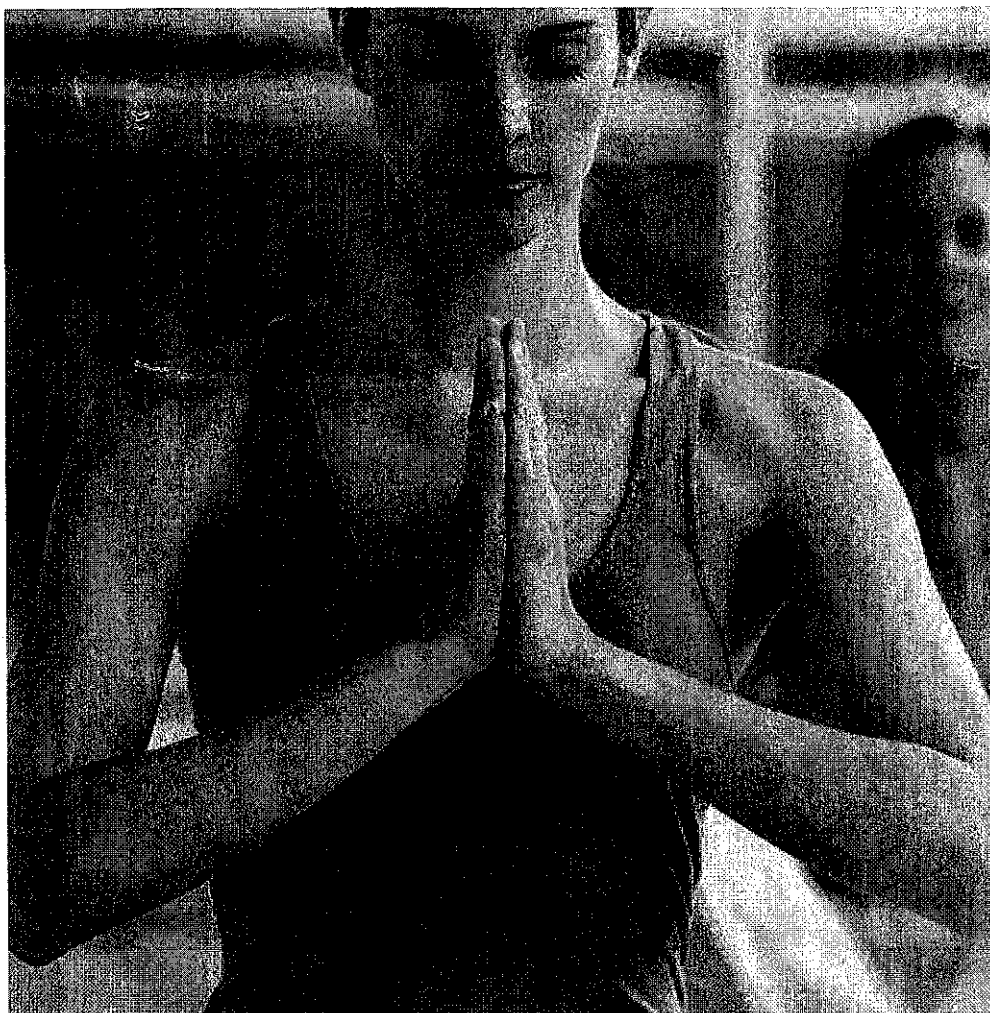


Gentle Yoga for Blood Glucose Control

Feel better and lower stress with these 8 simple moves

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January 2016



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For thousands of years, people have seen yoga as a union of body, mind, and spirit. It's only within the past few decades that science has discovered the physiological basis for how the specific postures, breathing techniques, and mindful awareness exercises can positively impact health. Because of yoga's proven effectiveness in stress management and easing lifestyle change, there has been a surge in the number of people, including those with diabetes, trying yoga for the first time. As it turns out, the benefits of yoga make it an excellent practice for people with all types of diabetes.

Not convinced? Boost your yoga IQ by busting these three common myths:

Myth: Only people who can touch their toes or bend into a pretzel shape can do yoga.

Fact: Yoga is a collection of postures and breathing exercises that can easily be modified to fit the needs of every person, regardless of shape, size, or flexibility. If you have physical limitations, though, best check with your doctor before jumping in.

Myth: Yoga is too gentle to help manage blood glucose.

Fact: Let's get one thing straight: Yoga is exercise. Scientific studies have shown that yoga, like other forms of cardiovascular exercise, can increase insulin sensitivity, improve glucose metabolism, and gently lower blood glucose.

Myth: Yoga is just another exercise fad.

Fact: Yoga has staying power because it melds exercise with stress reduction and improved emotional resiliency. Think of yoga as exercising with a focus on breathing. The relaxing effects of yoga are especially helpful for people with diabetes. Stress can make it difficult to take care of yourself. It's hard to make healthy choices when you're rushing around and feeling tense or unhappy. By lowering stress and promoting relaxation, yoga can help create the space you need to maintain healthy habits.

Get Your Om On

Before you begin, be smart about safety. Follow the same safe-exercise guidelines for checking blood glucose with yoga as you would with any form of exercise. Start with a slow practice (look for classes, videos, and books on "gentle yoga"), and avoid straining or over-stretching. Increase the speed or vigor of your practice slowly, paying attention to how you feel afterward: Are you fatigued or energized? If you feel pain, excess fatigue, or strain, slow down.

Below is a practice that can increase your energy by promoting relaxation.

Safety Note

Talk to your doctor before making any big changes to your exercise plan.

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Want more yoga for diabetes?

Check out *Yoga & Diabetes: Your Guide to Safe and Effective Practice*.



Download a printable guide featuring the following exercises.