



Types of Yoga

More and more of our patients are seeking for ways to enhance their core strength and flexibility. In addition to being a great full-body exercise, yoga also has a relaxational aspect that cannot be ignored in today's hi-stress world. Following are a few of the most common types.

Ashtanga-yoga:

- In Ashtanga (or astanga) yoga, also known as **Power yoga**, the yoga postures flow with an emphasis on strength and agility. Ashtanga yoga is also referred to as Flow Yoga or Vinyasa (series of poses), and focuses less on alignment than Iyengar yoga, and props are used less frequently. Ashtanga yoga, popularized by originator Pattabhi Jois, often appeals to the person who is fit or desires to become so quickly as it usually involves a challenging physical routine.

Prenatal yoga:

- Experts on yoga have a wide array of opinions on yoga during pregnancy, ranging from those who believe it is a panacea for a healthy pregnancy to those who do not think it appropriate for a pregnant woman to practice virtually any of the yoga postures. Of those who believe that yoga can and should be practiced by pregnant women, it is widely recognized that yoga practices must be widely adapted for the pregnant woman. Experts generally indicate that after the first few months of pregnancy any postures practiced on the abdomen or on the back are contraindicated, as well as twists and many others that may be harmful for the mother and/or baby. Differing guidelines exist for the breech baby.

Classical (Hatha) yoga

- Classical yoga focuses on a traditional approach to Hatha yoga, that is, it has not been adapted in any particular way. Hatha yoga is the part of yoga typically associated with the physical postures, and is one limb out of the eight limbs of Raja, or classical yoga. Raja yoga (meaning the royal path) eight limbs, including postures, breathing and meditation techniques, as well as philosophical guidelines. The practices of yoga are up to 6,000 years old, but the traditions were handed down orally until they were "codified" by Patanjali in a book called the Yoga Sutras. Many popular forms of yoga are adaptations of the traditional style of yoga, which have been developed by teachers with a particular area of focus. Classical yoga may start with gentle yoga as a warm-up, and may include restorative postures. Examples of styles of classical yoga would be Kriya yoga, Himalayan yoga (as taught at the Himalayan Institute), Sivananda yoga and Integral yoga.

Bikram yoga:

- Bikram yoga, named for its founder, Bikram Choudury, is a relatively strenuous type of yoga that is practiced in a hot room, thus the nickname, "hot yoga". The rooms may be heated to up to 115 degrees Fahrenheit, with the average from 90-105 degrees. Bikram Choudury says the heat increases the body's ability to move and stretch without injury. Bikram and his associate Julian Goldstein report success with treating various medical conditions, and diabetes in particular.

Iyengar yoga:

- Iyengar yoga is a style of yoga developed by B.K.S. Iyengar which emphasizes the precise alignment of a pose.

Restorative yoga:

- Restorative yoga is a subcategory of poses found within other styles, particularly traditional or Iyengar, focusing on poses that are restful and rejuvenating even for those who cannot perform many physical movements. Typically these are poses that require set up and props in order to get into a pose that can be comfortably and restfully sustained for ten minutes or more.

Kundalini yoga:

- Kundalini yoga can include chanting, hand positions, breathing techniques, and sometimes a vigorous aerobic type workout with repetitive motions and little emphasis on form or holding positions.

Gentle Yoga:

- Gentle yoga is an ideal place for many beginners to start yoga. The focus is on warming up the body, and beginning to work the joints and glands.