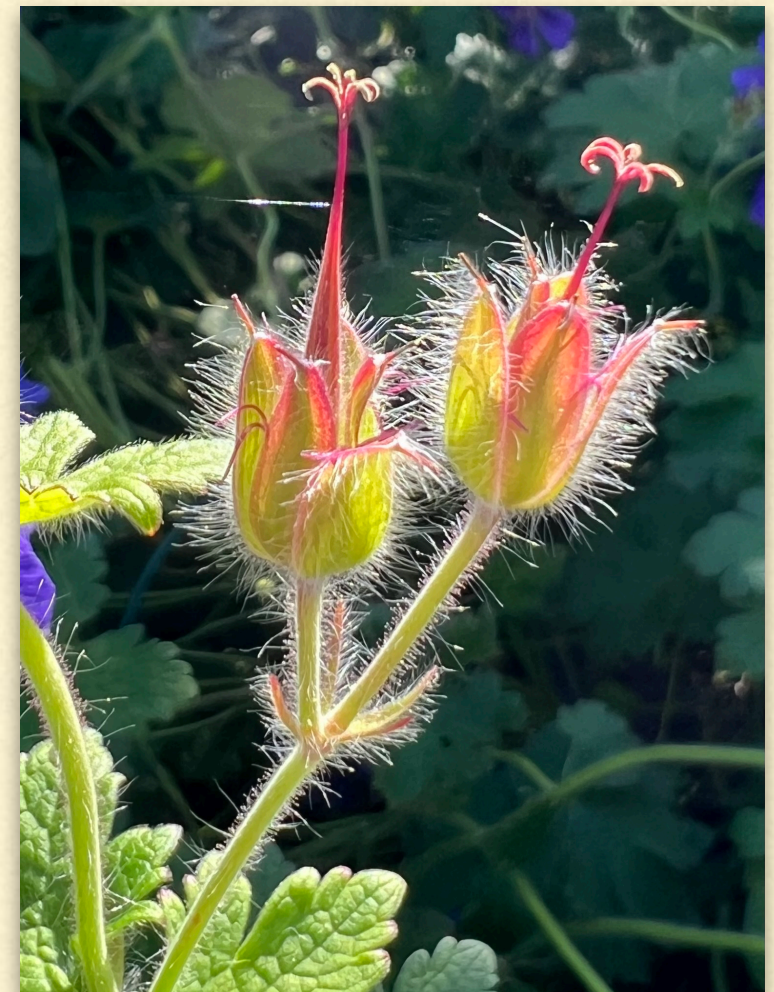
Behavioral Antidotes:

Raga (attachment) is countered by practicing Santosha (contentment) and Vairagya (detachment)

Dvesha (aversion) is countered by practicing Karuna (compassion) and forgiveness

Asmita (ego) is countered by practicing Seva (selfless service) and humility

Yogic Techniques: Asana (postures) may release physical tension, Pranayama (breathwork) may calm the mind, and Savasana may help overcome Abhinivesha (fear of death), through surrender.



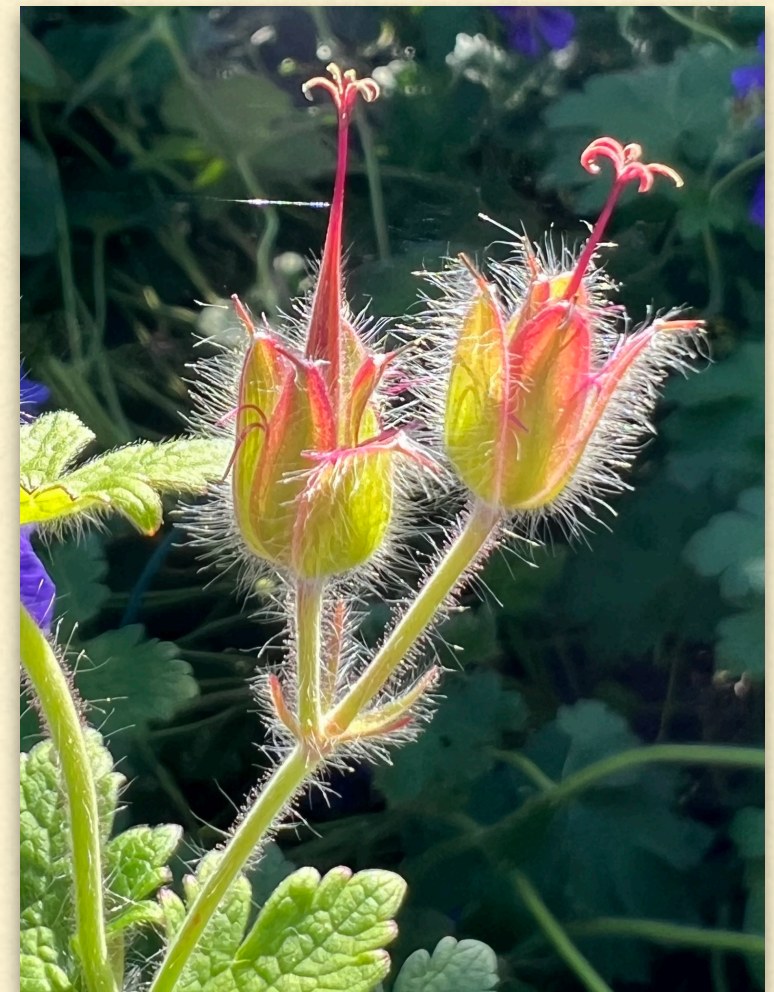
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)

Many breathing practices also support mental clarity and emotional well-being, including:

- Nasal breathing
- **Sun breaths (TCTSY version)**
Using movement to track breathing without needing to change it: lifting arms straight up in front of the body on inhalations, lowering on exhalations. *This version of sun breaths can be more accessible for some people than other versions; movements can also be smaller, coming from the elbows or even the wrists, rather than from the shoulders.*
- **Anuloma Viloma** alternate nostril breathing
- **Brahmari** breathing



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

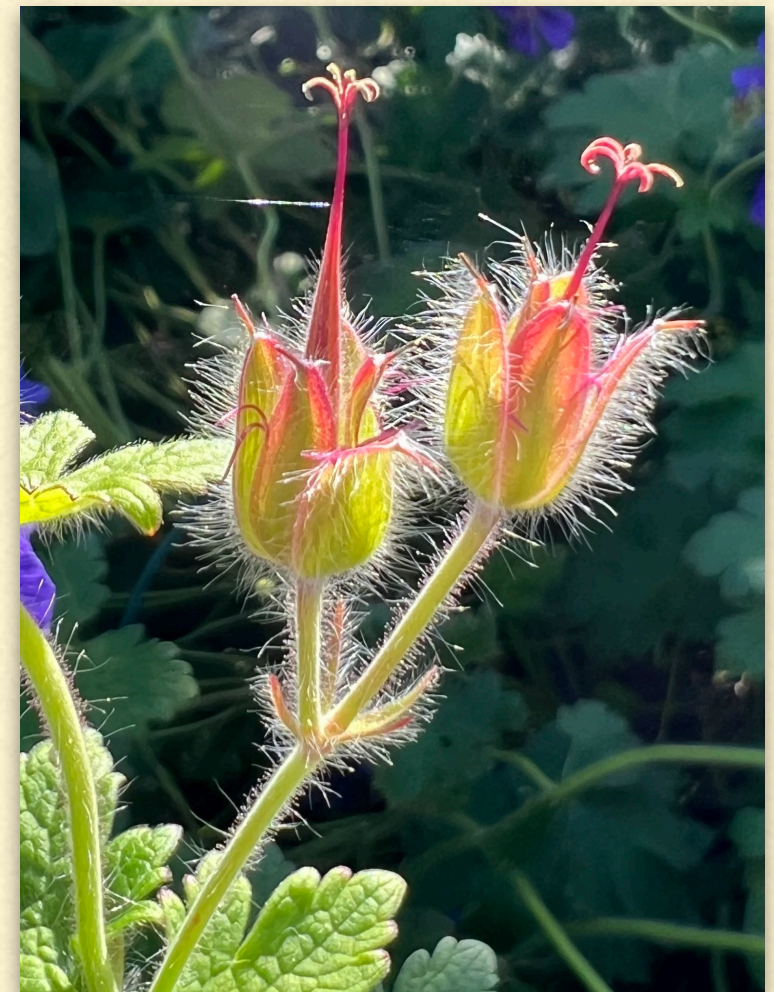
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)



Marma Chikitsa for mental clarity:

- **Adhipati:** *(On the apex of the scalp, to regulate prana/energy, pacify Vata, stabilize the nervous system, support mental clarity and memory)*
- **Brahmarandhra:** *(An inch or so behind Adhipati, to induce positive emotions like joy, happiness, peace.)*
- **Shivarandhra:** *(At the back of the top of the head, to support memory and enhance proprioception)*
- **Ajna** *(In the middle of the forehead, to balance internal systems, stimulate the pineal and pituitary glands, and support mental clarity.)*
- **Ostha** *(Under base of the nose, to support blood flow to the brain, help with focus and concentration and calm ADHD)*



