

Women Fitness

June 2024

Climb
STAIRS TO
LIVE
LONGER

Diet &
DETOX
Need of the Hour

Wellness
Beyond
50

DE-FUSING
ANGER
WITH YOGA

Hanne Desmet

It is never too late
To follow your passion

10
Essential
Oils For
Weight Loss



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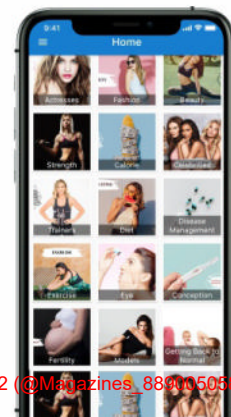
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C Contents

03 Editor's Note

Welcome to the June edition of Women Fitness Magazine, your trusted companion on the journey to a healthier, happier you.

04 Cover Story

"Being on the podium at the Olympic Games is an experience like no other. I'm very proud of my achievement of putting a short-track on the map in Belgium. My skating abilities have been improving ever since." **Hanne Desmet**, Belgium Speed Skater, and record holder.

10 Exercise & Fitness

A meta-analysis presented at a European Society of Cardiology conference recently found that people who routinely climb stairs are 39% less likely to die from heart disease, compared to those who don't. They also had a lower risk of stroke and heart attack. One more reason to take the stairs.



14 Nutrition & Performance

With increasing demands over some time, the body is unable to keep up the pace and the strain begins to show on the overworked liver and kidneys, leading to slowing down, of the body's performance. Well, it's time to Detox!

19 Weight Loss

Recent studies have shown that essential oils (Eos), thanks to their constituents, promote the reduction of fat mass and exert anti-obesity effects. Read to learn more!

25 Yoga: Body, Mind & Soul

"As it is International Yoga Day, I thought I would share my own experience in trying (and at some points failing) to practice mindfulness." by Megan Davies, an NSCA certified personal trainer.

29 De-Fusing Anger with Yoga

Anger comes in several forms, including outrage, frustration, jealousy, resentment, fury, and hatred. Here are yoga asanas to overcome anger and stay calm.



40 Pregnancy & Fertility

Mom's Aging Strong- Wellness Beyond 50 is here by Nicole Moneer. She is a licensed CHEK Holistic Lifestyle Coach, Root Cause Protocol Consultant & Master Reiki Practitioner.

46 Good Mental Health Essential During Pregnancy

Up to 1 in 10 females and 1 in 20 males experience antenatal depression. It's important to look after your mental health and well-being during pregnancy just as your physical health.

50 Zodiac Sign

By combining the principles of zodiac yoga, individuals can tailor their astrological yoga routines to align with their zodiac sign and capitalize on their unique qualities and challenges.



36 Beauty & Make-up

The best colour in the whole wide world is the one that looks good on you. Note that a little color therapy can make a major difference in your mood, especially on dreary days.



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# Editor's Note

*"It is indeed a radical act of love just to sit down and be quiet for a time by yourself"*

— Jon Kabat-Zinn —

Welcome to the June edition of Women Fitness Magazine, your trusted companion on the journey to a healthier, happier you.

June brings with it a sense of renewal and opportunity. On June 21st, the world comes together to celebrate International Yoga Day, a day dedicated to the ancient practice that promotes physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.

Our cover story features a three-time Belgian all-round Speed Skater Hanne Desmet, who also holds Belgian records in all distances. "Being on the podium at the Olympic Games is an experience like no other. I'm very proud of my achievement in putting short-track speed skating on the map in Belgium. My skating abilities have been improving ever since."

Mental well-being is as crucial as physical fitness, and this month, we delve into mindfulness practices that can be seamlessly integrated into your daily routine.

We hope this edition motivates you to set new goals, try new activities, and most importantly, enjoy becoming the best version of yourself.

Thank you for being a part of our community. Let's make this June a month of growth, joy, and vibrant health.

**In Fitness,**

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*Exclusive Interview*

# HANNE DESMET


*It is never too late  
To follow your passion.*

She is a three-time Belgian all-round champion, she also holds the Belgian records in all distances. At the 2019 European championships, she took second place in the unofficial 3000m distance. She took silver in the 1000 meters at the 2021 World Short Track Speed Skating Championships.

On 11th February 2022, she took a historic bronze medal in the Women's 1000 meters at the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, becoming the first Belgian woman to win a medal at a Winter Olympic Games in an individual event. She also won the European Gold medal in 2023.

Hanne studies Commercial Engineering at Hasselt University. She will be competing in World Championships in 2024 at Rotterdam and Winter Olympics in 2026 at Milan, Italy.





*In this interview Hanne Desmet Belgian short track speed skater, talks about her fitness regime, diet, and success story.*

You were born in Wilrijk, later lived for a few years in Heerenveen, Netherlands. Now you are living in Canada and training with the Canadian national team.. You became a three-time Belgian all-round champion in short track speed skating. This later propelled your career to the height where you have been at the top of the world in short track speed skating. Tell us more about your professional journey of exceptional hard work, tenacity, and endurance?

I moved to the Netherlands in 2018. I trained with the Dutch national team for 5 years and I'm very grateful for my time there. For one year I've been training with the Canadian national team. I gradually developed in the high performing athlete I am now, I'm definitely a late bloomer.

Belgium does not have the infrastructure to perform on the highest level in short track. Therefore I've always had to live abroad, but I'm very happy with the unique experiences this gave me. Most countries have a system where young talents are chosen to join the national team and start their careers. I had to find my own unique journey to be successful in short track. I am lucky to share this journey with my brother.





**You on 11th of February 2022 took the historic bronze medal in the Women's 1000 meters short track speed skating at the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing, becoming the first Belgian woman to win a medal at a Winter Olympic Games in an individual event. Tell us more about this spectacular achievement of yours?**

To be the first to win an individual medal on the Olympics was an incredible experience. I had a difficult season with a serious concussion in the beginning of the year. At the games I started feeling super confident in my skating. I got 5th, 4th and 3rd at the games and was very proud of all these achievements. Being on the podium at the Olympic Games is an experience like no other. I'm very proud my achievement put short track on the map in Belgium. My skating abilities have been improving ever since.

**“ In short track you definitely need a lot of mental toughness to be able to immediately go all out for the next race. ”**

**You put the sporting track on fire at the 2024 European Short Track Speed Skating Championships that was held from 12th to 14th January 2024 in Gdańsk, Poland by winning Gold in the Women's 1000 meters short track speed skating, Bronze medal in 500 m and another Bronze medal in 2000 m mixed relay. Elaborate more about these landmark achievements.**

My first European title was in 2023; one year later I was able to successfully defend my title. In 2023 after winning the 1000m my brother also became European Champion; this was one of the most memorable moments in my career. There was so much excitement. To be able to share moments like these with my brother and my team is incredible.

In 2024, the first distance I fell with one lap to go while being in winning position. I had to flip the switch to come back confident and win the 1000m. In short track you definitely need a lot of mental toughness to be able to immediately go all out for the next race.





