



Yoga nna love it!

Considering it's thousands of years old, referring to yoga as a new fitness craze isn't really accurate. However, yoga has become increasingly popular in the U.S. in recent years. Yoga offers many benefits including, improved flexibility, posture, balance, circulation and coordination, increased self awareness, reduced risk of injury for other activities and relaxation and stress reduction. With all this going for it, don't you think it's time you give yoga a try?

What exactly is yoga?

Yoga is an ancient philosophy or discipline that originated in India. Most people think of yoga as stretching, breathing or a meditation activity only to be enjoyed by people who eat granola and wear sandals. The truth, is yoga has many benefits that can be enjoyed by everyone. The concepts of yoga can be difficult to translate and often refer to concepts rather than concrete definitions.

Types of yoga

There are three main types of yoga but there are different ways to practice each type.

Apa refers to the yoga of the mind. It's practiced with meditation and chanting. This type of yoga is more of a spiritual or religious type of yoga and doesn't involve stretching and flexibility.

Karma yoga deals with healing and emotions and is also practiced through meditation. The emphasis is the effect of a person's actions or conduct and the positive effects towards others. This is also a more spiritual or religious type of yoga.

Hatha yoga is considered the physical yoga and is usually practiced by stretching and breathing, but can also include some chanting. Most people are only familiar with 2 of the stages of hatha yoga but there are actually 8 different stages. The first 2 steps (yama and niyama) deal with ethics, morals and personal conduct. The 3rd step (asana) is the

stretching and flexibility portion and the 4th step (pranayama) has to do with controlling breathing. The 3rd and 4th steps are most commonly known in the North America. The next three steps help you control your senses (pratyahara), concentration (dharana) and meditation (dhyana). The last stage (samadhi) is a combination of the previous stages and results in reaching a new spiritual level.

Although the different styles of Hatha yoga may use the same positions (known as postures or asanas), they can be practiced differently with the emphasis changing from breathing technique (known as pranayama), the alignment of your body or the movement from one asana to another. Below are just a few of the different styles of Hatha yoga named for their founders:

Iyengar yoga focuses on how the asanas are done, paying close attention to the alignment of the body, strength and flexibility. The goal is to balance and strengthen the body and improve muscle imbalances and posture.

Ashtanga (or Astanga) yoga uses a fast paced series asanas (sort of like "circuit yoga") that

are designed to improve strength and flexibility but also to warm up the muscles. This is less relaxing than Iyengar yoga but can be an excellent workout.

Bikram yoga, which is becoming more popular, is done in a warmer room and uses 26 different asanas. This type of yoga is also designed to stretch the muscles and connective tissue (ligaments and tendons).

Just learning the asanas and practicing can improve your flexibility, reduce stress and prevent injuries. Practicing asanas and pranayamas requires concentration and over time this will lead to an increased self-awareness. All of these things are helpful for athletes, people who exercise, a mother of 3, students, busy professionals, basically anyone.

So what are you waiting for? Yoga is fun, challenging and can improve many areas of your life. The Club offers yoga classes in many different format, check out the Class Schedule to find one that suits your schedule.

Source: U24



Ask the expert - Is dark chocolate good or bad for me?

Q: *I am a chocoholic and absolutely in love with dark chocolate (85% -99% cocoa). However, I have noticed that it is very high in saturated fat.*

I have come across contradictory evidence regarding the health benefits and risks of saturated fat found in dark chocolate.

Could you please shed some light on this issue?

Danielle

A: The contradictory evidence regarding the health benefits and risks you have come across is probably accurate for different reasons.

Most natural foods are beneficial for the body in some respects according to their concentration of nutrients. What needs to be kept in mind is the effect that food item in question will have on your body. While foods can be of benefit in one regard, they can be less than beneficial on other fronts.

An example of this is dark chocolate. We are

of course talking about pure dark chocolate with a high cocoa content, not the sweetened milk chocolate that is found commonly in candy bars. While the pure dark goodness is beneficial for the body due to its anti-oxidant content, it is a calorically dense food item therefore also comes with a lot of energy in the form of calories. This high caloric content is due to the high concentration of saturated fats.

Foods high in saturated fats are less desirable because they are saturated with energy/calories. Unsaturated fats are more desirable because they are less compact with energy/calories. So the same chocolate that brings you benefit because of the anti-oxidants, can work against you if you are looking at watching your caloric or food intake.

There are studies out there that list the pros and cons of specific foods but what should be kept in mind is how that food item contributes to your overall intake. Does it contribute to overall balance or detract from it?

As far as being a "chocoholic", it is important to keep in mind that everything should be consumed in moderation.

Thank you for your question!

Faisal Naqvi, CAT®, GRT
Clinic Director, Athletic Therapist,
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Send your questions to expert@clubmansfield.ca and we will answer you shortly.

We will feature one question and answer each month in the newsletter and we will post all of them on our website at www.clubmansfield.ca.

We're looking forward to hear from you!



Spin it!

Some call it torturous, others exhilarating. But there's no denying it, indoor cycling is popular. What sets these group classes apart from the usual boredom of stationary cycling is the visual imagery provided by instructors. Participants are led on a 'virtual' outdoor road race complete with hills, valleys, straight-aways and finish lines.