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

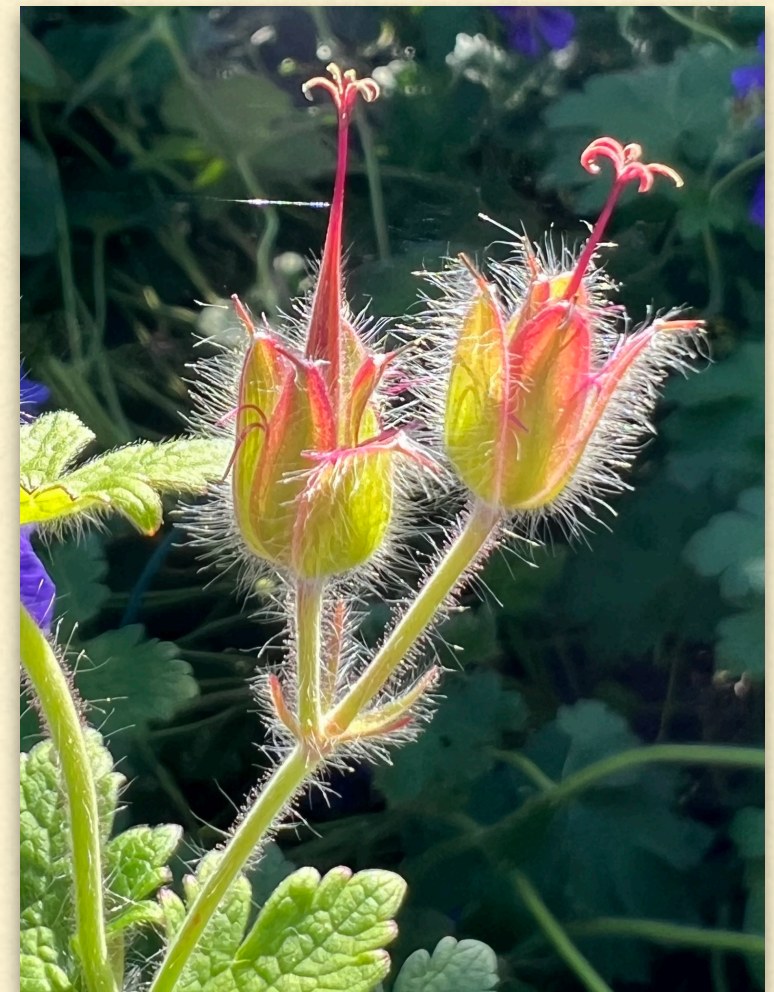
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)



Marma Chikitsa for emotional well being:

- **Hridaya** *(the heart center, to calm and soothe emotions)*
- **Brahmarandhra** *(front of the top of the head, for positive emotions)*
- **Urdhva Gandhi** *(two sides of the bridge of the nose, to calm feelings like grief, guilt, trauma, and fear)*
- **Nasa Mula, Nasa Madhya, Nasa Agra** *(between eyebrows; bridge of nose; tip of nose—to calm feelings of anger, irritability, aggression.)*
- **Vidhura to Manyamani** *(massaging six points on the back of the neck in long sweeping strokes down the two sides of the spine, to stimulate the vagus nerve and calm stress, fear, overwhelm, restlessness, grief)*
- **Bruh Agra, Bruh Madhya, Bruh Antara** *(eyebrows, sweeping strokes, to calm anger, frustration, grief and fear)*



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)

Mudras for mental clarity:

Jnana Mudra: to promote stillness,
mental clarity and learning

Dhyana Mudra: to enhance focus,
mental clarity, and channel prana
inward. (Both hands palms up, left hand
supporting right, tips of thumbs
touching)

Hakini Mudra: to balance two sides of
the brain, promoting coordination and
mental harmony (bring fingertips and
thumbs of both hands together)

Buchari Mudra: to calm the mind and
balance energy (hand placed under
nose, middle three fingers down, pinky
and thumb out).

*Sitting or lying down in a
comfortable position, you might
hold a mudra for 3 - 5 minutes or more,
focusing on the sensations of light contact
between your fingers...*



JNANA MUDRA



DHYANA MUDRA



HAKINI MUDRA



BHUCHARI MUDRA

Clare Norelle, 2026

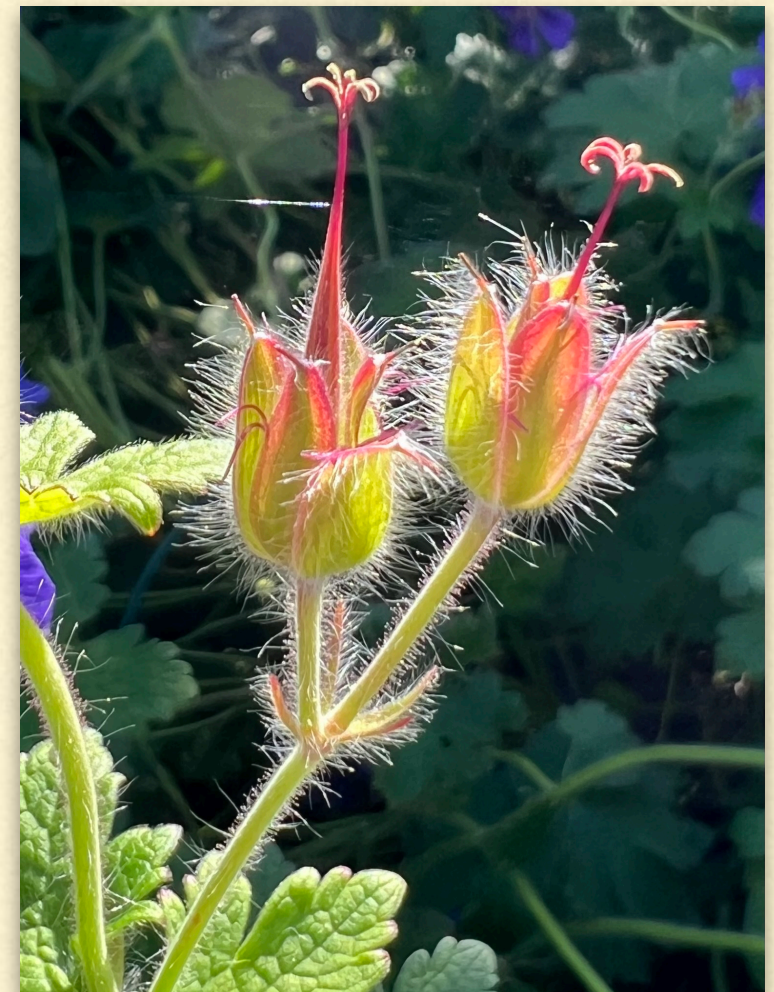
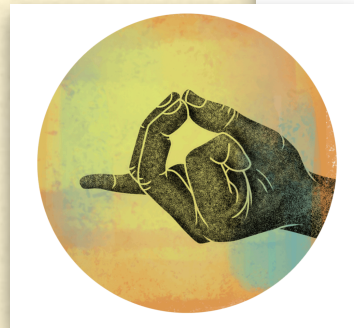
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)

Mudras for emotional well-being:

- **Anjali Mudra:** Known as the "prayer position," palms together at the heart is used to promote **emotional balance**, gratitude, inner calm.
- **Prana Mudra:** Connecting the ring and little fingers to the thumb, used to activate dormant energy, **combat fatigue, lethargy, and emotional exhaustion**.
- **Vayu Mudra:** Folding the index finger to base of thumb balances the air element, **calming an overactive mind**, nervousness, and anxiety.
- **Apana Mudra:** Joining the middle and ring fingers to the thumb for **emotional cleansing, helping to release negative feelings like anger, fear, and frustration**.



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

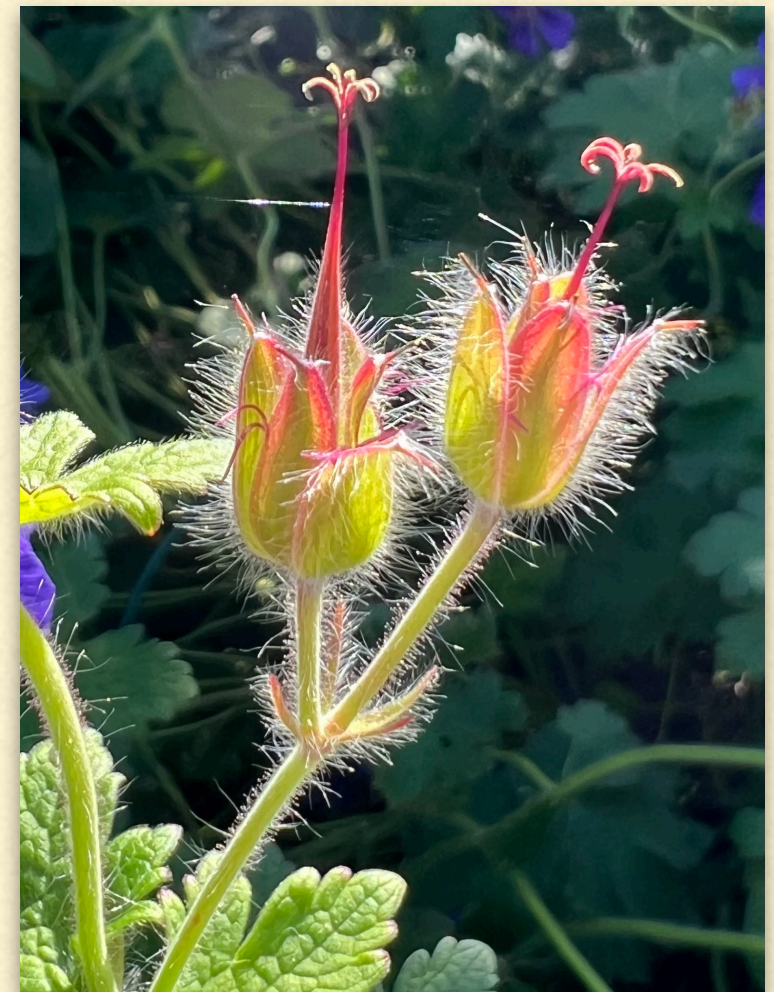
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)

“Regular yoga (asana) practice in general has been shown to improve several aspects of mental and cognitive function, including executive function.