How winning the silver medal in Women's 1000 meters short track speed skating at the 2021 World Short Track Speed Skating Championships play a catalyst to your meteoric rise as a speed skater.

This was my first Championships medal, it made me start to believe I could actually be competitive with the best in the world.







**What exercises comprise your fitness regime or workout routine you may wish to share?**

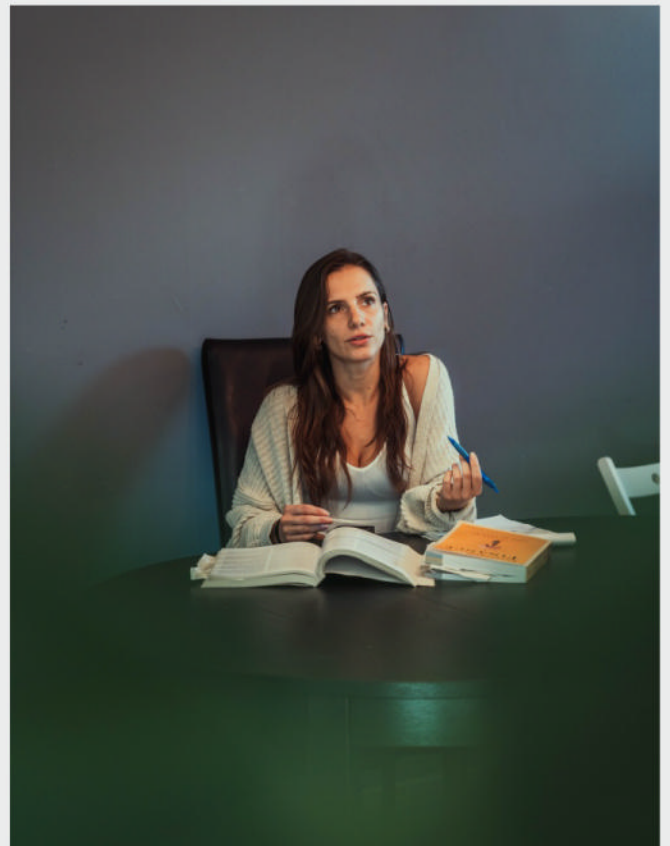
I train twice a day 6 days per week. Short track practices are long and require a lot of preparation. I skate every day and do biking, running, and weights outside of that. I love working hard and I love the feeling of improving.

**How do you train your abs?**

Consistency is the key. I do some kind of ab exercise every day. I'll interrupt my school work and do a few exercises.

**Do you take a special diet or have a strict menu that you follow?**

I don't believe in extreme dieting. I believe you can enjoy the things you like but with moderation. I enjoy eating healthy because I know it makes me feel better and perform better. But I also think it's healthy to allow treating yourself every now and then.







### **Five travel destinations on your wish list.**

Italy, Maldives, Greece, Madeira (Portugal) and Indonesia

### **In sports like speed skating how were you able to overcome physical or sports injury setbacks and what advice can you give to those in a similar situation?**

Focus on the things you can control.

### **Advice and motivational words to the inspiring and budding speed skater girls, who all are your fans and shall like to know from you for their climb to the ladder of success in the field of speed skating?**

It is never too late to follow your passion. Don't let anyone tell you you're not good enough. Work hard and believe in yourself. And most importantly enjoy the process.

### **Five foods you absolutely love and five you keep to a minimum.**

I love candy, I need my sweets. My favorite food is a good pizza. I really like simple bread and some good cheese. Dark chocolate is also one of my favorites. I enjoy making all kinds of vegetables soups.

### **Share your hair care and skincare routine.**

I don't really have a skincare routine; I wash my face with water and wear sunscreen. I like trying hair care tips I find on the internet but I don't have a mention worthy routine.

### **Quote you live by.**

Don't take yourself too seriously.

### **A day in the life of Hanne Desmet.**

I don't have a lot of variation in my days. I wake up and eat the same breakfast go to training, come back for lunch, go back to training. I really enjoy training, working hard, improving my skills. I get to work with great people and travel the world doing the sport I love.





# CLIMB STAIRS

To Live Longer

A meta-analysis presented at a European Society of Cardiology conference recently found that people who routinely climb stairs are 39% less likely to die from heart disease, compared to those who don't. They also had a lower risk of stroke and heart attack.







## Why Stair Walking Is So Good For You

Stair climbing is an aerobic exercise, or movement that increases your heart rate and oxygen levels using repetitive activity. Generally speaking, aerobic exercise reduces your risk of high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and, yes, heart disease.

Walking stairs is similar to many activities such as walking, running, and bike riding that are associated with improvement in cardiovascular risk, such as a reduction in heart attacks. Stair walking can be a bit more demanding than simply walking, and it also requires some balance and core strength that might combat an issue like frailty and muscle weakness.

Climbing stairs will help you lose weight by burning calories. You will be able to burn calories that are three times quicker when climbing stairs slowly when compared to walking on a flat surface. A study by BMJ Open Diabetes Research & Care showed that climbing stairs with a 3-minute bout after meals lowered the blood sugar levels in Type 2 Diabetes people. Plus, reduce the risk of chronic medical conditions like hypertension, diabetes, and colon cancer while achieving better immunity. It burns 300 calories in 30 minutes, depending on your pace and body weight.

As we age, stair climbing can improve leg power and back strength, both of which can help prevent falls. Specifically, post-menopausal individuals who climb stairs have been found to have higher bone density.

Stair climbing is a great stress reliever. Having a tough day at work? Release some of your stress by strutting up or down the stairs. It will help you relax. You may also find the activity makes you more energized and alert.



It is convenient. You'll find stairs in many places—at home, at work and at the mall to name a few. So you can get in a few minutes of stair climbing wherever you are. There's no reason to join a gym, buy special equipment or even change your clothes. Just find the nearest set of stairs and off you go!

## ***Tips for Effective Stair climbing***

Here are some key things to keep in mind for a safe and effective stair workout:

- *Wear comfortable, fitting shoes with proper support and cushion inside.*
- *Use non-slippery outer soles to avoid the risk of falling.*
- *Always warm-up before you start climbing the stairs for a workout.*
- *Choose stairs that are well built and have proper lighting.*
- *Keep your neck and shoulders relaxed and upright, without arching your back while climbing.*
- *Try to climb quietly, loud noises while climbing indicates that you are putting a lot of strain on your knees and other joints.*
- *Do not try to climb too fast, use a slow but steady pace and take rests whenever required.*
- *Don't try to skip steps while climbing.*

***Slowly build up your stamina over several weeks rather than trying to tackle many steps on your first try, you may injure yourself or cause other issues.***







## WORKOUT TIP

**O**n average, adults lose about 30 percent of their muscle power between 50 and 70 years. Inactivity can hasten that muscle loss. Scientists say the brief bouts of activity encourage muscle fibers to grow and improve the efficiency of how muscles use amino acids needed to repair and restore muscle mass.

To get started, tie an exercise snack to a daily habit in certain rooms, such as doing a plank in the kitchen while waiting for the coffee to brew or doing a one-legged balancing move while brushing your teeth in the bathroom.




