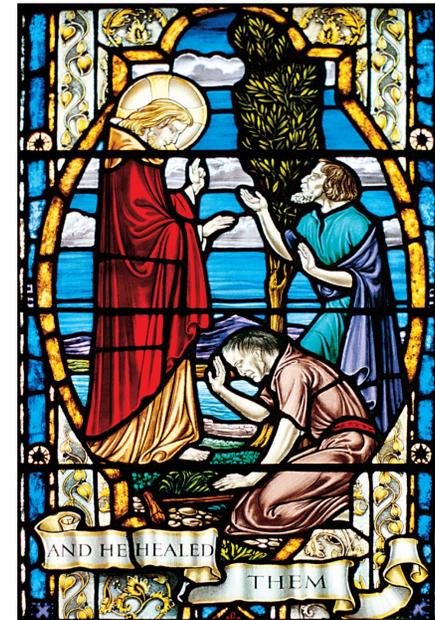


## Fascinating Yoga Facts

[www.msn.com](http://www.msn.com)

- Yoga is not just about doing a few joint, muscle or stretching exercises every day. It is a combination of three things: different postures, breathing patterns and meditation.
- A few minutes of yoga during the day can relax both your body and your mind, by releasing tension that accumulates in the muscles, and pacifying your over-worked brain.
- Yoga exercises not only keep the joints healthy, but also bring relief to people suffering from arthritis. Keep in mind that you should always listen to your body during yoga, and modify poses based on your own physical conditions.
- The regular practice of yoga can reduce food cravings, and subsequently, the habit of overeating. A University of Washington study claims that this happens because yoga increases the awareness of the physical and emotional sensations associated with eating.
- Practicing yoga has proved to improve relationships. A relaxed, happy and contented mind is better equipped to deal with relationships of every kind—professional and personal.
- Yoga is an ideal and risk-free way for losing those extra pounds. Sun salutations (surya namaskar) and kapalbhati pranayama are especially effective for weight loss.
- A 2013 study claims that yoga therapy could benefit people living with depression, schizophrenia and other psychiatric conditions. Other research has demonstrated the efficacy of yoga as an add-on therapy to improve withdrawal symptoms and social cognition.
- Regular yoga is a good antidote to sleep disorders. A Harvard Medical School study found that eight weeks of daily yoga practice improved the quality of sleep in many people suffering from insomnia.
- Yoga can bring relief to people suffering from migraine headaches. "The Migraine Solution," co-authored by Dr. Paul B. Rizzoli and published by Harvard Health Publications, claims that affected people had fewer and less painful migraines after three months of practicing yoga.
- Yoga poses stimulate the regular secretion of hormones from the endocrine glands, thus promoting overall physical and emotional health.
- By strengthening the core, toning the muscles, improving cardiovascular function, helping in the secretion of hormones and flushing out toxins from the body, regular yoga practice has immense anti-aging benefits.

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## Wellness Words

September 2018

National Yoga Awareness  
Month

“I have come that you may have life and have it more abundantly.”

John 10:10b

## National Yoga Awareness Month

www.healthcorps.org

Yoga has been featured in a number of clinical trials that have looked at its impact on risk of breast cancer, obesity, hypertension, heart disease, chronic back pain, asthma, carpal tunnel syndrome, and arthritis, and its impact on minimizing uncomfortable symptoms associated with menopause. Many of the studies also looked at the many benefits that yoga offers.

### Heart Benefits of Yoga

Individuals who practiced yoga on a regular basis saw improvement in each of the following primary heart disease risk factors:

- Blood pressure
- Body mass index
- LDL and HDL (cholesterol) levels



Additionally, yoga, when combined with specific medication treatments for conditions like high blood pressure, also provided significant benefits as a heart-risk improvement factor.

### Other Benefits of Yoga

- Increased flexibility.
- Increased muscle strength and tone
- Improved respiration, energy and vitality
- Maintaining a balanced metabolism
- Weight reduction
- Cardio and circulatory health
- Improved athletic performance
- Protection from injury.



### Brain Boost

Researchers at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign found that a single 20 minute Hatha yoga session improved participants' speed and accuracy on tests involving working memory and inhibitory control. These two brain activities represent measures of brain function that are involved in the ability of the brain to focus, take in and retain information, and then use that information. The study participants who performed the yoga, scored significantly higher than those who did not.



The researchers believe that it is Hatha yoga's impact on not only physical movements and postures, but also regulated breathing and meditation, that contributed to the positive impact. Yoga participants in the study were also compared to aerobic exercise participants, who worked out at 70% of maximum heart rate for 20 minutes – a pretty vigorous workout. The yoga workout also beat the aerobic workout in terms of brain boost.

### Bed Yoga

Recently featured on the Dr. Oz show, certain gentle stretches can help you relieve the most common aches and pains in your lower back and legs, so you can fall asleep without the interference of discomfort. Just make sure that these next moves are done in a gentle slow fashion, accompanied by deep breathing.

**Position #1** – Once in bed, sit up with feet straight in front of you. Cross your right leg over your left leg, and then gently twist your upper body towards your left side, placing your right palm as far behind your left hip on the mattress surface, as is comfortable. Hold the position for a count of 10, breathing in and out. Repeat by crossing your legs the other way, and reaching towards the back of your left side.

**Position #2** – Lie on your back and bend your right leg, so that your knee goes out to the side, and place your right ankle just above the knee of your left leg (which is still lying straight out). Gently bend the left knee so that you can reach behind the knee area, and clasp your hands just behind. Now gently pull the left knee up and in towards your face so that you are stretching your right knee flexor. Hold for a count of 10, breathing in and out deeply. Sit up and repeat on other side.

“Inhale, and God approaches you. Hold the inhalation, and God remains with you. Exhale, and you approach God. Hold the exhalation, and surrender to God.” ~ Krishnamacharya