Executive function includes planning, decision-making, and cognitive flexibility, among other aspects.”

—*Libby Hinsley, PT, DPT, C-IAYT*



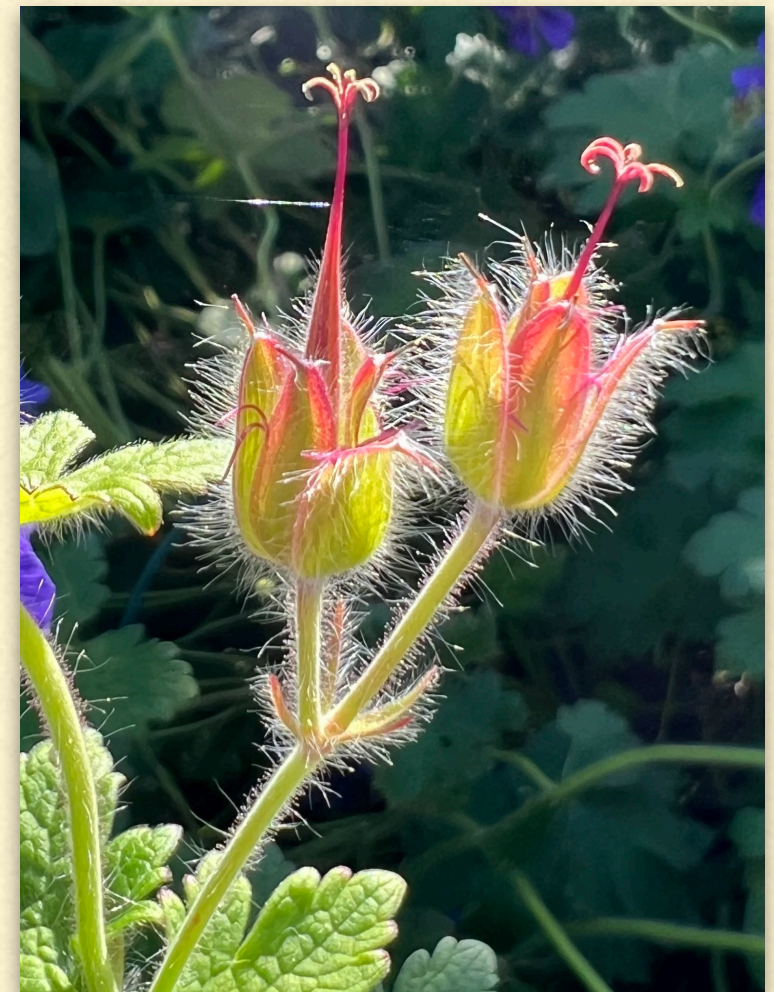
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)

Even with greater mental and emotional clarity, psychological suffering is still likely to be present for many people with hEDS. What are some other ways yoga therapists might help?

- By listening actively, without rushing to offer solutions or unsolicited advice.
- By validating the person's experience, believing their pain and fatigue. Remembering that medical invalidation is a common source of trauma for people with hEDS.
- By avoiding any attitude of dismissal, or of imposing your beliefs on their experience; use affirming language like "I believe you".
- By allowing people with hEDS to express their grief or frustration, using open-ended questions to encourage them to lead the conversation while you maintain a caring non-judgmental presence.
- By offering opportunities for them to feel, and be, in charge of their own bodies and their own choices.
- By offering to talk them through exploring restorative dinacharya self-care practices, like abhyanga warm oil massage, if they're interested.



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

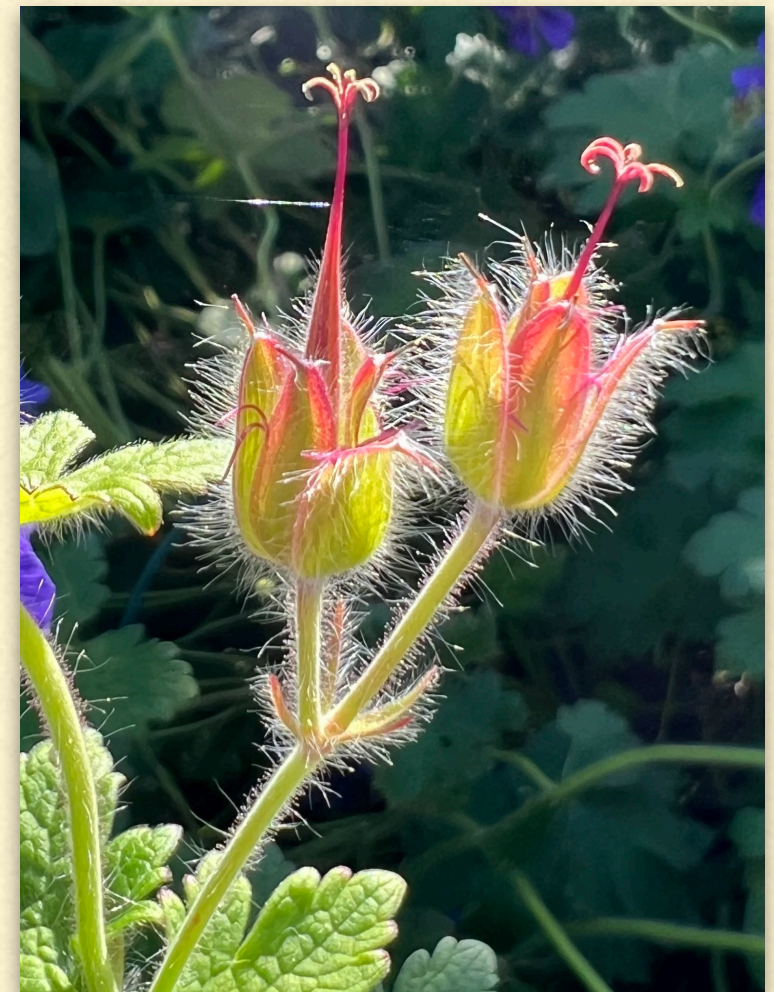
Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)



Other practices to support mental and emotional well-being for people with hEDS:

- Maitri / loving kindness meditation
- Meditating on the Chakras
- Practicing the Yamas and Niyamas
- Restorative Yoga (gentle long-held, well-supported asanas)
- TCTSY sun breaths, diaphragmatic breathing, 4/6 breathing, anuloma viloma or nadhi sodhana (alternate nostril breathing)
- Yoga Nidra, or guided relaxation practices



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)

Chakra meditations for mental clarity & emotional well-being
adapted from the work of Anodea Judith

(1) Muladhara, base of spine:
grounding, roots, security, belonging.

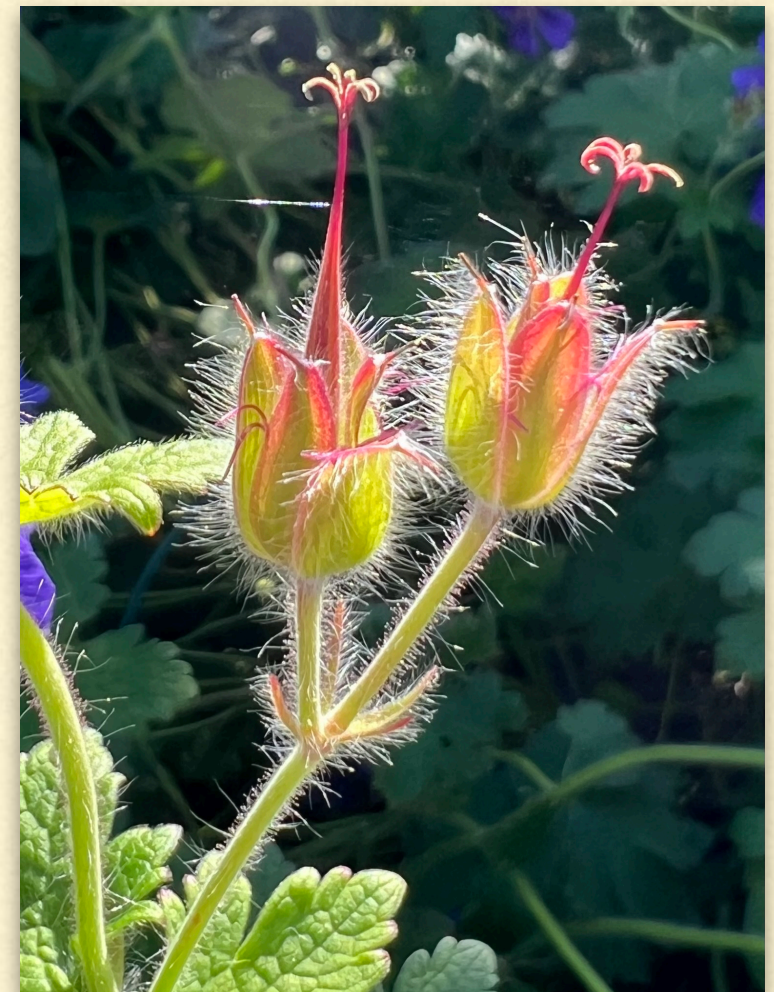
Principle: Gravity **Orientation:** Self preservation **Challenge:** Fear

Physical correspondences:
Inner adrenal glands, fight, flight, freeze responses

Signs of injury:
Inertia, hoarding, excessive spending, body disconnection

Health principles & possibilities: You might try practicing gratitude to help yourself feel abundance. You might honor your body's needs for sleep, nourishment, and exercise, especially if you've become disconnected from these. You could take care of basics: home, work, finances, environment/nature... and seek to understand and release fear.

