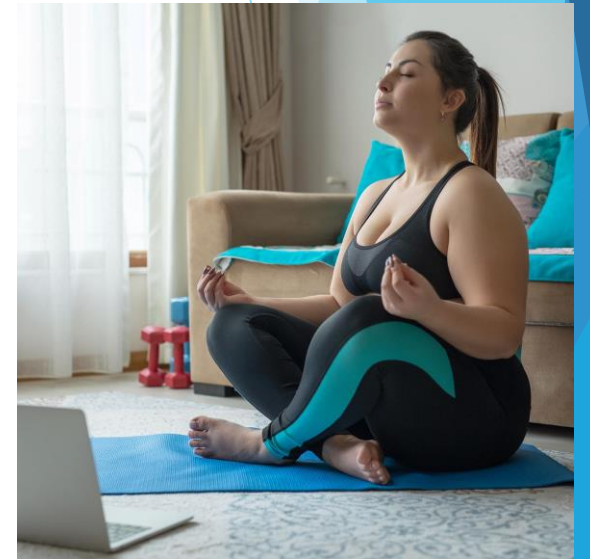


GENTLE YOGA

Be Well September 2021



What is Yoga

Yoga is an ancient practice, originating in Indian culture. Yoga started as a spiritual practice but has expanded as a popular way of promoting physical and mental well-being.

What Are Some of The Health Benefits of Practicing Yoga

Research suggests that yoga may:

- ▶ Help improve general wellness by relieving stress, supporting good health habits, and improving mental/emotional health, sleep, and balance.
- ▶ Relieve low-back pain and neck pain, and possibly pain from tension-type headaches and knee osteoarthritis.
- ▶ Help people who are overweight or obese lose weight.
- ▶ Help people quit smoking.
- ▶ Help people manage anxiety or depressive symptoms associated with difficult life situations.
- ▶ Relieve menopause symptoms.
- ▶ Help people with chronic diseases manage their symptoms and improve their quality of life.

Source: National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health

Risks in Practicing Yoga

- ▶ Yoga is generally considered a safe form of physical activity for healthy people when performed properly, under the guidance of a qualified instructor. However, as with other forms of physical activity, injuries can occur. The most common injuries are sprains and strains, and the parts of the body most commonly injured are the knee or lower leg. Serious injuries are rare.
- ▶ Older adults may need to be particularly cautious when practicing yoga. The rate of yoga-related injuries treated in emergency departments is higher in people age 65 and older than in younger adults.

Source: [National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health](#)

How to Make Yoga Practice Safer

- ▶ Practice yoga under the guidance of a qualified instructor. Practicing yoga without supervision has been associated with increased risks.
- ▶ New to Yoga?. You should start off slowly and avoid extreme practices such as headstands, shoulder stands, the lotus position, and forceful breathing.
- ▶ **Pregnant women, older adults, and people with health conditions should talk with their health care providers and the yoga instructor about their individual needs.** These conditions may need modifications in yoga: preexisting injuries, such as knee or hip injuries, lumbar spine disease, severe high blood pressure, balance issues, and glaucoma.

Source: NIH





Park Yoga Practices

onyouryogamat.com

Each of these 3 yoga practices begins with this page of the same Warm Ups and Sun Salutations accompanied by 3 separate standing, seated and finishing sequences



Begin in Child's Pose, knees apart, feet together, arms in front
Breathe steadily in through the nose, and out through the nose
Keep awareness turned inwards to sensations within the body
Remain with this sensation when you start to move

Warm Ups



Cat posture: look gently down
Shoulders above wrists
Hips above knees, feet apart



Breathe in: start to look forwards
Lift the chest, shoulders roll back
Feel the abdomen drawing down

← X3 →



Breathe out: start to look back
Arch the back like a cat
Draw the abdomen up



Stay here and breathe
Keep lifting the chest



Downward facing dog
Bend each knee in turn
Gently stretch out legs



Easy forward bend
Let the head hang
Relax the shoulders



Interlace fingers, reach up
Shoulders relaxed

Hips square to front:
Reach out to the left
Reach out to the right



Gentle Stretch Yoga for YOU

A video from the National
Institutes of Health

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Gentle Yoga