

Anti-Inflammatory Benefits of Yoga

It's common knowledge that yoga is great for encouraging flexibility and relieving stress. But yoga can be a key ingredient in an inflammation-reducing, pain-relieving program for people suffering from conditions like arthritis, lupus, migraines, injuries, colitis, and more.

The common denominator in all these conditions is inflammation and yoga has proven for many to be an effective tool for reducing inflammation and easing pain. According to Timothy McCall, author of *Yoga as Medicine: The Yogic Prescription for Health and Healing*, yoga can help keep people keep moving when other forms of movement prove too painful. With the inclusion of breathing techniques and meditation instruction, many types of yoga teach pain-coping mechanisms, helping arthritis sufferers and others to stay active and involved in life.

Yoga also minimizes the erosion of cartilage that causes joint pain by teaching proper alignment of bones. In this way, a yoga practice can bring about postural improvements. Plus, the greater awareness of muscular patterns that a regular yoga practice engenders can help people reverse the conditions that create or exacerbate their physical suffering.

BE GENTLE

If you suffer from arthritis or another inflammatory condition, look for a gentle yoga class that emphasizes alignment to create as much space between the joints as possible. Yoga styles that are particularly focused on proper alignment include Iyengar and Anusara yoga classes.

GO SLOW

A slower pace will ensure smooth and easy transitions between poses. Rather than holding poses for a long period of time, which can be stressful on the joints, "pulse" in and out of the poses, and always come out of a pose if you feel tired or strained.

BOTTOM LINE

Yoga can be an important part of a pain-relief and inflammation-reducing protocol.



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