

Yoga Improves Fitness: One Trial and You'll See

Interest in Yoga for fitness is increasing across the country and it is a widely accepted fact that Yoga is great for the body. What was once ridiculed as a bizarre fad is today recognized as a basic skill that many people have embraced as a way of life and a first-rate choice for physical and mental fitness. Yoga is so popular these days that many celebrities like Madonna, Sting, Russell Simmons and Ricky Martin to name a few have become informal advocates for this form of exercise. From increased flexibility, strength, endurance to delayed aging and massaging of the internal organs of the body, the benefits of Yoga seem limitless. I stumbled upon it personally after telling a friend in the gym several years back that "Hey man, look at apes and all, we are so similar, they don't lift these boring weights and they are so much stronger, in fact Bruce Lee was known to NOT lift any weights but to perform several Hindu Push-ups, so there's got to be another kind of exercise to do for fitness on the inside and out..." Well, he passed on a book on Yoga to me the next day and lo and behold, I've been hooked ever since. From my own studies, research and practice, I've come to realize that Yoga is more than just stretching, is not only an exercise for women: (I challenge the most hard-core body-builder to hold a peacock pose for 2 minutes!!) and is quite simply great. Many people practice Yoga exclusively and at times for days on end, that is the only exercise I perform with as much emphasis on the unique 'Sun salutations' as possible. I single these core warm-up routines of Yoga out as they restore flexibility to the spine and believe it when I say they miraculously endow you with strength to hold challenging poses such as the Wheel, Peacock and Crow poses for several minutes on end. I mention these poses, because being a guy, these are the main ones that enhance the muscle groups us guys are so concerned about: Arms, Chest and Abs. I've also found that when combining these poses with other body-weight exercises like Hindu Squats and Push-ups, regular push-ups, reverse push-ups, pull ups and aerobic exercises, you really may not (re-phrase will not) need a gym or cumbersome equipment to get a total body workout. Another great benefit of Yoga lies in its unique Abdominal and Breathing exercises. These ones work. Being a former asthmatic and lethargic person, they have been an integral reason why my breathing (and singing mind you) has improved so drastically. Moreover, they have spiritual benefits such as clearer thinking, clairvoyance and increased focus. It is important, however, when practicing Yoga to adhere to a healthy diet, most books on the subject advocate a Vegan/vegetarian diet (which is fine by me being as I have been a vegan for several years, and this is arguably the main reason I believe I was able to cure over a decade of marring acne as well.) This simple, yet very effective discipline or sacrifice will aid you in gaining the most from Yoga as some poses do speed up detoxification and cleansing. Now for fitness, since most Yoga poses are Isometric in nature, you may choose to combine them with conventional exercises as while the latter builds the muscles up, Yoga definitely will relax them and add tonality much quicker. This simple principle is why Basketball coach Phil Jackson brought his Yoga philosophy to the Los Angeles Lakers and in June of 2000 led the team to their first championship in 12 years; needless to say, similar methods were used in the coaching of the Chicago Bulls during their successful tenure as NBA champions under his guidance. In addition to the points above, Jackson's philosophy on Yoga embraces the facts that 1. Yoga strengthens and streamlines your muscles, giving you a leaner yet stronger body, with longer and toned muscles instead of short bulkier ones common to body-builders. This gives everyone from athletes to housewives, increased ability to perform their duties better. 2. Yoga calms and clears the mind for more focused thinking. 3. Yoga energizes the average practitioner while simultaneously increasing one's flexibility. 4. Yoga offers psychological benefits in that it increases self-confidence, esteem and self-acceptance as no other exercise can. 5. Yoga tones and normalizes internal organs like the endocrine, digestive, excretory, reproductive and respiratory systems through the gentle, yet very effective poses it's associated with. Here are two last reasons I set aside based on their uniqueness: Sexual fitness & animal magnetism? Well, yoga gives you that... just try its breathing and abdominal exercises and inverted poses, namely the shoulder-stand and you will see for yourself what I am talking about. So there you have it, a few of the many reasons why Yoga is so popular and with good cause. Now to improve your fitness levels beyond your imagination, why not incorporate a little bit (or heck a whole lot) of Yoga. Trust me, your body will be glad you did. Discover proven ways of attaining improved health with the all-natural methods of a proper diet, Yoga and positive thinking.

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