Query: What can you do for your body, to help you feel grounded, steady, and welcome in this world?



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)



(2) Svadisthana, just below the navel:
flow, enjoyment, self-acceptance

Principle: Polarity **Orientation:** Self gratification **Challenge:** Guilt

Physical correspondences:

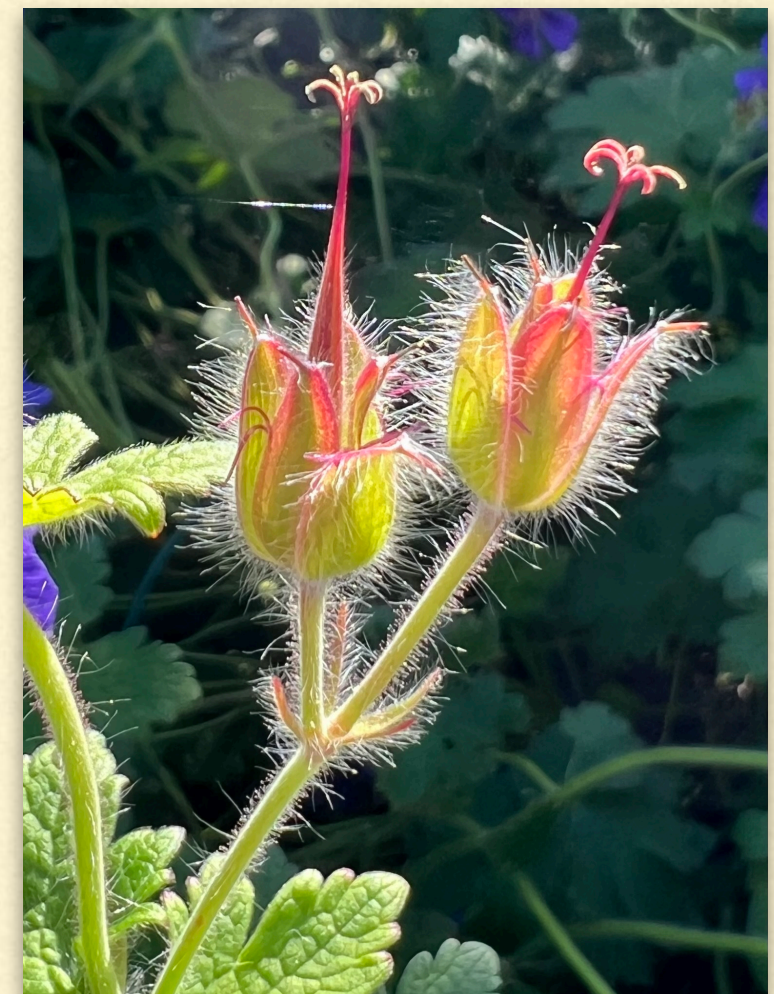
Testes/ovaries, sex hormones affecting emotions

Signs of injury:

Emotions unbalanced or unfelt; rigidity in body, beliefs, behavior

Health principles and possibilities: You might try appreciating and deeply feeling any pleasures, without seeking them to the exclusion of other aspects of life. This can support fluidity and grace, depth of feeling, and the ability to accept change.

Query: What moves you, what are you passionate about? What in life give you pleasure? What helps you become more flexible, open to new possibilities?



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)



(3) Manipura, solar plexus, between navel & sternum:
energy, will, strength

Principle: Combustion **Orientation:** Self definition

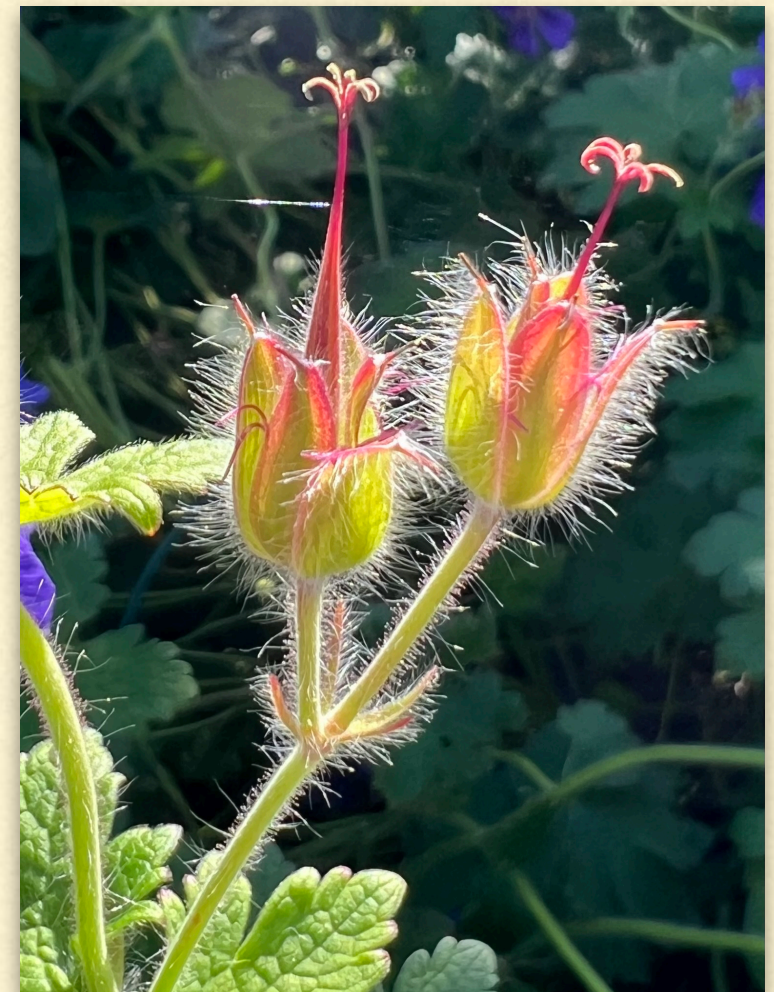
Challenge: Shame

Physical correspondences: Pancreas, regulation of blood sugar, digestive enzymes converting food into energy

Signs of injury: Compulsive need to assert power-over; and/or, avoidant, self-pitying, blaming, self-doubting.

Health principles and possibilities: You might pay attention to things that enhance your energy and those that deplete it. Maybe notice the relationship between your food intake and your energy level, and how your body converts food into energy. And allow yourself to act, make mistakes, and learn, without shame.

Query: Where in your life do you experience a sense of self-trust and a positive sense of your own strength and will?



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)

(4) Anahata, center of chest, heart center:
loving, connecting, caring, creating balance.

Principle: Equilibrium **Orientation:** Self acceptance

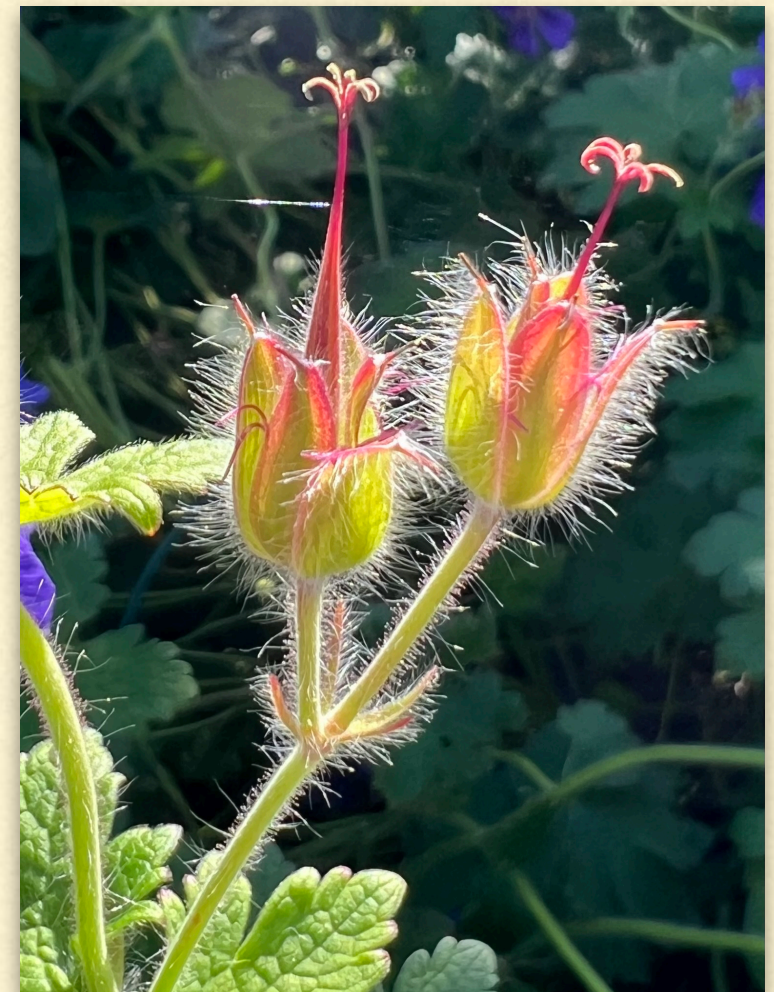
Challenge: Un-integrated grief

Physical correspondences: The physical heart and thymus gland, immune and endocrine systems, circulatory and respiratory systems

Signs of injury: Poor boundaries, jealousy, resentment, approval-seeking; and/or being withdrawn, critical, intolerant, afraid to give or receive love

Health principles and possibilities: You might imagine feeling love towards your own body and life, then practice doing this; also seeing if you can move away from judgment towards compassion. A healthy fourth chakra allows us to love and care deeply, holding a steady sense of peace and centeredness.

