

Yoga is Good For You

Why should you do yoga? Why not jog, lift weights, do aerobics? Or maybe you get your exercise skiing, snowboarding, or swimming. Of course other forms of exercise work your body in various ways, but yoga is a complete, systematic and time-tested form of exercise that compliments your other activities.

Then again, if you don't exercise at all, yoga is the perfect way to start. It's designed for people of all ages and levels of fitness. If it's your first time, look for a gentle or beginning level class. The beautiful thing about yoga is that it's not competitive. You work at your own pace, listening to your body, gradually encouraging it to stretch and strengthen – when it's ready. But don't think you won't get a workout! You'll push your limits but you do it gently and safely, balancing strength with flexibility.



Yoga not only keeps you fit and firm, but provides innumerable benefits to the internal systems of the body as well. The many forward-bending *asanas*, or positions, stimulate digestion and elimination. Twisting *asanas* and backbends stimulate spinal nerves, benefiting the entire nervous system. With a healthy nervous system, you are able to relax and face life's difficulties more steadily. Inversions and other *asanas* pump up your blood circulation. Breathing exercises bring oxygen to the blood, which then bathes the cells, rejuvenating the body from the inside out. Yoga *asanas* affect the glands and regulate the production of hormones – in fact, yoga does wonders for all systems of the body.

Even a little effort at this exercise is repaid almost instantly with greatly increased feelings of well-being. With regular practice, you will quickly notice how your body feels lighter, livelier and more limber.

Other, more subtle forms of yoga, such as meditation and Bhakti Yoga practices, are easy to perform, relieve stress and benefit the body, the mind, and you, the Soul.