

Why Seniors Should Practice Yoga and Meditation (and How to Begin)

Physical activity is one of the most essential aspects of aging well. But when you’re older, you have to find ways to stay active without overdoing it. With yoga and meditation, you can reap benefits for both your body and mind without overexerting yourself, and there are many different [types and styles](https://www.yogajournal.com/yoga-101/types-of-yoga) so that each person can find what works for them. Also, if you’re a caregiver, it’s a great way to exercise with your loved one. Here, we’ll discuss the benefits of yoga and meditation and suggest ways to incorporate them into your life.

**Benefits of Yoga**

There are [many benefits](https://osteopathic.org/what-is-osteopathic-medicine/benefits-of-yoga/) that come with yoga. Not only can it be practiced by seniors who suffer from chronic back [pain](https://yogainternational.com/article/view/restorative-yoga-for-chronic-pain), arthritis, inflammation, and other ailments, it can reduce the effects of these conditions. Here are a few of the areas that yoga improves:

* Strength (muscle and bone)
* Flexibility
* Balance
* Mobility
* Blood circulation
* Cardiac health

There are also lesser-known benefits that come with yoga. For instance, yoga can be connected to your dental health and gut health. Since stress and depression are known to contribute to tooth decay and gum disease, and heightened tension can result in jaw pain, the stress-relieving practice of yoga can improve [your dental health](https://areadentist.org/depression-and-dental-health-exploring-the-connection-and-how-to-get-back-on-a-healthy-track/). Furthermore, your gut health is connected to several other areas of your body. Because regular exercise can boost your [gut microbiome](https://plexusworldwide.com/sunnyshare/trust-your-gut/prebiotic-probiotic-biotic-eat), yoga can greatly improve your gut health, which can leave you feeling healthier and happier.

**Benefits of Meditation**

Yoga practices are most often joined by meditation, and the two of them are growing in popularity as people realize the benefits. [Meditation](https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/12-benefits-of-meditation#section10) is a practice in which you focus your mind and re-route your thoughts to a desired path. When incorporated into your daily routine, it can significantly reduce stress, anxiety, and depression symptoms. Also, mindfulness meditation can improve concentration, boost self-awareness, and help seniors combat age-related memory loss. Furthermore, it can help you control blood pressure and lead to better sleep, which are both critical for people in their golden years.

**Starting Out**

Yoga and meditation are beneficial for everyone — no matter what your age. And one of the best parts about these practices is that you can start and maintain them basically anywhere and anytime. For instance, if you would rather exercise at home, carve out your own [meditation space](https://leftbrainbuddha.com/create-a-meditation-space-in-your-home/) with enough room to do your yoga poses. Make sure it’s clutter-free, and add any elements that will make it relaxing (e.g., candles, flowers, soft lighting, landscape art, etc.). If you want to add a social element, consider joining a yoga class. Along with providing community, classes can serve as a motivation to follow through with your routine even when you don’t feel like it.

**Maintaining Mindfulness**

It’s important to understand that — whether it’s for health reasons, a scheduling conflict, or some other reason — there may be times when you can’t do your poses. But you can always practice [mindfulness](https://www.verywellmind.com/mindfulness-meditation-88369). This is perhaps when having your own meditation space at home proves most useful. You don’t need any special equipment or memberships to meditate. If you start to feel stressed or anxious, taking a [few minutes](https://www.mindful.org/a-five-minute-breathing-meditation/) to recalibrate your mind; it can change the whole course of your day. Even if you feel great, dedicating five or 10 minutes a few times a day can keep you in the right frame of mind.

When it comes to your overall health, yoga and meditation are some of the most effective habits you can incorporate into your everyday life. Do your research to unpack the plethora of benefits offered by both, and consider making your own space at home or joining a class. Also, remember that you can meditate anytime and anywhere. If you’re looking to improve your physical, mental, and emotional health as you age, yoga and meditation should be at the top of your list of things to try.

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