# Diet AND DETOX

Need of the Hour

**T**oday we live at a pace that would have seemed unbelievable and indeed impossible to our grandparents. With the increasing demand of jobs, long travel, odd working hours, bringing up children and hectic social lives. We tend to become tired and rundown.





Besides our bodies are under constant assault from pollutions, stress, bad posture, sedentary jobs and own bad eating habits.

Over a period of time, these effects build up and emerge in many different forms- everything from passing infections, skin eruptions, headaches & digestive problems to serious conditions, such as ulcers, cancers and heart disease.

The more we overload over body, the more it sinks under the strain. When we begin, detoxification- we give our bodies the chance to repair and cleanse and restore a more balance state to the entire system.

Detoxification shows up in number of ways. Besides achieving a healthy weight, you can expect to have a clearer skin, healthy looking hair, strong nails and more energy. Detox also has a very calming effect on the mind, particularly if it is combined with meditation. Above all this, it puts you on the right course of long term health.





## How It Works!

Our bodies are completely complex organisms in a state of constant growth and renewal on cellular level. When we pour toxins into our bodies, it treats these as a matter of urgency and works on processing them to render them harmless. This leaves the body with less energy for everyday processes of cleaning, healing and renewal. With increasing demands over a period of time, the body is unable to keep up the pace and the strain begins to show on the overworked liver and kidneys, leading to slowing down of body's performance.

When we detox, two things happen. First, we stop overloading the body with harmful substances and secondly, we give it plenty of the right nutrients to actually speed up the elimination of old toxins and promote cell renewal.

As you rejuvenate the cells, become healthier and you look and feel younger!

## Super Scavengers

The World Health Organisation (WHO) had clearly stated that Vitamin A, C & E are vital for health. These vitamins, together with mineral selenium are known as antioxidants.

They can protect us not only against minor infections but also serious degenerative diseases such as cancer and heart diseases, as well as conditions that come with premature ageing. They work by acting as scavengers for free radicals.



*We clearly need as many anti-oxidants as we can get! One of the best place to find them is in fresh fruit and vegetables and that is why these foods are vital for detoxification. Many nutrients are destroyed by cooking and that is why raw food is much more effective as a source of health and forms the core of a healthy diet plan.*

Raw food and fresh juices have remarkable cleansing and regenerating effect on the entire system, as they retain all their nutrients, which might get destroyed while processing and cooking.

Juices, both fruit and vegetable are essential part of the whole process. Besides they are easily assimilated by the body and contain all the nutrients present in raw fruits and vegetables.

The detox diet helps to cleanse your system! The plan begins with a juice fast, which eliminates toxins at a very low level, and then continues with a highly nutritious food that promotes cellular renewal.



*The diet might last for 2-4 weeks. By the fourth week you will be on your way to establish a healthy diet for future. Below is an example of what a detox diet, might look like to begin with:-*

### The First two Days:-

- **Breakfast:** Natural yogurt with seeds. Apple and carrot juice.
- **Mid Morning:** Apple
- **Lunch:** As much salad as you like made from any of the following raw ingredients-cucumber, peppers, radishes, spring onion, any kind of salad leaves.
- **Mid afternoon:** Apple
- **Supper:** As much as fruit salad you like made from fresh fruits with orange or apple juice as sweetener.

You might drink plenty of water and herb tea throughout the day. Good digestion is one of the cornerstones of looking and feeling your best. You can help maintain digestive health and boost your body's natural detoxification processes with an herbal fiber colon cleanse.



Is the expiration date on food really a matter of concern? No, the expiration dates on food are directly related to quality and not safety. According to the USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service, manufacturers put "best by" or "best if used by" dates on their products to let retail stores and consumers know how long their products are expected to maintain their best taste and texture.



# Essential Oils

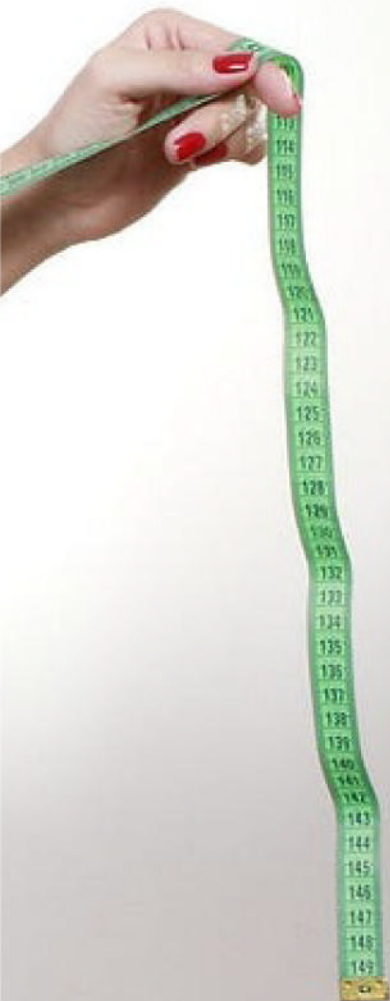
## For Weight Loss

The use of essential oils for weight loss is an old practice that has recently gained global attention. Being a few pounds overweight is not a serious problem, but long-term obesity can damage your metabolic speed, increase your risk of heart attacks and strokes, lead to diabetes, cause pain in your joints and muscles, and shorten your life.

Recent studies have shown that essential oils (Eos), thanks to their constituents, promote the reduction of fat mass and exert anti-obesity effects.







## How Essential Oils Work?

*The essential oils have an effect on the limbic system (structures in the brain that deal with emotions, memories, appetite, sleep and dreams). Also, our sense of smell has an incredibly powerful impact on our feelings. Just imagining the aroma of coffee or the sweet smell of flowers quickly peeps up our mood. Human body can distinguish about 10,000 different scents.*

## Specific Effects:

- Mental and physical relaxation
- Curb appetite
- Enhance the mood
- Stress relief and promote well-being
- Improve blood and lymph circulation
- Strengthen immunity



## Essential Oils for Weight Management

*Some of the most effective and proven essential oils for weight loss include lemon, ginger, cinnamon, lemongrass, juniper berry, peppermint, bergamot, grapefruit, fennel and rosemary oils.*





## Ginger Oil:

A key compound in ginger oil, called gingerol, effectively reduces inflammation in the body and improves absorption of the vitamins and minerals. It can lead to passive fat-burning when used, as well as boost your nutrient uptake, helping you feel full, so you can avoid overeating and snacking between meals. It promotes sweating, which helps remove toxins from the body.

## Cinnamon Oil:

The essential oil of cinnamon is famed for its ability to regulate blood sugar levels. While this can help diabetic patients keep their insulin and glucose levels even, it can also help people manage their sugar intake and food cravings, which can aid in losing weight. It reduces the risk of heart disease and inflammation, improves blood circulation, suppress appetite and boost metabolism.



## Lemongrass Oil:

As a weight loss aid, lemongrass oil can energize your metabolism, even as it calms down your muscle spasms and soothes the stomach. This can promote better digestion of nutrients, which can help you feel full and healthy, without the need for extra food.







