



Yoga for Injury Prevention...and a Relaxed State of Mind to Boot

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Yoga has been in practice for thousands of years. It is an ancient system of meditation. The word Yoga comes from the Sanskrit word meaning yoke or bind. In western views it is the union of the body, mind and soul. Yoga is not a religion, but has been incorporated by many religions to help one become more spiritual in their own religious practices. Yoga is therapeutic as well as a preventative science.

In the US many practice what is known as asana, performing a routine of physical poses. These are used to help with stretching and strengthening of muscles. Muscles become toned without the bulked-up look. Hatha yoga, which stresses physical movement, is highly practiced today. It is a series of coordinated exercises that balance both sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems that leads to improved health and relaxation.

Yoga has many benefits including toning muscles, enhances balance and coordination and posture, lowers blood pressure, relaxes the body and mind reducing stress and anxiety. It also has been known to help with emotional concerns including Attention Deficit Disorder and impulse problems.

There are a lot of books and videos about yoga out there and to decide which one to choose can be overwhelming. The best way to see if yoga is right for you is to take a class. Most gyms or yoga studios offer a free week of yoga to try it out. There are classes for beginners. The most important thing is that when you perform the poses you shouldn't feel intimidated by the instructor or others in the class. Poses can be modified in many ways including doing the poses seated or with props.

Yoga should be practiced regularly to experience all of the benefits. Practicing 20 to 30 minutes 3 times per week is ideal to make a difference physically as well as mentally. Uniting the body and mind is the essence of yoga. Remember the experience is found through practice and the benefits are the many rewards.