But before you reserve your spot (classes are popular and there's only a set number of bikes) and start composing your victory speech, there are a few questions to ask yourself, as well as a few precautions to take, to make your first ride a smooth and enjoyable one.

what kind of shape am i in?

This question is crucial. Despite its heavy promotion as a workout for even the most uncoordinated, indoor cycling is by no means for everyone. The intensity levels of many classes are far beyond what most novices or part-time exercisers can achieve and maintain, particularly for 40 minutes or more.

It's easy to get caught up in an instructor's chant of 'Faster RPMs!' and 'Don't sit down!' even if your body is telling you otherwise. That's why it's so important that participants either be in very good cardiovascular condition, or have the discipline to monitor and adhere to

their body's cries for moderation.

get in cycling shape

Just because you may not be ready for a cycling class now doesn't mean you can't be in the very near future. Consider doing some cycling-specific training before you take your first indoor cycling class. Spend some time on a stationary bike, but make it interesting by creating your own 'virtual' experience by 'traveling' some of your favorite road trips in your mind as you listen to music. You can increase your endurance by interspersing periods of high-intensity cycling with more leisurely pedaling.

In just a few short weeks you'll be ready to sign up for your first indoor cycling class



indoor cycling essentials

The following helpful tips can make your first

cycling experience a positive one:

Don't make the dreaded mistake of showing up in your usual boxers or running shorts - there's no better way to make your ride unbearable. Opt instead for bike shorts, preferably padded like most outdoor cyclists wear. While this won't eliminate the chaffing and discomfort altogether, it helps - a lot.

Your second most important item: a full water bottle. Get ready to consume plenty of fluids during this class.

Adjust the seat to the appropriate height. If the seat is too low, you won't be able to get enough leg extension on the downstroke. If it's too high, you'll be straining to reach and might injure yourself. Here's a good rule to follow: Your upstroke knee should never be higher than hip level, while your downstroke knee should be about 85 percent straight. And don't grip the handlebars too tightly, as this will increase the tension in your neck and shoulders.

Above all, concentrate on exercising at your own pace. Don't be intimidated by the high speeds and furious intensity of your cycling mates. Listen to your body and adjust the tension and speed accordingly, and don't be afraid to sit back and take a break when necessary.

A month of exercise helps ease heart failure

By Ed Edelson, HealthDay Reporter

Moderate regimen saw heart output, breathing improve, researchers say

Just four weeks of moderate exercise is enough to boost the cardiac performance and breathing capacity of patients with heart failure, a new study finds.

This slightly more strenuous exercise program, in standard use in Europe for people with heart failure, works at least as well as the less intense American regimen, the researchers noted. They presented the findings Tuesday at the Experimental Biology conference in San Diego.

In heart failure, the heart progressively loses the ability to pump blood. In the United States, doctors typically recommend three-times-a-week exercise sessions for eight to 12 weeks to help ease the condition, noted study author Stephen F. Crouse, a professor of kinesiology and internal medicine at Texas A&M University, in College Station.

His team looked at data from an Austrian rehabilitation center where 366 heart failure patients (average age 63) exercised 14 to 22 minutes on stationary bicycles six times a week. Participants also did a brisk 45-minute walk each day.

Four weeks of that regimen were enough to produce a significant increase in the participants' breathing capacity, Crouse said.

"This is something that we can recommend continuing for the rest of their lives," he added.

The benefits of exercise for people with heart failure are well-established, Crouse acknowledged. "There are some data from U.S. studies showing that the European regimen has at least equal benefits," he said.



The study used such standard measures of heart function as VO₂max, which measures oxygen consumed; resting heart rate; and blood pressure. But of greater interest was the measurement of blood levels of the protein NT-proBNP, which is secreted when heart muscle cells are stressed, Crouse said.

"We have this biomarker in the blood that can be followed very well and that correlates with [cardiac] performance," he said.

Levels of NT-proBNP went down as standard measures of heart performance went up, Crouse said. Blood levels of the protein dropped by 33 percent in the study group after four weeks of the exercise regimen.

Measuring NT-proBNP "is something we would suggest could become a routine clinical test, of treatment and performance," Crouse said. A blood test for the protein is not expensive and is a better alternative for more costly tests such as echocardiography, he said.

The longer-term effects of a continued exercise program for heart failure will be assessed by the Texas A&M team, Crouse said. "We need data to follow them out," he said.

The results were not surprising and will not affect advice on exercise now given to people with heart failure, said Dr. William E. Kraus, research director at the Duke University Center for Living. His center is currently leading a major trial of long-term exercise training for people with heart failure, with results expected later this year.

Use of NT-proBNP as a measure of performance is "a new wrinkle, but not so much of one that it makes me want to change practice," Kraus added.



The Chefs' Corner

by Derek Dammann, Executive Chef at the DNA Restaurant

Sicilian Pangritatta

With Barbeque season approaching, try using this to garnish your grilled meat, fish or vegetable dishes. It keeps well in an airtight container for two weeks.