## Fennel Oil:

Primarily, this oil is an appetite suppressant, which can reduce overeating and snacking between meals, but it can also alter the cholesterol balance in the body, discouraging fat from being deposited and stored, and instead converting it directly into usable energy.

## Rosemary Oil:

One of the contributing factors to obesity and unexplained weight gain is excessive stress levels. Fortunately, rosemary oil is able to balance the metabolism and reduce anxiety, which can help your body deposit less fat and improve its efficiency in digestion.



## Peppermint Oil:

By boosting your digestive and metabolic speeds, this ancient herbal oil can help you lose weight and improve your overall health. The oil helps to manage stress and avoid the temptation of overeating when under stress. It is rich in omega 3 fatty acids, Vitamin C, iron, potassium, magnesium which are essential for the promotion of good health and for improving the metabolic processes of the body. Finally, it can reduce bloating and cramping, while also suppressing appetite.







## Grapefruit Seed Oil:

One of the best essential oils for weight loss comes from grapefruit, as the active ingredient in this fruit can stimulate the metabolism to a measurable degree. The presence of limonene, as well as alpha-pinene, various terpenes and myrcene can boost your passive fat-burning ability and help you shave off the pounds. It supports the cleansing and improves drainage of the lymphatic system which carries nutrients between the tissues and the bloodstream. This reduces cellulite and prevents bloating.

## Lemon Oil:

The active ingredient in lemon oil, namely limonene, can help to burn excess fat by boosting the metabolism, while also providing an energetic boost to stimulate physical activity, which can further eliminate calories and prevent fat deposition.



Essential oils are used topically, inhaled, or ingested. Sometimes combinations of delivery methods are used.

## Word of Warning

Pay close attention to your body after using essential oils for weight loss, and if any negative side effects occur, such as allergic reactions or gastrointestinal distress, discontinue use immediately.



**D**on't waste your time or money on powders, pills and products that claim to increase muscle mass.



# What I Learned From Practicing Mindfulness

by Megan Davies

**A**s it is International Yoga Day, I thought I would share my own experience in trying (and at some points failing) to practice mindfulness. With results including enhancing focus and clarity, increasing productivity, improving sleep and boosting the immune system, I had high expectations. Here's what I learned, both about the art of mindfulness, and also myself.







*Firstly, what is mindfulness? Well according to Be Mindful “mindfulness is a mental state achieved by focusing one’s awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations.”*

### **It’s not as easy as it looks...**

The idea of sitting around for an hour, focusing on breathing, movements and ‘the present moment’ didn’t seem like a tall order. In fact, I was quite looking forward to taking an hour out of my busy week to just relax and let go.

In actual fact it was incredibly hard. Painfully hard.

It actually takes a lot of effort to just sit and focus whilst not allowing my mind to wander. I wasn’t the best at it: I fidgeted, my breath felt forced and uncomfortable, and mind wandered. I am told this is completely normal and most people don’t get the hang of it right away, it is all about training your mind.

### **We spend a lot of time wrapped up in our own thoughts**

Whilst I wasn’t very good at controlling my thoughts, it did show me how much time we spend inside our own head.

I often spend my few hours before work wrapped up in my own thoughts, playing over in my mind a daily to-do list or mentally preparing for a big meeting – it’s a detrimental habit though. There is nothing I can physically do until I arrive at work, so playing it over and over in my mind only serves to make me feel overworked and inevitably burnt out.





## **Mindfulness is a great sleeping tool**

There are a number of great sleeping meditation options you can choose to practice each night. My favorite was the 'body scan', where you complete a running scan of your body focusing the mind and senses on each particular part until, in my case, you experience a sense of 'letting go' throughout.

If you are anything like me and you'll find it hard to sleep at the end of an exhausting, busy day, mindfulness and meditation can be excellent winding down tools.

## **The world isn't going to end if you slow things down for an hour**

This was the biggest revelation for me (my lunch hour is usually spent working/eating at my desk) and hands-down the best thing I took away from the sessions.

Most days I would come out of my mindfulness classes with a guilty feeling that I had the spent an hour essentially doing nothing and expect to return to a barrage of emails. Most days I did not, making me realize that as long as I worked smart, an hour out of my day would not be harmful, but in fact very valuable.

So whilst I may not have mastered the art of being 'present', mindfulness did teach me some important lessons: the more working hours put in does not in fact equal more work out and taking a break is an important, but undervalued tool in increasing productivity and quality of work.

**About Author :** *Megan Davies is an NSCA certified personal trainer. Her down-to-earth, empowering workout style and motivating, upbeat personality make you feel like you're training with a best friend.*



## EMBRACING YOGA

**T**his year we celebrate International Yoga Day 2024 keeping in mind “Yoga for Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” which translates to “One Earth, One Family, One Future”. By embracing yoga as a holistic lifestyle choice we can unlock numerous physical and mental health benefits, contributing to a healthy and thriving society.








# De-Fusing **ANGER** *With* **Yoga**

**A**nger comes in several forms, including outrage, frustration, jealousy, resentment, fury, and hatred. It also masquerades as judgment, criticism, and even boredom. Like all emotions, it is a complex, ever-shifting state involving thoughts, feelings, and bodily changes.



A close-up of a person's hand in a yoga pose, with the index and middle fingers extended and the thumb tucked. The background is a soft-focus green field.

