



Karuna Yoga Newsletter

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YOGA THERAPY

WHY YOGA KEEPS YOU HEALTHY

21 ways your yoga practice can improve your health. (part 1)

As yoga has become an increasingly integral part of our life, scientists have been turning their attention to what happens physiologically when we practice yoga. This includes the asanas, pranayama and meditation. They are uncovering fascinating evidence of how our yoga practice affects us mentally and physically and how it may help to prevent a number of the most common ailments that lower our vitality and shorten our lives.

1. Pain Reliever

Yoga can help relieve certain kinds of chronic pain. Researchers compared Iyengar Yoga with a self-care exercise program for people with chronic neck pain and it was found that yoga reduced pain scores by more than half. Young women suffering from rheumatoid arthritis reported improvements in measures of pain, as well as in anxiety and depression.

2. Yes, You Can!

A study was recently published on how yoga may benefit people who are overweight, sedentary, and at risk for type 2 diabetes. Forty-two people who had not practiced yoga within the previous year took part in an eight-week gentle Iyengar Yoga program. More than 80 per cent reported that they felt calmer and had better overall physical functioning.

3. Ray of Light

It has already been shown that practising mindfulness meditation is an excellent therapy for depression. A study was then carried out on how yoga asanas affected people who were clinically depressed. After eight weeks of practicing Iyengar Yoga three times a week, the patients reported significant decreases in both anxiety and depression.

4. Happy Day

Scientists have shown that meditation increases the activity of the area of the brain that's associated with positive moods, equanimity, and emotional resilience. In other words, meditating regularly may help you cope with life's ups and downs with greater ease and feel happier in your daily life.

5. Stay Sharp

Studies have shown that yogic practices can help your brain work better. Study participants completed a set of mental challenges both faster and more accurately after a 20-minute yoga session.

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STRETCHING POSTURES FOR SEPTEMBER

<p>TADASANA (Mountain)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves posture • Strengthens thighs, knees, and ankles • Firms abdomen and buttocks • Relieves sciatica • Reduces flat feet • Good preparation for standing postures. 	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">DAVID MARTINEZ</p>
<p>ADHO MUKHA SVANASANA (down dog)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Calms the brain and helps relieve stress and mild depression • Stretches the shoulders, hamstrings, calves, and hands • Stretches the spine • Strengthens the arms and legs. 	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">MARTY SCONDUTO</p>
<p>UTTANASANA (standing forward bend)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stretches the hamstrings, calves, and hips • Strengthens the thighs and knees • Reduces fatigue and anxiety. <p>Cautions Back injury: Do this posture with your hands on the wall, legs perpendicular to your torso, and arms parallel to the floor.</p>	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">DAVID MARTINEZ</p>
<p>TRIKONASANA (Triangle)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stretches the thighs, knees, and ankles • Stretches the hips, groins, hamstrings, and calves; shoulders, chest, and spine <p>Cautions Neck problems: Don't turn your head to look upward; continue looking straight ahead and keep both sides of the neck evenly long.</p>	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">RORY EARNSHAW</p>
<p>VIRABHADRASANA II (Warrior II)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stretches the legs and ankles • Stretches the groins, chest and lungs, shoulders <p>Cautions Neck problems: Don't turn your head to look over the front hand; continue to look straight ahead with both sides of the neck lengthened evenly.</p>	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">CHRIS ANDRE</p>
<p>PARSVAKONASANA (Extended Side Angle)</p> <p>Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stretches the legs, knees, and ankles • Stretches the groins, spine, waist, chest and lungs, and shoulders <p>Cautions If you have any neck problems don't turn your head to look at the top arm; instead look straight ahead with the sides of the neck lengthened evenly, or look down at the floor.</p>	 <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">RORY EARNSHAW</p>