Query: What might help you integrate any grief in your life, releasing the past and making room for love? What might help you to feel love towards your own body and life?



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)

(5) Vissudha, throat: finding a voice, purifying through sound

Principle: Resonance **Orientation:** Self-expression

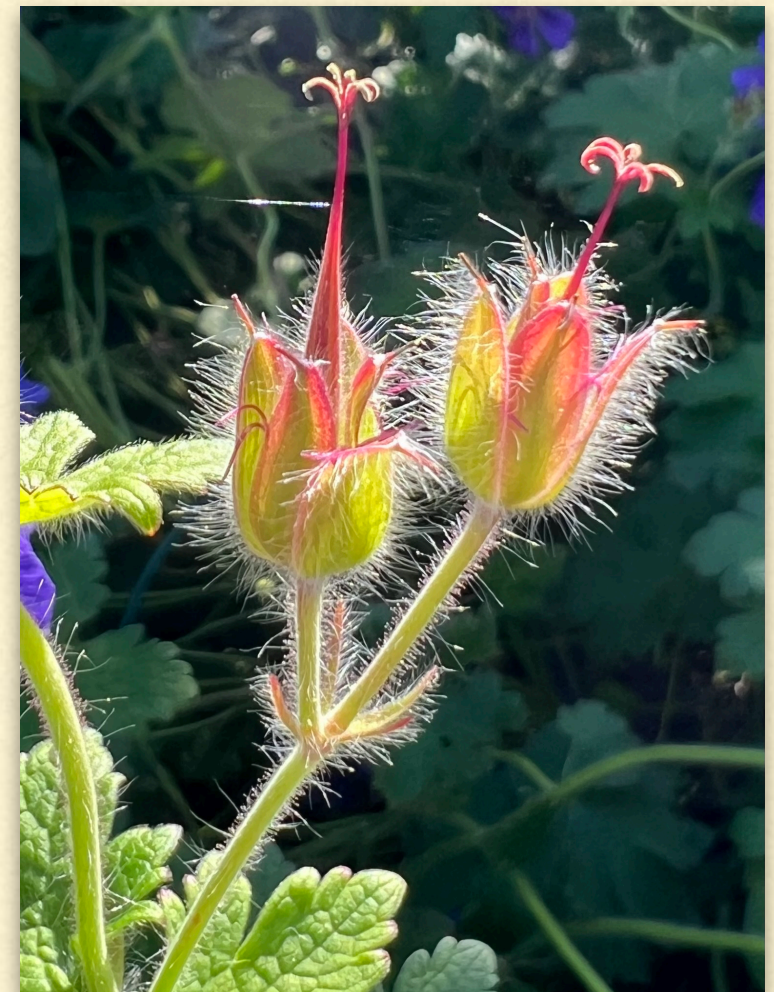
Challenge: Dishonesty

Physical correspondences: Neck, shoulders, jaw, thyroid gland, producing hormones to help cellular communication in the body, growth and maturation

Signs of injury: Over-talking, gossiping, failing to speak when needed, losing resonance with core truths, and/or having a weak constricted voice

Health principles and possibilities: Feeling through all seven chakras to find resonance with your core truths and a clear strong voice to express them. Letting your creativity awaken, move, and guide your expression in ways that you choose.

Query: What helps you to feel that your voice is heard or received, and that your truth is welcome? How do you make space for others to be heard or received, and express truth?



Yoga Therapy for hEDS

Yoga practices and possibilities for people with hEDS

(for mental clarity and emotional well-being)

(6) Ajna, forehead/third eye: seeing the way, finding, creating meaning

Principle: Radiance **Orientation:** Self reflection

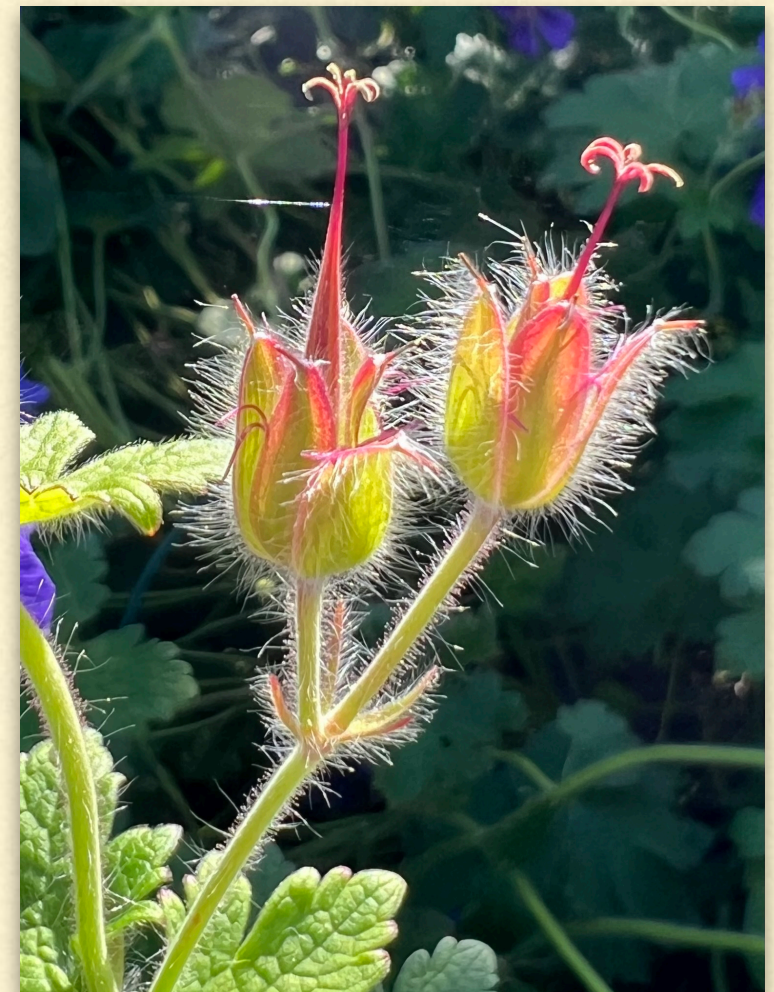
Challenge: Illusion/denial

Physical correspondences: Ajna corresponds with the third eye and the light-sensitive pineal gland, which produces serotonin and melatonin to facilitate sleeping and dreaming, calm anxiety and relieve depression.

Signs of injury: Delusions, difficulty concentrating, excessive fantasizing, fixating on a frozen image of “how things are supposed to be” to the point of illusion (believing something that isn’t true) or denial (not looking at or seeing what is true)

Health principles and possibilities: You might see if you can sleep long enough to dream well, then check your dreams for insight. Practice releasing intrusive memories to see more clearly into the present, and to envision your path into the future. Nourish yourself with light, color, visual beauty.

Query: What’s a guiding vision in your life? What’s a larger good that you’re working for? Where do you see possibilities that don’t yet exist?



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(7) Sahasrara, crown of head/cerebral cortex:
questioning, wisdom

Principle: Unity **Orientation:** Self-knowledge

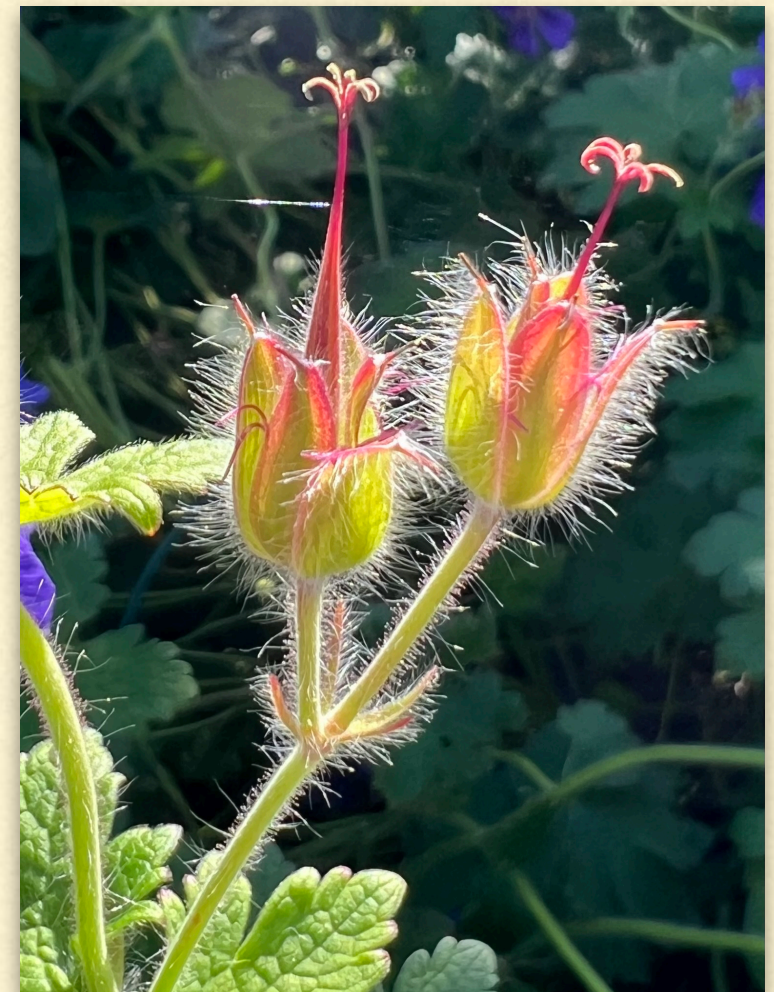
Challenge: Unhelpful attachments

Physical correspondences: Located above the head like a halo, center of consciousness, enlightenment, connection with the divine. Corresponds with the pituitary gland that balances the endocrine system; connects with hypothalamus and thalamus, believed to play key roles in consciousness.