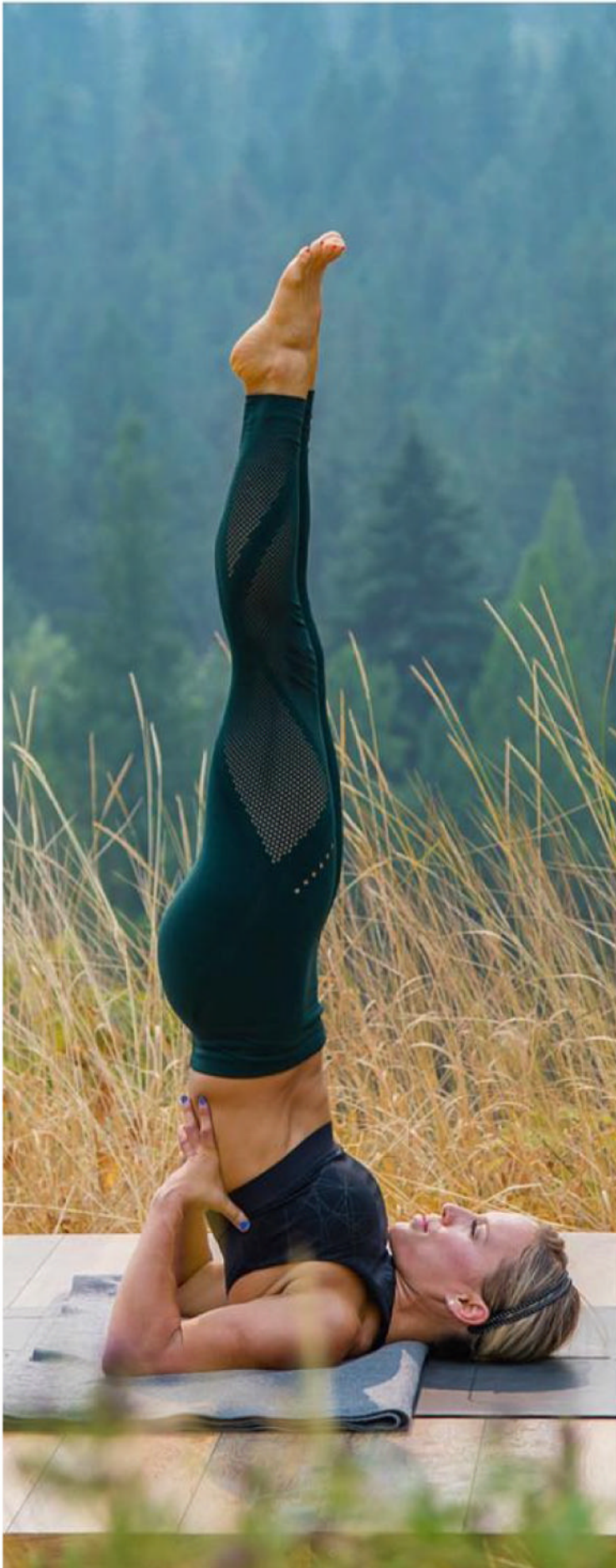
Yogis understand anger as an energy existing, like all emotions, halfway between a physical and mental experience. Like heat or other energies, anger wanes naturally, if we don't hold it back with psychological defenses—say, denying or repressing it: “Anger tends to arise in a very visceral wave. It arises, crests, and then passes away.”

In yogic theory, asanas, pranayama, and meditation comprise a comprehensive toolkit for freeing up blockages at the mental, physical, or energetic level. Yoga, particularly therapeutic forms like restorative yoga, has proven to be a valuable method of cooling hot-reactives down. Asanas may be in fact the best yogic antidote for anger “because asanas allow you to move the energy.”

The fact that anger manifests differently in each person, and must be treated differently as well. Some of us get so revved up by our catecholamines that we can't think straight. In those cases, experts have found that methods such as deep breathing, moderate exercise, or walking away from a provocative situation are the best way to lower the arousal level. But for those who are milder by nature, awareness can accelerate anger's rush through, and out of, the body. Yoga helps people stay with the wave of anger all the way to the other end. The first step at anger management is – do not resist and do not ignore the cause of anger. Experience it fully. Try and develop an attitude of an observer or a witness. Learn to change your role from being the subject to becoming a bystander. See how the anger is operating. See what it is doing to your mind and how. When faced by an anger causing action, immediately get into the mode of exploring and rationalizing with the “whys” and “more whys”.

You will start seeing some wonderful perspectives. You start appreciating that it is not necessarily the desire of the person to hurt you – getting angry is YOUR response. You realize that a person is seeing the situation from his point of view to the best of his intellectual and emotional capability – he may not be quite ‘capable enough’ to appreciate your point of view. This is only natural – because individuals are built in different ways. After all, aren't you showing similar traits when you are getting angry!





## Yoga Asanas To overcome Anger

All postures should be performed while doing deep, quiet breathing

### The Shoulder Stand (Sarvang Asana)

Effective for Excessive anger or hate, Migraine headache, Liver disorder, hemorrhoids, Anemia, Hypertension, Indigestion. The Shoulder stand invigorates and rejuvenates your whole body.

- Lie down on the floor with your legs together and your hands, push down, by your sides. inhaling, push down on your hands and raise your legs straight up above you.
- Lift your hips off the floor and bring your legs up, over and beyond your head, at an angle of about 45°.
- Exhaling, bend your arms and support your body, holding as near the shoulders as possible, thumbs around the front of the body, fingers around the back. Push your back up, lift your legs.
- Now straighten your spine and bring the legs up to a vertical position. Press your chin firmly into the base of your throat. Breathe slowly and deeply in the pose, gradually trying to work your elbows closer together and your hands further down your back toward the shoulders, so as to straighten your torso. Keep your feet relaxed.

### Caution:

- Shoulder stands should not be attempted without a qualified teacher.
- Any one suffering from breathing difficulties or pain in the upper spine should not attempt these postures.





### The Half Bow (Ardha Dhanurasana)

Half bow energizes and strengthens the entire body, and especially builds core body strength. Half bow stimulates the kidneys, adrenals and reproductive system.

- Lie on your belly, with the legs together or a few inches apart. Bring the chin to the floor and slide the right arm along the floor, over your head with the palm facing down.
- Bend the left knee and reach the left hand back to hold onto the left heel or ankle.
- Inhale and kick the left foot into the arm to lift the left leg, head and chest off of the floor. Keep the neck in line with the spine, looking down at the floor. Lift the right arm off of the floor, keeping it parallel to the floor.
- Breathe and hold for 2-6 breaths.
- To release: slowly exhale and lower the leg, arm, head and chest down to the floor.
- Repeat on other side.

### Avoid:

Recent or chronic injury to the legs, hips, neck or arms; pregnancy, recent abdominal surgery.







### Hidden Lotus Pose (Gupta Padmasana)

This asana corrects postural defects of the spine. It may be used as a relaxation or even a meditation pose as it induces peace, stability and emotional balance.

- Sit in Padmasana. Place the hands on the floor in front of the knees. Leaning on the arms, raise the buttocks and stand on the knees. Slowly lower the front side of the body to the floor in the prone position. Rest either the chin or one cheek on the floor.
- Place the palms together behind the back. The fingers may point downward, or upward in Universal Spirit. If possible, touch the back of the head with the middle fingers. Close the eyes and relax the whole body.
- Return to the starting position, cross the legs the other way and repeat the asana.
- Hold the position for as long as is comfortable. For complete relaxation, the hands may rest on the floor beside the body with the palms upward. **Note:** The Sanskrit word Gupta means 'Hidden'. In this asana the feet are hidden under

