

Yoga Practical Cautions and Suggestions

Remember that your body is different from anyone else's body. Listen to its messages.

Every day your body will vary in its range of motion, flexibility, strength and endurance. Never bounce when stretching. Use the breath to gently ease into a stretch. This will give better results and help to prevent injury.

Learn to discriminate between pain and the slight discomfort that may be experienced when asking the body to move in ways to which it is not yet accustomed. If there is real pain, check with your physician to see what might be wrong.

Never hold a position beyond your comfort level. Come out of a position slowly and carefully whenever you need to do so.

Remember to breathe as you come into a pose, as you hold a pose, and as you come out of a pose. Use the breath to help you relax into a pose.

Pause between poses in order to find your center before moving on to the next pose.

Take some time at the end of a session to relax in savasana (corpse pose). It is better to do fewer poses and leave some time for relaxation, receptivity, and integration.

Move from your center in the spine. Stay aware and keep your focus. When the attention gets distracted, bring your concentration back to center by watching the breath.

Begin and end each session with pranayama (breathing exercises). If you have time, follow each session with a period of quiet contemplation.

Be sure to talk to your physician about any conditions that may affect your yoga practice.

Wear loose, comfortable clothing. Always remove your shoes for practice.

Try not eat too heavy before class. The body will be much more comfortable if you practice on an empty stomach. Do not drink too much water during your session.

If you are pregnant, please check with your physician for special guidelines.

Although it can help, remember your area does not have to be completely quiet and serene. Practice when you can where you can.