Signs of injury: Dissociation from the body, spiritual addictions, ignoring the other six chakras, closed mind, rigid belief system, cynicism or apathy

Health principles and possibilities: Practice increasing awareness of your life and choices. Ask questions, notice, release attachments that get in the way of clarity.

Query: “What are my beliefs? Do they open me up or close me down? How can I move beyond them at times, and feel myself part of a larger universe?”



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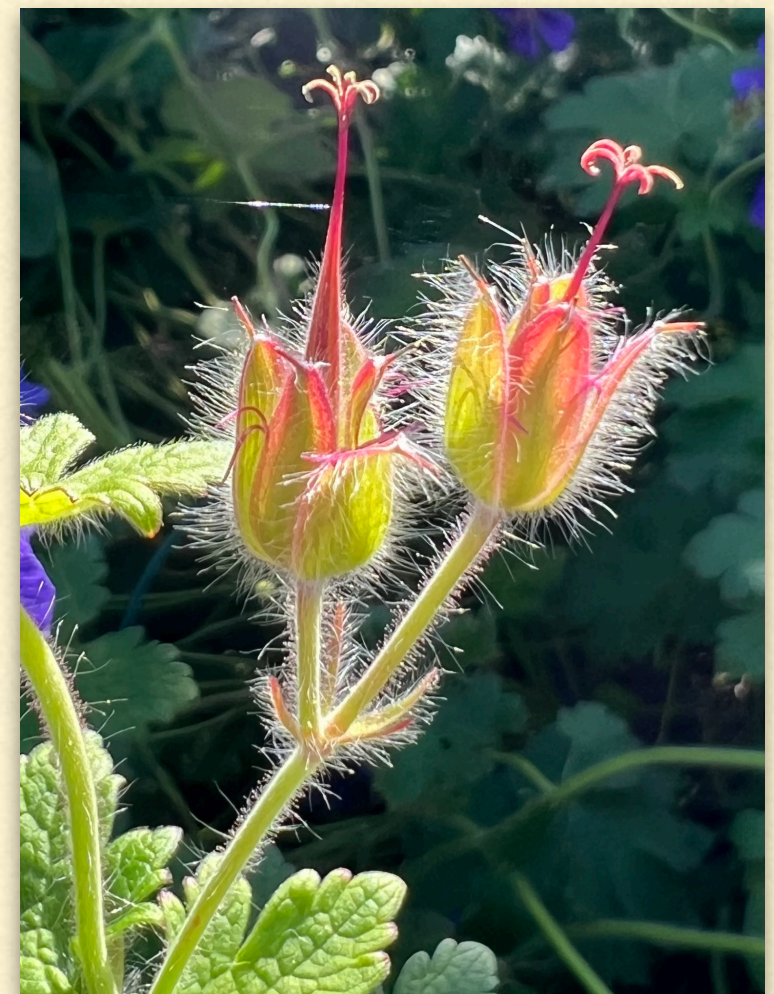


Directions of energy flow through the Chakras:

In Mukti (the current of liberation that flows upwards) we can carry the security, fluidity, willpower, love, creativity, and insight of the other chakras into the experience of universal consciousness.

In Bukti (the downward current of manifestation) we can carry a sense of spiritual unity, deep visions, expressiveness, balance, strength, pleasure, and rootedness into our doing and making in the world.”

—Anodea Judith



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Mental clarity and emotional well being can also be supported through practicing the Yamas and Niyamas.

Yamas / Restraints: things to avoid, to relate well with others and oneself:

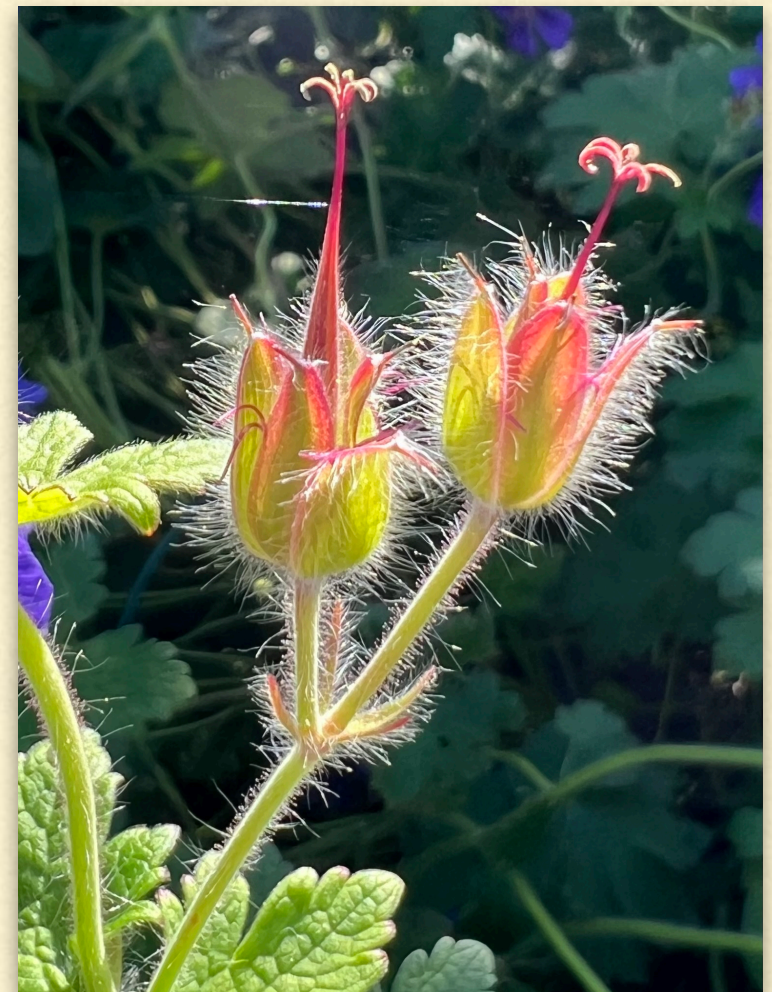
Ahimsa / non-injury / non-harm: To cultivate respect and kindness towards all beings and all of life, in thoughts, words and actions.

Satya / truthfulness / avoiding dishonesty: To speak truth thoughtfully, with awareness of how it may affect others. By practicing truthfulness you may encourage truthfulness in others, and the growth of intuition and refined awareness within yourself.

Asteya / non-stealing / non-coveting: To practice trustworthiness, and not taking advantage of others; this includes not taking away their ideas, and not taking someone's reputation through gossip.

Brahmacharya / divine conduct / conservation of energy: To practice moderation, to not get swept away by the pleasures of the senses, instead treating them with joyful attentiveness. To show respect for oneself and others, by not overindulging, misusing or abusing energy.

Aparigraha /non-possessiveness / releasing attachment: To only take what is necessary, striving for material simplicity, practicing generosity, being mindful to not hoard something that someone else might need more.



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Niyamas / Observances: things to do, to care for oneself and others

Saucha / purity and cleansing: Practicing cleanliness, in hygiene, food, and in other ways; releasing tensions that clog the mind, heart, and body; cleansing through asanas and pranayama.