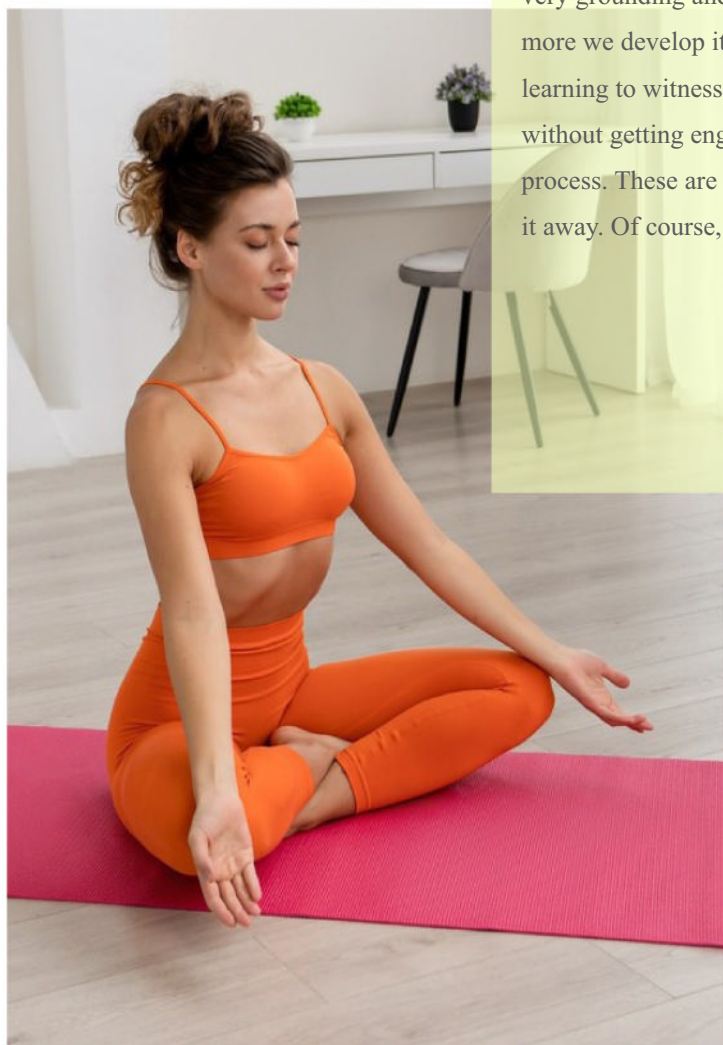
### The Corpse Pose (Shava-asana)



The goal of the shava-asana is for the body and mind to be perfectly still and relaxed. Not only should the body be motionless and at ease, but the mind as well should be quiet, like the surface of a still lake. The result will be a deep and stable relaxation that will extend into your meditation or be felt through the activities of your daily circumstances. If find yourself getting drowsy while in the shava-asana increase the rate and depth of your breathing.



- Lie flat on your back with your legs together but not touching, and your arms close to the body with the palms facing up.
- Keep your eyes gently closed with the facial muscles relaxed and breath deeply and slowly through the nostrils.
- Starting at the top of the head and working your way down to the feet, bring your attention to each part of your body, consciously relaxing it before proceeding on to the next.
- Remain in the shava-asana for between 3 and 5 minutes or longer. If you become sleepy while in the shava-asana begin to breath a bit faster and deeper.



## “Antar mouna” meditation

Developing this observer attitude is NOT difficult. Yoga also has some very powerful tools in the form of “antar mouna” meditation techniques that help you cultivate this attitude. Moreover, as you start reaping the wonderful fruits of such an attitude, such a behavioral pattern only gets reinforced.

Over time, with such an attitude, you will see that not only do you get angry less often, but also each brush with an unpleasant situation provides a remarkable opportunity to know your subconscious mind in a better way. Every such insight brings you one step closer to the supreme goal – that is, Enlightenment (perpetual Bliss)

Antar mouna is the technique of inner silence, also known as witnessing. It is divided into six main stages which can be divided into three basic categories. The first two categories are passive, where we sit and observe our mind and our process of evolution, of change in our inner nature, without engagement. We simply observe that tendency to suppress things and to grab onto things and to lose ourselves within our mental process. We do not try to change anything. We simply develop what is called a sense of self. A sense of self is very grounding and calming. We feel a greater sense of safety and trust the more we develop it. So the first stages of antar mouna are simply passive, learning to witness outside sounds or sensations, learning to witness thoughts without getting engaged in suppression of thoughts or involvement in the process. These are the two main states, grabbing onto a thought and pushing it away. Of course, the awareness is the antidote to ignorance.

*Once we have that capacity, we go into the next two stages. These are active, to develop mental muscle, like doing mental push-ups. We consciously try to grab onto a thought, to exaggerate the process of grabbing. Then we consciously let it go. One stage is to create a thought, grab it and then throw it away, and the other state is to grab a spontaneous thought as it comes up and then throw it away. So we are developing this internal capacity to deal with our thoughts, feelings, emotions and inner states with greater clarity. In the third category, which is divided into two groups, we throw out any thought that comes into our mind, until we achieve shoonya or emptiness, a luminous emptiness. It is not a dark, tamasic emptiness; it is an emptiness which is full of peace and love.*

*Antar mouna is one of the most important techniques that we can learn in order to maintain the path, in order to maintain an awareness of duality and polarity, and to be able to hold the negative as well as the positive experiences.*



**N**ot all sunscreens are created equally. It's important to dive into the ingredients, especially chemical sunscreens. Ensure the sunscreen is broad-spectrum, SPF 50+, and contains zinc oxide and titanium dioxide. This will offer the best and most comprehensive protection against UVA rays, which go deeper into the skin and break down collagen, and UVB rays, which are responsible for sunburns and skin cancer.



# Colour Confidence

## Tips & Trick to Wear Bright Colors

**T**he ability to mix and match colorful clothes is an important attribute of having a good fashion sense. If you wear a yellow colored top and red colored trousers, you are bound to be considered as having a horrible fashion sense! You can wear brown or blue trousers below a yellow top. This combination will create the needed impact.





If you choose the right colors, you are sure to be considered fashion-conscious.

If you wanna know more about this vibrant colors trend, buckle up. This is your guide on how to wear bright colors this season.

To do so, we've compiled some tips and tricks for how to confidently wear this season's boldest paintbox shares.

A little bit of color therapy can have a major difference in your mood, especially on dreary days.

We talk about warmer and bright colors being 'happy colors.' That's because we feel good when we look at them and wear them. They're evocative and illicit a visual connection for most of us.

## **Tips & Tricks to wear Bright Colors**

What's the best way to wear bright colors if you're generally accustomed to neutrals and generally more understated options? Keep these style-conscious tips in mind.

Before you rush out and buy the most vibrant clothes you can find, remember that you need to have an idea of which shades suit your particular skin tone. That's because some skin tones look better in cool tones (a blue, lilac, green), while others tend to look their best in warmer tones (red, yellow, orange).

**Pair bright new colours (that may feel scary) with more basics** at first so you get used to seeing yourself in them. Often we can feel self-conscious and uncomfortable wearing new colours and being bolder, as we fear what others will say. Your corporate wear is an interesting area to experiment with this look — try a dress in office-friendly gray with a red satchel, for example.



**Opt for elevated basics:**

Timeless silhouettes in statement hues will allow you to dabble in new prints and colors without feeling like you are going too far! A patterned dress, a fun jumpsuit, a bright sweater, or a colorful trench are all great options this fall!

**Throw some shade:**

A fun way to wear color is by choosing different shades of the same color. For instance, you could opt for a purple sweater and add a lavender skirt and magenta heels.







### Select Colors Wisely:

When planning to wear a brightly colored outfit, be sure you aren't wearing every shade at the same time. Opt for colors that complement one another or that fall into the same family so your look doesn't overwhelm every passerby. And that doesn't mean you can't take a risk, either. Pink and orange may not seem like best friends, but they look surprisingly chic together. The same goes for blue and green.

