

Tips for Avoiding Yoga Injuries

You might think yoga is a foolproof practice. That there's no way you can get hurt. Unfortunately, the opposite is true. Without a bit of proper care and prevention, yoga injuries can be quite common. Protect yourself by learning a few expert pointers.

#1 Listen to Your Body

Depending on your personality, your yoga instructor, and your fellow classmates, it can be easy to get a bit competitive. Pushing your body too far on any given day can quickly result in a painful injury.

Understand that some days may be better days than others. Your sleep, diet, and focus can all affect your performance. Instead of thinking "I did this pose last week," or "Joe is rocking this pose, I need to do better," listen to what your body is telling you. If it's a day to push yourself, then great. If it's a day to hold back, then hold back.

#2 Choose a Skilled Yoga Instructor

Yoga is extraordinarily popular. There are classes in just about any community across the country. The vast growth of yoga means an increasing number of instructors. However, all instructors are not created equally. Some are quite skilled. Others, not so much.

The unskilled or questionable instructors can cause injuries by pushing students too far or by positioning your body in a pose that you're not ready for. Pay attention to your instructor's demeanor. How do they handle beginner students? Additionally, review their credentials. How long have they been teaching and where did they get their certification?

#3 Go Easy

Everyone starts yoga at the same place, as a beginner. Allow yourself to be a beginner and ease into the practice. It can take some time to find the right instructor and yoga type for your needs and personality. Allow yourself time to learn and your body time to adapt.

Additionally, give your body time to warm up and cool down before class. As you ease into each class, and out of it, you're giving your body time to adapt and do what you request of it. That also means going into postures slowly and coming out of them slowly, too.

Finally, don't try to go to a yoga class once a week or once a month. The more time you give your body to learn the movements and become flexible and strong, the better your classes will be. And most importantly you'll reduce your risk of injury. Yoga is wonderful for your body, mind, and spirit. Take it easy on yourself and prevent injuries so you can enjoy your practice year round.