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Wellness Quick Read

From The Solutions Group Wellness Team

Benefits of Yoga

Many studies have shown a variety of benefits from practicing yoga.

- Increased Flexibility
- Improved Core Strength and Posture
- Improved Muscle Strength
- Relaxation
- Lowered Blood Pressure
- Reduced Inflammation
- Reduced Fatigue
- Slowed Heart Rate
- Migraine Relief
- Increased Blood Flow and Circulation
- Improved Sleep Quality
- Increased Mindfulness
- Improved Breath Awareness

4 Essential Yoga Tips for Beginners

Have you been wanting to try yoga? Here are some tips to get you started. If you have questions about yoga culture or etiquette, more experienced students are almost always happy to share their experiences. Questions about specific postures are best directed to your teacher, either during or after class.

1) What to Wear

Bare Feet—Yoga is most often done barefoot. Most yoga studios will have a designated area near the front door where you can leave your shoes.

Pants -Any comfortable exercise pants or shorts that allow for movement will do.

Tops –A fitted shirt is best so that it doesn't slide up.

2) What to Bring

Mat -If you are headed to your very first class, don't worry about bringing a mat as most studios will provide them. Eventually you will want to invest in your own.

Water Bottle -If you're doing hot yoga, bring a water bottle with you. With other types of yoga, you can probably wait until after class but be sure to rehydrate.

3) How to Prepare

Food -It's best not to eat a heavy meal right before you practice yoga. A light snack an hour or two prior is fine.

Warming up -If you are early to class, try some warm-up stretches or poses.

4) Practice Tips

Alignment –Keep a close eye on precisely how the instructor aligns his or her body in each pose. This will help you get the most out of each pose and avoid injury.

Listen –The instructor's verbal cues will guide you from one pose to the next.

Stay Positive –Don't feel badly if your teacher corrects your form. Hands-on instruction is the best way to learn and everyone is at a different place in their practice. Enjoy yourself!

Trust Your Judgment –No one else is in your body, so trust your judgment about what you can and cannot do and modify as needed.

Adapted from article by Ann Pizer. For original, complete article please refer to http://yoga.about.com/od/beginningyoga/a/Yoga-Tips.htm

Is Yoga Enough Strength Training?

Research indicates that although yoga does lead to some increased muscle strength, it is probably not enough to meet the recommended amount of strength training exercise.

The Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommend the following for strength training:

- 2 or more days/week
- 48 hours rest in between sessions
- Work all major muscle groups
- Start with 1 set per exercise and work up to 2-4 sets
- Complete 6-12 repetitions per set
- Perform each exercise to fatigue but with good form

Recipe of the Month:
Baked Zucchini Boats with Cherry Tomatoes

Ingredients

4 large zucchini, washed

1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, grated extra fine

2 tablespoons breadcrumbs

8 cherry tomatoes, halved

Fresh chopped basil

olive oil

salt and pepper

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Directions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.
2. Make about a 1/2 inch slice vertically down the side of each zucchini. Using a melon baller, scoop out the insides until you've created about a 1/4 inch trough.
3. Brush the zucchini inside and out with olive oil, then place 4 cherry tomato halves inside each zucchini boat. Sprinkle with cheese, top with the breadcrumbs, and add a pinch of salt and pepper.
5. Bake for roughly 25 minutes, or until the zucchini is tender.
6. Top with fresh chopped basil.

Recipe Source: The Zucchini Diaries
Click here for this recipe and others like it: http://thezucchinidiaries.blogspot.com/2012/02/baked-zucchini-boats-with-parmesan-and.html#!/2012/02/baked-zucchini-boats-with-parmesan-and.html

Yoga Poses

Downward Facing Dog

Mountain Pose

Warrior I

Extended Side Angle

Cobblers Pose

Triangle Pose

Cat-Cow Stretch

Child's Pose

For detailed description of proper form and benefits of these poses please visit
http://yoga.about.com/od/beginningyoga/tp/Ten-Essential-Yoga-Poses-For-Beginners.htm

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