### Block Your Colors:

Where would be without color-blocked pieces that make it easy to wear just about anything bright? Colorblocking makes it easy for anyone to wear those adventurous shades.

### Accessories with attitude:

Add an element of personality by opting for colorful accessories that add contrast to your outfits, such as bold-colored shoes, scarves, crossbody bags, and watches.







Photo credit:  
Magic Dreams Production,  
Matty Jacobsen

# Wellness

## At 50

Moms are Aging  
with Grace!



**M**idlife today no longer looks like it did for our mothers and grandmothers. Times have changed, mindsets are significantly different, and countless women are taking an active role in aging stronger than past generations. Self-care is the best health care and aging regimen, no matter what day of the year it is. I am sharing with you knowledge gained in my 51 years of life as well as things that have proven successful for my clients.

**Photo credit:**  
Magic Dreams Production,  
Matty Jacobsen



**No matter what your age, set a goal by doing more of what makes you happy! Be proactive and aggressive in pursuing optimal health, the relationships you want, the type of work life and finances you desire, along with how you want to look.**

**Start small, keep it realistic, take one baby step, and commit for 21 days minimum.** It usually takes 3 weeks of doing something repeatedly for it to become a habit. Do not beat yourself up if you do not achieve perfection, give yourself grace in the journey.

**Make it a point to nourish your body, mind, and soul.** Organic, non-GMO, gluten-free foods, a variety of protein sources, filtered water, and healthy fats are best and have been my medicine since 2006. Move your body daily and be sure to include weight training a few days a week. Take classes whether online or in person. Listen to your higher self.





Most moms are marvelous at taking care of others. The question I have is how well do you take care of yourself? Do you put your needs first or last? Are you able to say no to others? Did you know people pleasers have higher rates of cancer? **Strengthen your vocal cords by saying yes to yourself more. It could save your life!**

In my opinion, confidence isn't about feeling good about oneself, it is about trusting oneself.

That trust comes with age. I call it wisdom from learned life experiences both good and bad.

Hold onto all your stories, those dividends pay off in the long run.



**Photo credit:**  
Magic Dreams Production,  
Matty Jacobsen

**Your DNA is NOT your destiny.** My entire family: father(57), mother(69), and brother(50) all died far too young from heart disease. I could have thrown in the towel decades ago when my father passed in 1996. In 2006, I put myself in the driver's seat regarding my health. After being on dozens of prescriptions for decades and suffering from a plethora of chronic conditions, I reversed all health challenges with whole real unadulterated foods and supplements, and speaking up for myself. It is never too late to achieve better health and a better life when you are open to changing the way you live. At 51, I am not on any medicines nor do I have any chronic conditions. 20-30 years ago I did proof that you can improve with age and consistent conscious self-care.



Manage your stress instead of numbing it. That will look different for everyone. It is not as simple as doing yoga, a cold bath, or meditation. For many those create more anxiety, avoidance, and stress. Instead, slow down, pause, schedule nothing, make friends with your feelings, take a Tai Chi class, learn how to communicate your needs effectively, and journal emotions and how they connect to unhealthy lifelong patterns you are seeking to break free from. Chronic stress depletes our precious minerals, leading to a plethora of health problems, including early menopause.

Invest in functional lab testing, hair tissue mineral analysis, and exploring your emotions and past traumas. All help uncover the root causes of conditions, symptoms, lifelong patterns, and disease, along with prevention. As we women enter into the menopause years it is critical to be informed about how cortisol and hormones impact our sleep, memory, mood, and metabolism, along with when and how we journey through this stage of life. Often times, allopathic doctors fail to provide answers and long-term solutions, leaving most women with debilitating conditions. Shop around and be savvy when it comes to how you age. I offer the above support including a complimentary consultation to further discuss clients' goals and challenges along with my services and pricing.

**Email me at** [nicole@nicolemoneer.com](mailto:nicole@nicolemoneer.com) to schedule your path towards aging strong.



**Photo credit:**  
Magic Dreams Production,  
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If you have diabetes, keeping your blood glucose as close to normal as possible before and during your pregnancy is important to stay healthy and have a healthy baby. Getting checkups before and during pregnancy, following your diabetes meal plan, being physically active as your health care team advises, and taking diabetes medicines, if you need them will help you manage your diabetes.



# Good Mental HEALTH

## ESSENTIAL DURING PREGNANCY


**I**t's important to look after your mental health and wellbeing during pregnancy just as your physical health.

If you are mentally healthy, you will be in the best position to manage the challenges of pregnancy and life with a new baby.

It's normal to have some worries and fears about what's coming when you're pregnant. Pregnancy itself can be stressful. Coping with hormonal and physical changes, may leave you feel stressed about things such as antenatal tests. You may feel especially worried you've had a bad experience before, such as a miscarriage.







For these reasons, pregnancy can increase the likelihood of developing a mental health condition.

### Mental Issues during Pregnancy:

Both partners can experience mental health conditions during the pregnancy (the 'antenatal' period), as well as after the birth (the 'postnatal' period).

### For some people, pregnancy can lead to conditions such as:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Bipolar disorder (less common)

Up to 1 in 10 females and 1 in 20 males experience antenatal depression.



### Certain factors can put you at greater risk of developing anxiety and depression during pregnancy. Like:

- A previous mental health condition
- Feeling that you don't have enough support
- Going through a hard time, such as in your relationship
- Past or current abuse of any sort
- Problems with drugs or alcohol

It's important to remember that you don't need to be ashamed about it.





## Managing mental wellbeing during pregnancy:

There are things you can do to help manage your mental health and well-being during pregnancy.

- Don't expect too much of yourself – be realistic about what you can do; rest when you need to.
- Try not to make major changes at this time, like moving house or changing jobs, unless you have to.
- Keep physically active (check with your doctor or midwife before you start an exercise program).
- Eat regular, healthy meals.
- Spend time with people who make you feel relaxed and good about you.
- Avoid using drugs or alcohol to deal with stress.
- Make connections with other expectant parents so you can support each other.
- Accept help if it's offered to you; ask for help if you need it.







### Time to Take Action:

It's a good idea for all expectant parents to monitor their mental health and well-being. Keep a lookout for signs that you may need help and be ready to take action if you need to.

**While pregnancy has its ups and downs, it's time to seek advice from a health professional if:**

- You've felt consistently bad (for example, if you feel sad or worried) for longer than 2 weeks
- Negative thoughts and feelings are starting to affect your ability to function normally
- You're showing signs of depression, such as losing interest or feeling hopeless or unable to cope
- You feel anxious or worried most or all of the time
- You start having panic attacks or develop obsessive or compulsive behavior.

The most important thing is to talk about it – tell the health provider managing your pregnancy about your mental health condition. And tell your mental health care provider that you're pregnant. Together, they can help you manage your pregnancy and your mental health.




