

How Yoga Works

Many of yoga's benefits can be explained in ways that conform with Western ways of knowing. Here are forty ways that yoga facilitates better health, both as prevention and as treatment, that are supported by evidence. While it would have been possible to choose others, the mechanisms of action selected provide a broad overview of how yogic tools including asana (poses), pranayama (breathing techniques), and meditation can improve health.

40 WAYS YOGA HEALS

1. Increases Flexibility
2. Strengthens Muscles
3. Improves Balance
4. Improves Immune Function
5. Improves Posture
6. Improves Lung Function
7. Leads to Slower and Deeper Breathing
8. Discourages Mouth Breathing
9. Increases Oxygenation of Tissues
10. Improves Joint Health
11. Nourishes Intervertebral Disks
12. Improves Return of Venous Blood
13. Increases Circulation of Lymph
14. Improves Function of the Feet
15. Improves Proprioception
16. Increases Control of Bodily Functions
17. Strengthens Bones
18. Conditions the Cardiovascular System
19. Promotes Weight Loss
20. Relaxes the Nervous System
21. Improves the Function of the Nervous System
22. Improves Brain Function
23. Activates the Left Prefrontal Cortex
24. Changes Neurotransmitter Levels
25. Lowers Levels of the Stress Hormone Cortisol
26. Lowers Blood Sugar
27. Lowers Blood Pressure
28. Improves Levels of Cholesterol and Triglycerides
29. Thins the Blood
30. Improves Bowel Function
31. Releases Unconscious Muscular Gripping
32. Uses Imagery to Effect Change in the Body
33. Relieves Pain
34. Lowers Need for Medication
35. Fosters Healing Relationships
36. Improves Psychological Health
37. Leads to Healthier Habits
38. Fosters Spiritual Growth
39. Elicits the Placebo Effect
40. Encourages Involvement in Your Own Healing

Source:

30 YOGA AS MEDICINE

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