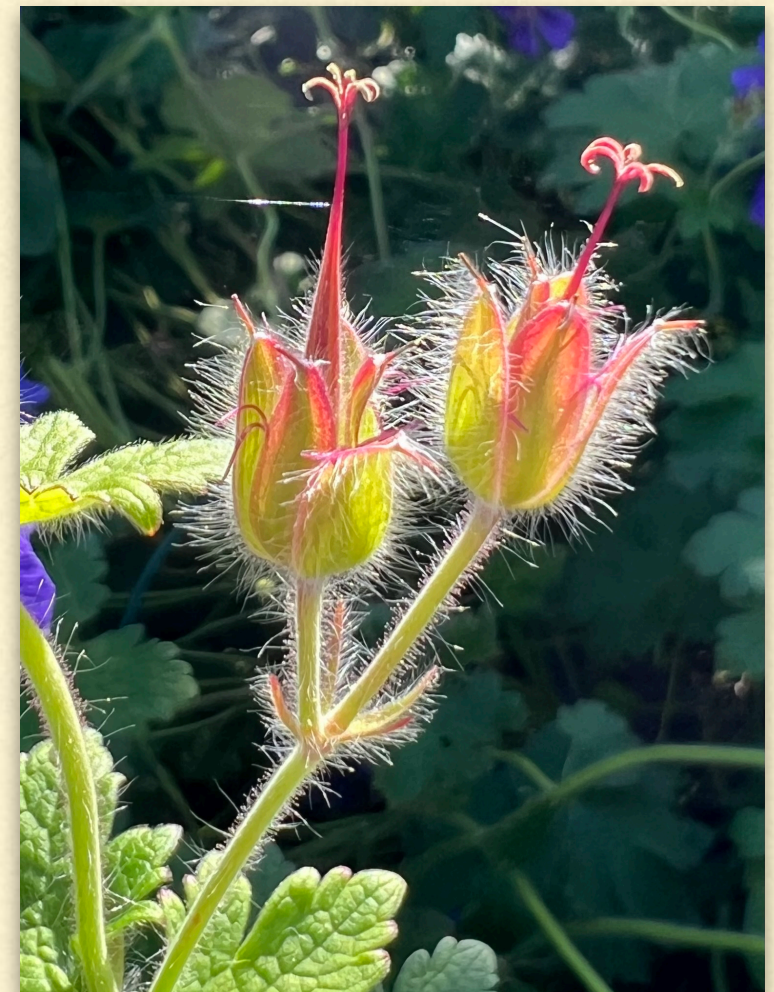
Santosha / practicing contentment, peace of mind and heart.

Cultivating an even temper and balanced attitude, being honest and accepting of who you are. Surrendering yearning desires, trusting change will come through continued dedication and focus.

Tapas / creating heat and momentum through discipline: With dedication and discipline, creating heat to burn away tensions and other impediments. Keeping your body fit, maintaining a dedicated spiritual practice, and practicing focus.

Svadhyaha / self-study: Learning to both see and see through our own habits and tendencies, finding practices that help us experience the deeper aspects of being.

Ishwara-pranidhana / surrender to universe or the divine: Centering oneself in the spiritual aspects of life; dedicating your efforts and actions to a greater good; practicing gratitude for life's gifts.



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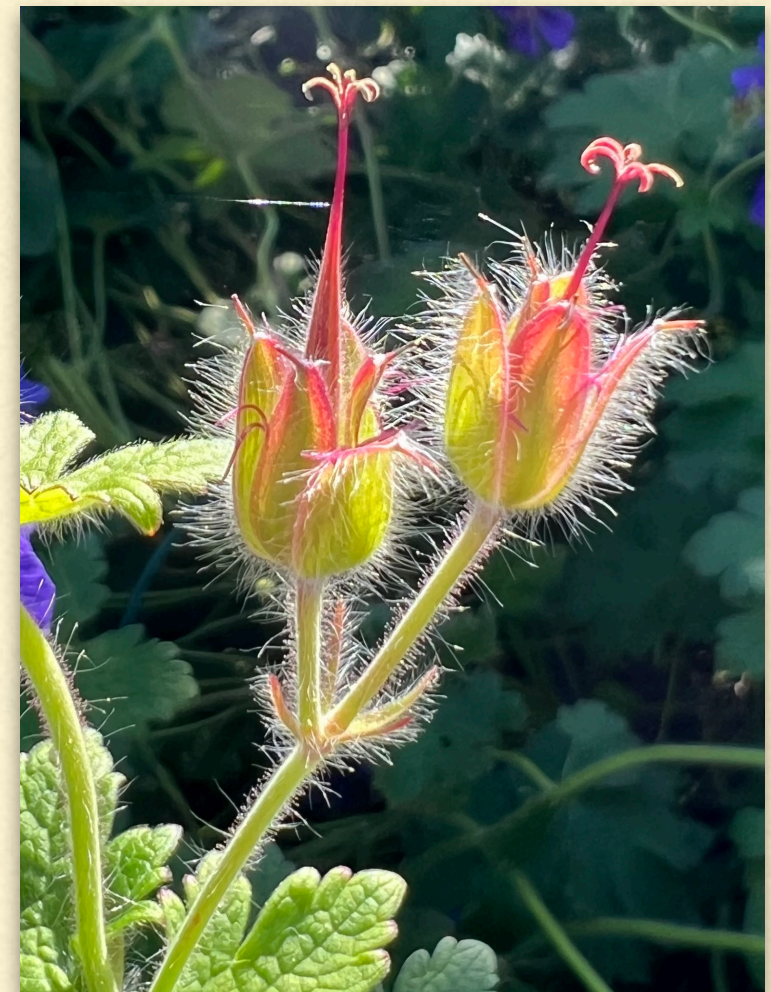
12. Getting good rest; restoring energy

Progressive muscle relaxation: an active practice of consciously tensing and releasing different muscle groups throughout the body, to release physical tension and prepare for rest; can be narrated by a second person, or done on one's own.

Yoga Nidra: there are various forms of Yoga Nidra, but usually it's a passive practice, in which the yoga teacher or therapist offers a guided meditation that may begin with bringing attention to each area of the body, then incorporate more elements, including breath, an intention or resolve (sankalpa) visualization, emotional balancing, etc. Yoga Nidra often helps release mental and emotional tension, leading to better rest.

—For some people who have unprocessed trauma in their nervous systems, progressive muscle relaxation may offer fewer opportunities for them to dissociate or get lost in trauma memories than might happen with Yoga Nidra or other resting practices.

In either case, with trauma it may be especially important to offer the person a choice about whether or not to try either of these practices, and if they choose to do one, remind them that they're welcome to move or come out of it at any time.



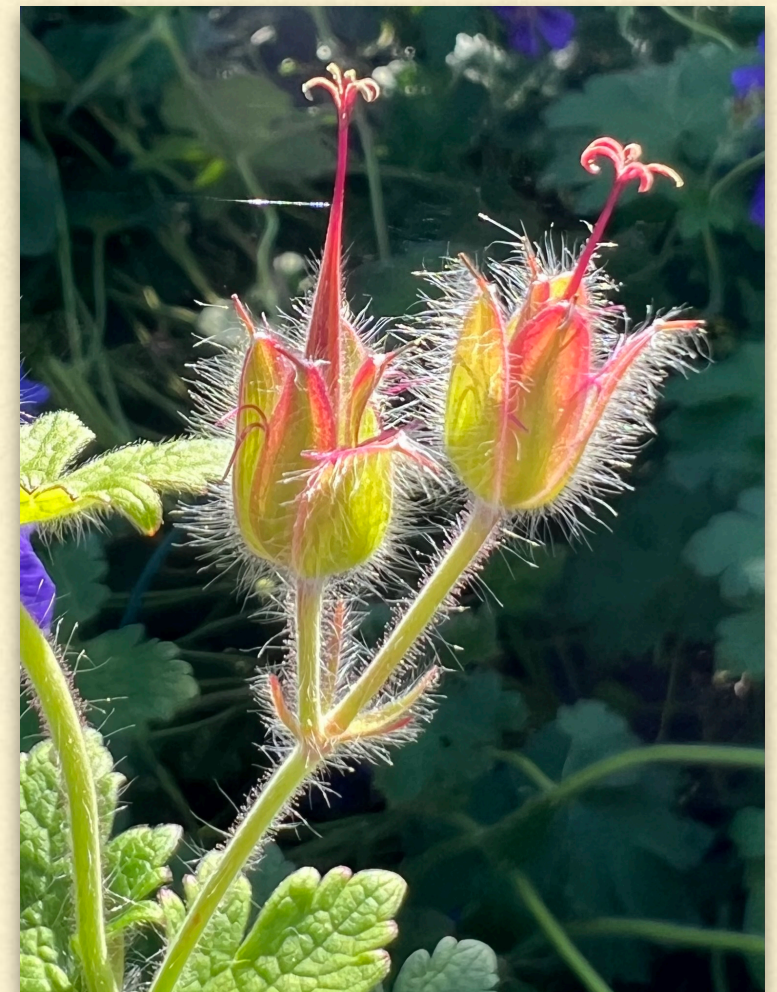
Yoga Therapy for hEDS

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Marma Chikitsa for good sleep:

- **Adhipati** (*crown of the head*)
- **Brahmarandrha** (*front of the top of the head*)
- **Hridaya** (*heart center*)
- **Tal hridaya** (*centers of the palms of hands, soles of feet*)
- **Nasa madhya** (*bridge of nose, for snoring and sleep apnea*)

