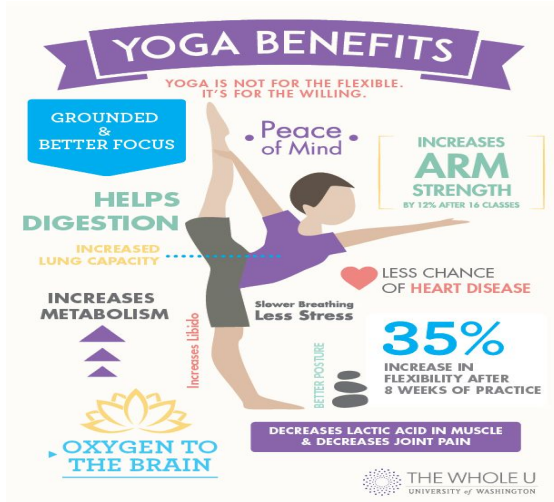


YOGA AND ITS BENEFITS

The word Yoga comes from the ancient Sanskrit language and means “union.” It seeks to unite the body and the mind.

There are many benefits to point out, for example:



- Improved Brain Function. Just 20 minutes of Hatha yoga can improve cognitive function, boosting focus and working memory.
- Lower Stress Levels.
- Increases Flexibility in shoulders, lower back and hamstring.
- Lower Blood Pressure.
- Improved Lung Capacity.
- Reduced chronic neck and back pains.
- Relieve anxiety and depression
- Steady blood sugar levels in people with diabetes.
- Improved sense of balance.
- After years you will get stronger bones, healthy

weight and lower risk of heart disease.

But Yoga is more than just a system of preventative or restorative health care. Yoga looks at health from a broad, holistic perspective that is only now being rediscovered by avant-garde medicine. This perspective appreciates the enormous influence of the mind (your psychological attitude) on physical health.

Yoga can help you in several ways. It can put you in touch with your feelings and help balance your emotional life. Yoga also helps your ability to empathize and communicate with others.

APPROACHES TO YOGA

Yoga has undergone various adaptations since coming to the Western hemisphere from its Indian homeland in the late 19th century. Today, yoga is practiced in five major ways:

- As a method for physical fitness and health maintenance.
- As a sport (acro yoga).
- As body-oriented therapy.
- As a comprehensive lifestyle.
- As a spiritual discipline.

We focus primarily on the first way, in which yoga is practiced as a way to improve flexibility, resilience and strength. In order to relax the body and mind, we also practice postural control and breathing.

All of these approaches to yoga cultivate two fundamental practices: *awareness and relaxation*.

☐ Awareness is the ability to pay close attention to something, to be consciously present, and to be mindful. Yoga is attention training. The following exercise is an example. Pay attention to your right foot for the next 30 seconds. Feel your right foot and do nothing else. Chances are, your mind is drifting off after only a few seconds. Yoga asks you to rein in your attention whenever it strays.

☐ Relaxation is the conscious release of tension in the body. Both practices are usually done at the beginning and the end of a yoga lesson.

HEALTH, HEALING AND YOGA

Yoga helps you mobilize your inner strength so that you can live responsibly and wisely.

What is health? Health is more than just the absence of illness in a positive state of being. Health is also being vitally connected to your social and physical environment. To be healthy also means to be happy.

What do we need to do in Yoga?

- Wear comfortable clothes (like leotards) that allow broad movement.
- Use a mat or rug.
- Leave shoes, chewing gum, cell phones and crummy attitudes outside of the class.
- Be in silence in order to internalize what you're living and feeling, and also out of respect for the other practitioners.
- Have a good attitude, motivation and good humor.
- Your attitude is quite useful in overcoming some postures. You are not competing with other students, so don't try to overcome your limits because you can get injured.

What is sun salutation?

Is a sequence of postures that help you to prepare the body and the mind for more demanding postures.



ONE MINUTE, ONE YOGA POSE

LOTUS

Sit with your legs crossed and feet pressed on top of thighs. Bring your hands forward and press them before your chest. Exhale slowly.

WARRIOR I

Jump your feet 3 1/2 feet apart. Raise your arms perpendicular to the floor and slowly bring them to a peak above your head. Gaze upwards.

TREE

Press your right foot on your inner left thigh. Raise your arms slowly and form a peak above your head.

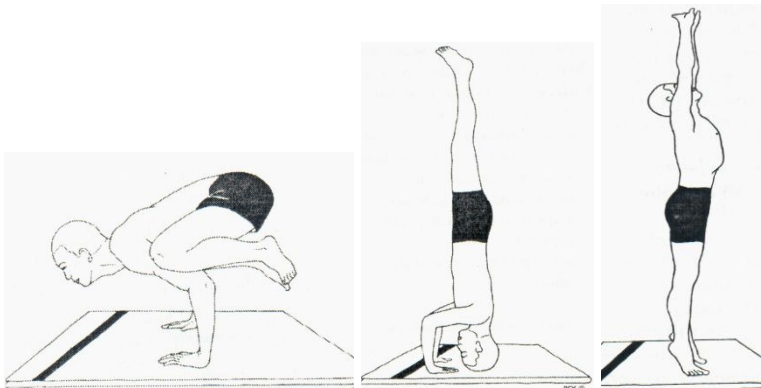
HALF TWIST

Sit so that your left foot slides to the outer edge of your right hip. Twist to the right and bring your left elbow against your right knee palm forward.

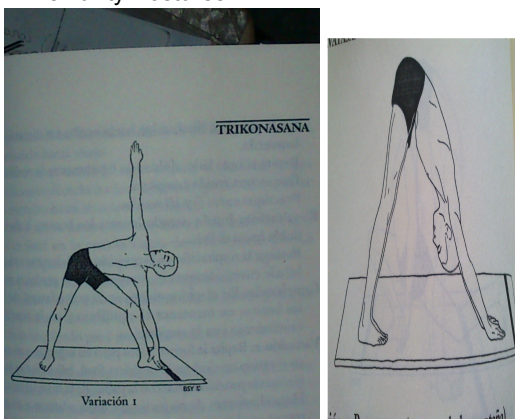
SIDE PLANK

Form your body into one straight diagonal line from the crown to the feet. Stretch your hand up towards the ceiling and gaze upwards.

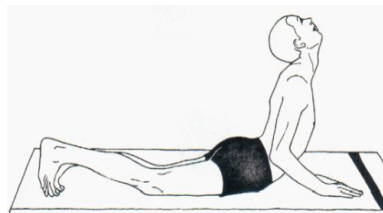
1. Balance postures:



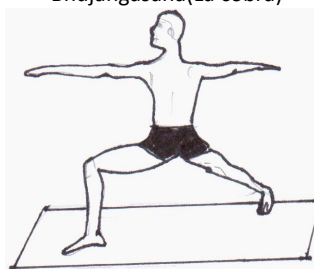
2. Flexibility Postures:



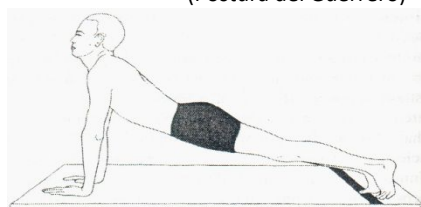
3. Strength Postures:



Bhujangasana (La cobra)



Virabhadrasana II
(Postura del Guerrero)



Santolanasana

