

FAST FACTS: Yoga

Yoga is a Hindu discipline which focuses on bringing harmony between body and mind to influence health and relaxation. Yoga practiced in the United States generally focuses on physical postures, breathing techniques, and meditation. Yoga is generally safe for most healthy individuals when practiced with a trained instructor.

✓ Core Components of Yoga

- Poses
 - Also called postures, range from simple to difficult
 - Includes a series of movements to increase strength and flexibility.
- Breathing
 - Important part of yoga
 - Controlling breathing can help control the body and quiet the mind.
- Relaxation/Meditation
 - Helps user to be more aware of the present.

✓ Benefits of Yoga

- Research indicates yoga shows promise with:
 - Relieving low-back pain and neck pain.
 - Possibly relieve pain from tension headaches and knee osteoarthritis.
 - Stress management
 - Improving anxiety or depression

✓ Risks and Precautions of Yoga

- Like all forms of physical activity, injuries can occur. The most common injuries are sprains and strains, in the knee or lower leg.
- Serious injuries are rare in yoga.
- Older adults may need to be cautious of yoga-related injuries as injuries are higher in people aged 65 and older than in younger adults.
- Older adults should talk with their healthcare provider and yoga instructor about their individual needs prior to beginning yoga.
- Some health conditions, such as preexisting knee or hip injuries, lumbar spine disease, severe high blood pressure, balance issues, or glaucoma may require modifications or avoidance of certain yoga poses.



✓ What Else You Should Do

- Try a non-drug treatment and document the impact on your pain in your [Pain Diary](#).
- Write down and share information about your pain with your healthcare provider.

Resources

1. National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (2023). *Yoga: What You Need To Know*. <https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/yoga-what-you-need-to-know#:~:text=They%20may%20need%20to%20avoid,%2C%20balance%20issues%2C%20and%20glaucoma>, Accessed 2/26/2023.
2. Denham-Jones L, Gaskell L, Spence N, Tim Pigott. A systematic review of the effectiveness of yoga on pain, physical function, and quality of life in older adults with chronic musculoskeletal conditions. *Musculoskeletal Care*. 2022 Mar;20(1):47-73. doi: 10.1002/msc.1576. Epub 2021 Jun 14. PMID: 34125986.
3. WebMD Health News. (2022) *Yoga can benefit Older Adults, Including Those With Memory Loss*. <https://www.webmd.com/fitness-exercise/news/20221004/yoga-benefit-older-adults-memory-loss> Accessed 2/26/2023.
4. National Institutes of Health: National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (2021) *Yoga: What you need to know*. <https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/yoga-what-you-need-to-know>, Accessed 8/6/2022.
5. Emedicinehealth from WebMD (2022) *All about Yoga: 15 Health Benefits*. https://www.emedicinehealth.com/yoga/article_em.htm Accessed 8/6/2022.

Revised February 2023