# YOGA

## *Asanas* *For Your*

# SUNSIGN

**Y**oga Pose has gained immense popularity worldwide, with people of all ages and backgrounds embracing its benefits.





Astrological yoga, the study of celestial bodies and their influence on human behavior and destiny has long been used to gain insights into various aspects of life. By combining the principles of zodiac yoga, individuals can tailor their astrological yoga routines to align with their zodiac sign and capitalize on their unique qualities and challenges.

By understanding the characteristics associated with each sign, we can identify the yoga postures that can enhance the positive qualities and address the specific needs of individuals belonging to those signs.

## Yoga Pose for your Zodiac Sign:



**Aries:**

21 March - 19 April

Aries is a fire sign known for its energy, enthusiasm, and assertiveness. The best yoga pose for you is the Warrior II pose or Virabhadrasana II. This pose helps channel your dynamic energy, builds strength, and promotes focus and determination.



**Taurus:**

20 April - 20 May

Taurus is an earth sign associated with stability, sensuality, and being grounded. The zodiac yoga pose for Taurus is Vrksasana or the Tree pose. This posture helps Taurus connect with the earth, improves balance, and cultivates a sense of inner strength.





## Taurus:

20 April - 20 May

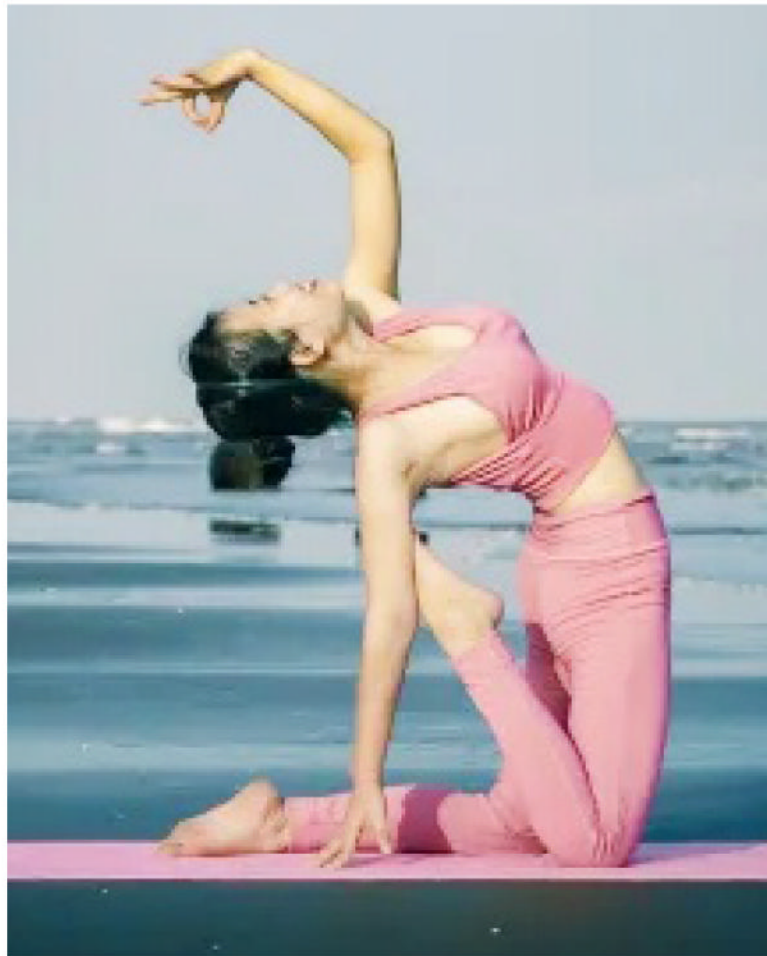
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## Gemini:

21 May - 20 June

Gemini is an air sign characterized by curiosity, versatility, and communication skills. The perfect yoga pose for Gemini is Ardhah ustrasana or the Half Camel pose. This pose opens up the throat chakra, enhancing Gemini's natural ability to express and communicate effectively.



## Cancer:

21 June - 22 July

Cancer is a water sign known for its emotional sensitivity, nurturing nature, and intuition. The zodiac yoga pose for Cancer is the Child's pose (Balasana). This is the best yoga pose for you since it promotes relaxation, emotional release, and inner healing, allowing you to find solace and rejuvenation.



## Leo:

23 July - 22 August

Leo is a fire sign associated with leadership, creativity, and self-confidence. The yoga pose for Leo is the Simhasana or Lion Pose. This posture helps release tension in the face and throat, enhancing Leo's ability to express authentically and assertively.







## Scorpio:

23 October - 21 November

Scorpio is a water sign known for its intensity, passion, and transformative nature. The astrological yoga pose for Scorpio is the Cobra pose or Bhujangasana. This posture helps activate the energy centers in the body, promotes self-empowerment, and encourages emotional healing.



## Sagittarius:

22 November - 21 December

Sagittarius is a fire sign associated with adventure, optimism, and philosophical pursuits. The perfect astrological yoga pose for Sagittarius is the Archer pose (Akarna Dhanurasana). This posture stretches the hips and thighs, encourages focus and concentration, and supports Sagittarius' desire for exploration and personal growth.



## Virgo:

23 August - 22 September

Virgo is an earth sign known for its attention to detail, practicality, and analytical nature. The perfect zodiac yoga for Virgo is the Standing Forward Bend or Uttanasana. This is the best yoga pose for you since it calms the mind, improves focus, and promotes self-reflection, allowing Virgos to embrace their introspective qualities.



## Libra:

23 September - 22 October

Libra is an air sign characterized by diplomacy, harmony, and a love for beauty. The ideal zodiac yoga pose for Libra is the Dancer pose or Natarajasana. This posture enhances balance, grace, and the ability to find equilibrium, aligning with Libra's innate sense of harmony.







## Capricorn:

22 December - 19 January

Capricorn is an earth sign known for their ambition, discipline, and practicality. The ideal zodiac yoga pose for Capricorn is the Mountain pose. This posture helps cultivate stability, strength, and a sense of groundedness, enabling Capricorns to harness their determination and achieve their goals.



## Aquarius:

20 January - 18 February

Aquarius is an air sign characterized by its humanitarian spirit, independence, and innovative thinking. The best astrological yoga pose for Aquarius is the Eagle pose (Garudasana). This posture improves balance, concentration, and flexibility, aligning with Aquarius' quest for originality and free thinking.



## Pisces:

19 February - 20 March

Pisces is a water sign known for its empathy, imagination, and spiritual inclination. The perfect yoga pose for Pisces is the Fish pose. This posture opens the heart, stimulates the throat chakra, and promotes relaxation and inner peace, allowing Pisces to tap into their intuitive and compassionate nature.

### Summary:

*Yoga is a powerful tool for self-discovery and self-improvement. By incorporating astrological insights into our yoga practice, we can further enhance its benefits and tailor our routines to suit our zodiac sign's unique qualities and challenges.*

Remember, astrology and yoga are not strict guidelines but tools for self-reflection and growth. Experiment with different poses, listen to your body, and embrace the connection between the celestial and physical realms. By practicing the best yoga pose for you, you can deepen your astrological yoga practice, embrace your strengths, and find balance and harmony within yourself.



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