Yield: 2 cups

1 cup	fresh breadcrumbs
2 tbsp	olive oil
1/3 cup	olive oil
1/2 cup	pine nuts
1/2 sprig	rosemary
1 tsp	chili flakes
3/4 cup	red onion, finely diced
1/3 cup	dried currants
1/4 cup	balsamic vinegar
2 tbsp	Italian parsley, finely chopped
	sea salt and black pepper to taste

Preheat the oven to 375F.

Toast the pine nuts for 8 minutes, until nicely golden brown.

Toss the breadcrumbs in the 2 tbsp of olive oil and toast in the oven for 10 minutes, or until golden brown and crunchy.

In a sauté pan over medium heat, add the olive oil, rosemary and the chilies, when they start to sizzle, add the onion and season with salt. Turn the heat down to low and allow the onions to stew for about 10 minutes, until very tender, transfer to a bowl and remove the rosemary.

While the onion is cooking soak the currants in hot water for 10 minutes and drain.

Add the balsamic vinegar to the pan that the onions were in, and reduce it over medium heat until you have 1 tbsp left. Stir the reduced vinegar into the onions.

Add the pine, nuts, currants, parsley and breadcrumbs to the onion mixture and season to taste.



Do we get enough exercise from our daily activities?

Most Americans get little vigorous exercise at work or during leisure hours. Today, only a few jobs require vigorous physical activity. People usually ride in cars or buses and watch TV during their free time rather than do something active. Activities like golfing and bowling provide people with some benefit but they do not provide the same benefits as regular, more vigorous exercise.

Evidence suggests that even low to moderate intensity activities can have both short and long-term benefits. If done daily, they help lower your risk of heart disease. Such activities include pleasure walking, stair climbing, gardening, yardwork, moderate to heavy housework, dancing and home exercise. More vigorous exercise can help improve fitness of the heart and lungs, which can provide even more consistent benefits for lowering heart disease risk.

Today, many people are rediscovering the benefits of regular, vigorous exercise, activities like swimming, brisk walking, running, or jumping rope. These kinds of activities are sometimes called "aerobic," meaning the body uses oxygen to produce the energy needed for the activity. Aerobic exercises can condition your heart and lungs if performed at the proper intensity for at least 30 minutes, 3-4 times a week.

But you don't have to train like a marathon runner to become more physically fit! Any activity that gets you moving around, even if it's done for just a few minutes each day is

better than none at all. For inactive people, the trick is to get started. One great way is to take a walk for 10-15 minutes during your lunch break.



These are the benefits often experienced by people who get regular physical activity.

feeling better:

- gives you more energy
- helps in coping with stress
- improves your self-image
- increases resistance to fatigue
- helps counter anxiety and depression
- helps you to relax and feel less tense
- improves the ability to fall asleep quickly and sleep well
- provides an easy way to share an activity with friends or family and an opportunity to meet new friends

looking better:

- tones your muscles
- burns off calories to help lose extra pounds or helps you stay at your desirable weight
- helps control your appetite

You need to burn off 3,500 calories more than you take in to lose 1 pound. If you want to lose weight, regular physical activity can help you in either of two ways.

First, you can eat your usual amount of calories, but be more active. For example: A 200-pound person who keeps on eating the same amount of calories, but decides to walk briskly each day for 1 1/2 miles will lose about 14 pounds in 1 year. Or second, you can eat fewer calories and be more active. This is an even better way to lose weight.

About three-fourths of the energy you burn every day comes from what your body uses for its basic needs, such as sleeping, breathing, digesting food and reclining. A person burns up only a small amount of calories with daily activities such as sitting. Any physical activity in addition to what you normally do will burn up extra calories.

The average calories spent per hour by a 150-pound person are listed below. (A lighter

person burns fewer calories; a heavier person burns more.) Since exact calorie figures are not available for most activities, the figures below are averaged from several sources and show the relative vigor of the activities.

Activity	Calories Burned/ Hour
Bicycling 6 mph	240
Bicycling 12 mph	410
Cross-country skiing	700
Jogging 5 1/2 mph	740
Jogging 7 mph	920
Jumping rope	750
Running in place	650
Running 10 mph	1280
Swimming 25 yds/min	275
Swimming 50 yds/min	500
Tennis-singles	400
Walking 2 mph	240
Walking 3 mph	320
Walking 4 1/2 mph	440

The calories spent in a particular activity vary in proportion to one's body weight. For example, a 100-pound person burns 1/3 fewer calories, so you would multiply the number of calories by 0.7. For a 200-pound person, multiply by 1.3.

Working harder or faster for a given activity will only slightly increase the calories spent. A better way to burn up more calories is to increase the time spent on your activity.

working better:

- helps you to be more productive at work
- increases your capacity for physical work
- builds stamina for other physical activities
- increases muscle strength
- helps your heart and lungs work more efficiently

Consider the benefits of a well-conditioned heart: In 1 minute with 45 to 50 beats, the heart of a well-conditioned person pumps the same amount of blood as an inactive person's heart pumps in 70 to 75 beats. Compared to the well-conditioned heart, the average heart pumps up to 36,000 more times per day, 13 million more times per year.

Source: U24