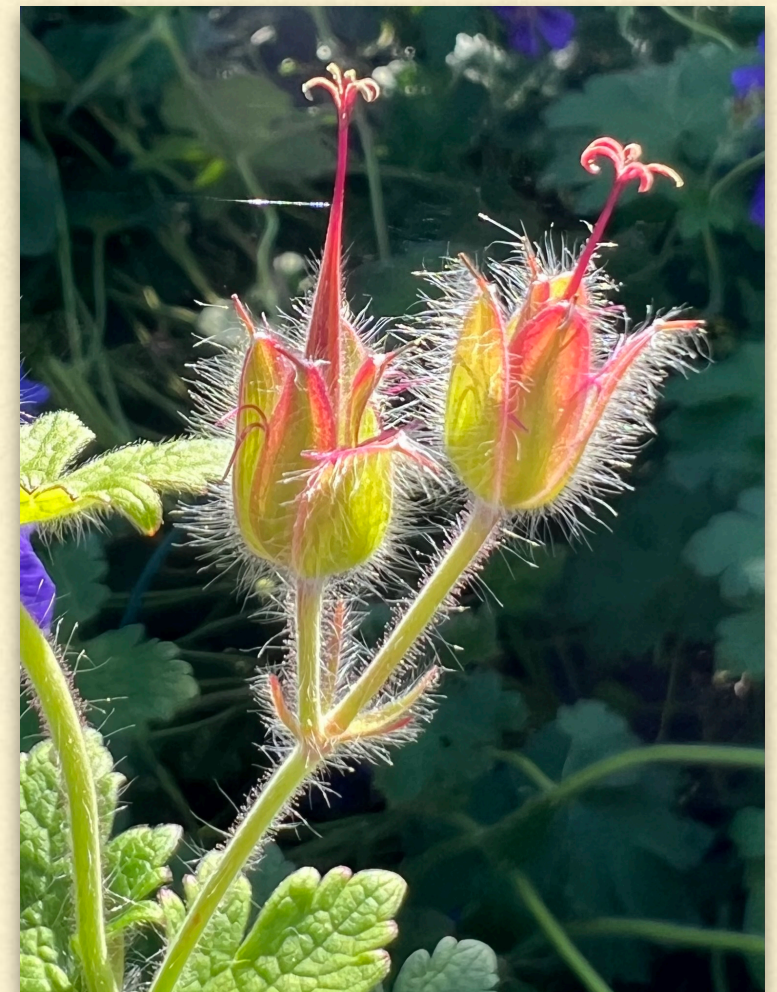
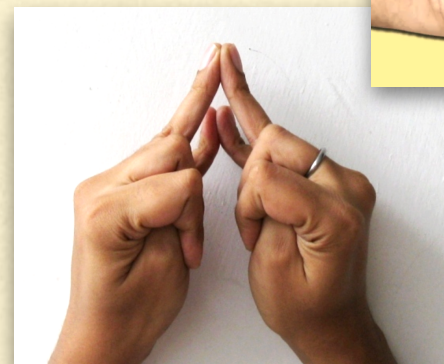


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Mudras for good sleep:

- **Jnana / Gyan mudra:**
to reduce stress and anxiety
- **Shunya mudra:**
to ease the mind and feel peace
- **Prana mudra:**
for better circulation, better sleep
- **Apana mudra:**
for digestion and stress relief
- **Shakti mudra:**
improve sleep quality & quantity

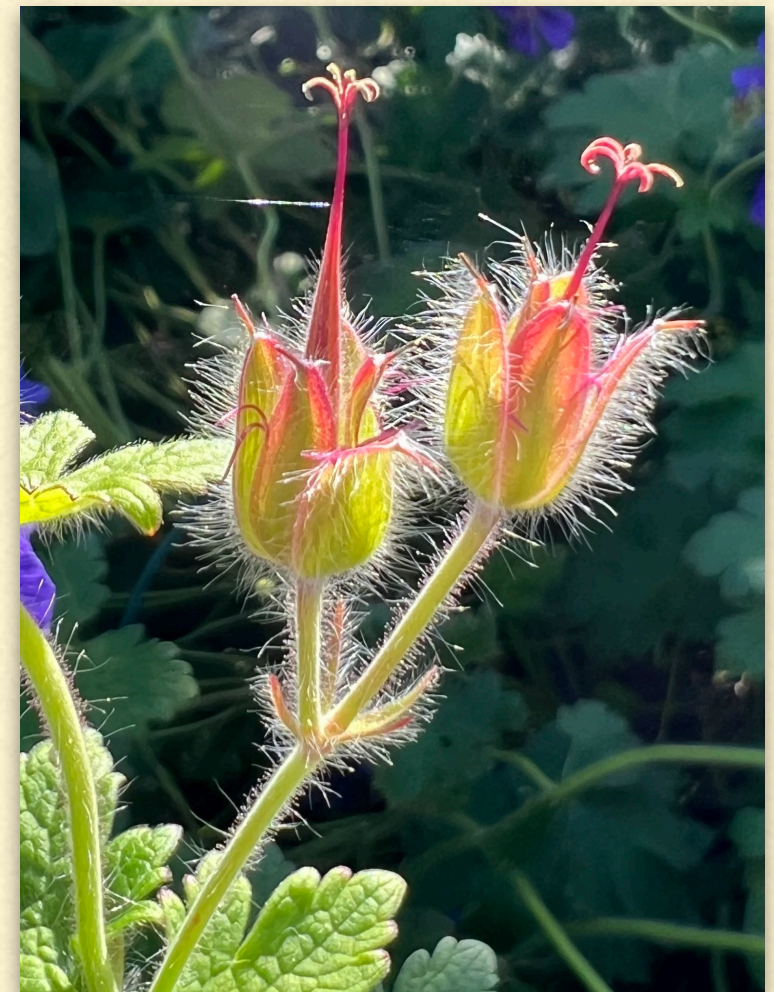


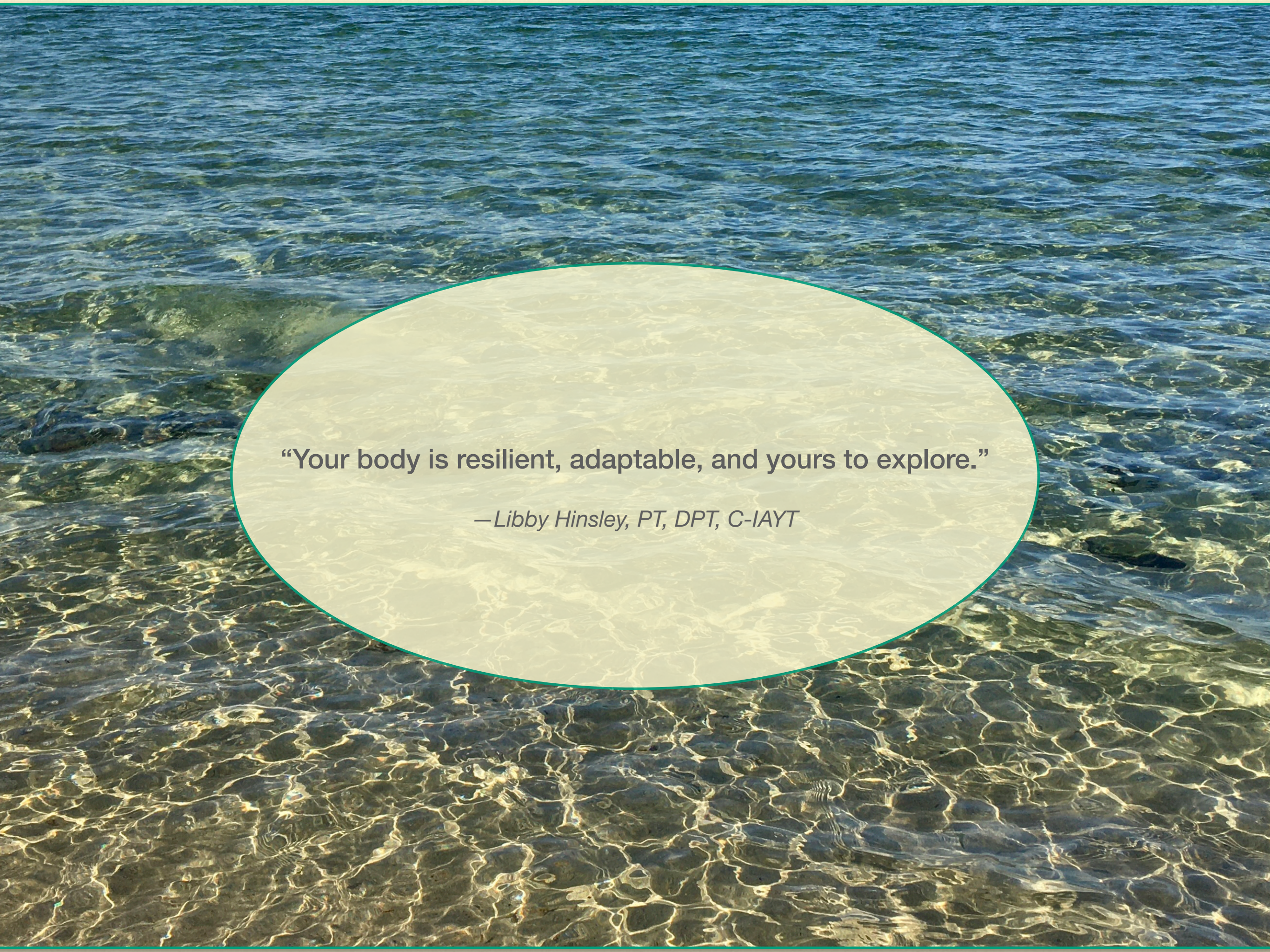
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Pranayama for good sleep:

- Gentle nasal breathing
- Diaphragmatic breathing
- Brahmari breathing
- Square breathing
- Left nostril breathing:
<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9564237/>
- 4/6 breathing (*inhaling 4, exhaling 6*)
- 4-7-8 breathing (*inhaling 4, retaining breath 7, exhaling 8*)



The background is a photograph of a body of water, likely a lake or ocean, with a mix of blue and green hues. The water surface is covered in ripples and reflects light, creating a shimmering effect. A large, light yellow oval with a thin green border is centered in the image, containing the text.

“Your body is resilient, adaptable, and yours to explore.”

—*Libby Hinsley, PT, DPT, C-IAYT*