**HOW YOGA CAN HELP YOU** 20.11.12

* This is just an introduction to yoga. If you want to learn more about yoga you have a lot of useful websites to visit.

Warm up

* Ask the questions : *What do you know about yoga? What is yoga?* *Do you practise yoga?* Elicit the answers

Definition

*Yoga* is a commonly generic term for physical, mental and spiritual disciplines which originated in ancient India. The origin of yoga is not clear but some seals depicting yoga or meditation poses were discovered in excavations and they are dated in the 3rd millennium BC.

The word *yoga* comes from Sanskrit, the old Hindu language, and means *join , connect* or *contact.*

It is also used to refer to one of the six schools of Hindu philosophy.Someone who practices yoga or follows the yoga philosophy with a high level of commitment is called a [yogi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yogi).

Purpose

Traditionally yoga is practised and developed to open your body and clear your mind to so can meditate, that is , so you are free from stress and anxiety and able to focus your attention on important things like *Who am I? What is my purpose?* *How can I solve my conflicts? How can I help myself?*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| P H Y S I C A L  B E N E F I T S | |
| Strength | builds strength of muscles and bones |
| Flexibility | lengthens muscles to increase mobility in the joints |
| Improved Posture | develops understanding of body mechanics, healthy movement patterns, and ideal postural alignment |
| Ability to Relax | develops the skill of non-action and the awareness to physically relax |
| Breath Awareness | draws attention to the breath as a reflection of state of mind and as a tool to elicit relaxation and focus |
| Stability and Balance | provides physical experiences that ask the body to continually re-establish balance, which develops coordination and prevents injury |
| Equalizes Energy | revitalizes low energy and tempers hyperactivity |
| M E N T A L   B E N E F I T S | |
| Stress Management | allows teens to experience a sense of space around their concerns (including what others think) and provides techniques for redirecting thoughts and calming the nervous system |
| Decision Making | teaches teens to make choices that respect themselves and others |
| Concentration | develops one’s ability to focus through practical disciplines of breath and bodywork |
| Healthy Body Image | provides a strengthened internal perspective; helps self-image develop free of media and other cultural influences |
| Acceptance | cultivates gratitude for what the body can do; enables letting go of the tendency to be critical of one’s self and judgmental of others |
| Curiosity | provides a healthy way to experiment, take risks, and explore the body |
| S P I R I T U A L   B E N E F I T S | |
| Compassion | opens us to our greater qualities of kindness, compassion, and nonviolence |
| Connection | cultivates interconnectedness between ourselves, others, and the natural world around us |
| Presence | heightens awareness and cultivates emotional connection while combating both numbness and drama |
| Intuition | encourages self-trust by valuing one’s internal voice |

Asanas

The physical practice of yoga postures that is a form of exercise. *Asanas* are each of the poses when you practice yoga.

Breathing

Breathing control is very important when practice yoga. Both inhalation and exhalation must be done through nose and you have to make complete and conscious breathing.

Tips for starting yoga

* **Consider your fitness level and any medical issues before joining a yoga class.** Talk to your doctor before beginning any new exercise program, especially if you have a health problem. Also talk to the instructor. Many will be able to provide modified poses for beginners or those with special health concerns.
* **Look for a low-pressure environment where you can learn at your own pace.** Don’t extend yourself beyond what feels comfortable, and always back off of a pose at the first sign of pain. A good teacher can show you alternate poses for ones that are too challenging for your health or fitness level.
* **Dress comfortably** in clothing that allows your body a full range of motion. Yoga is practiced with bare feet, so wear shoes you can quickly slip on and off before and after class.

Websites

<http://www.helpguide.org/mental/practicing_yoga_tai_chi_supplement.htm>

<http://www.yoga4teens.com/allabouty4t.php>

<http://www.beliefnet.com/Wellness/Yoga/Teen-Yoga/Yoga-for-Teens.aspx>

<http://yogaminded.com/12-yoga-poses-teenagers-should-know/>