



5 Benefits of Practicing Yoga

The practice of yoga originated in India thousands of years ago, but many are benefiting from using this ancient art today. As our lives become increasingly hectic, it is more important than ever to focus on our mental and physical well-being. Yoga is a simple way to improve *both* aspects of your health. Yoga incorporates breathing exercises, meditation, and strength-building poses, and it can be useful as a workout or a mental retreat from a chaotic schedule. Whether you practice once a week or once a day, yoga provides multiple benefits ranging from improved posture to better sleep.

Practicing yoga regularly may help improve your:

Strength

Practicing yoga strengthens your muscles and improves your posture. Performing yoga poses that target the shoulders and upper back will actually help build support for your spine. Yoga poses are typically held for three to five breaths, depending on your skill level. When

performed correctly, nearly all of them will engage your core and strengthen your abdominal walls.

Sleep

Taking time to practice yoga declutters the mind, which may help you fall asleep faster and experience higher quality rest at night. Recent studies indicate that yoga may increase the production of melatonin, the sleep hormone, which in turn helps us to get much-needed rest.

Stress Level

Yoga incorporates meditation, which helps reduce stress levels. Meditation is a practice within yoga that encourages you to focus on your breathing and to be present in the moment. Most individuals attempt to empty their minds while meditating, which helps reduce anxiety levels. Regularly practicing yoga and meditation have been found to reduce the hormones ACTH and cortisol, which are responsible for depression and stress.

Flexibility and Balance

All yoga poses are designed to increase balance, flexibility, and strength. As you practice yoga more frequently, you will experience more significant physical benefits. Over time, your muscles, ligaments, and tendons will lengthen, improving your range of motion. Practicing yoga only 15-30 minutes a day will result in a noticeable improvement in flexibility.

Chronic Pain

Some forms of chronic pain, such as headaches and migraines, are improved by practicing yoga. This commonly experienced pain is often caused by muscle tightness, stress, or poor posture. Practicing yoga, especially poses that strengthen the spine, could relieve this type of pain.

FREE YOGA RESOURCES

Check out these popular yoga YouTube channels to get started!

- 1 Yoga with Adriene
- 2 SarahBeth Yoga
- 3 Yoga with Tim