

Three Internal Health Benefits of Yoga Exercises for Athletes

By Jeanne Rose, Yahoo! Contributor Network Nov 17, 2:05 am EST

Yoga exercises are great for an athlete to add into his or her exercise routine, and there are a lot of benefits to yoga. An athlete might decide to start performing yoga exercises because he or she thinks of the external benefits, such as toning muscles or reducing a stomach bulge, but these are not the only benefits.

Here are three of the best internal health benefits of an athlete performing yoga exercises, which he or she might not know exist.

Decreased Respiratory Rate

One of the best internal health benefits of an athlete practicing yoga is that it will decrease the respiratory rate, which means that the lungs are not working as hard. As an athlete begins to practice yoga, his or her breathing will become stable and more relaxed, and the lungs will become more efficient. Yoga can decrease the respiratory rate of an athlete due to the fact that yoga uses a lot of controlled breathing techniques, which can allow for the lungs to perform better under pressure or stress. If an athlete uses yoga exercises as part of his or her routine, then she will definitely notice a difference in breathing during an intense sport such as soccer. A decreased respiratory rate is also beneficial because it means the heart is not working as hard, and it also can help temperature regulation within the body.

Increased Circulation

An athlete that practices yoga regularly will also have better circulation within the body, which will allow blood and oxygen to flow more effectively. When an athlete has increased circulation throughout his or her body, he or she will notice that the skin looks healthier, joints feel stronger, and the brain will work better. Increased blood flow will also help an athlete prevent serious health issues such as a blood clot; it can also increase athletic ability, and can help him or her concentrate. Having an increase in blood and oxygen throughout the body also helps all of the internal organs, since these are essential nutrients the organs need to survive, and it can also improve overall health. If an athlete is suffering from an injury or has pain issues, the increase in circulation also will decrease the inflammation and pain associated with the condition.

Promotes Healthier Organs

Yoga also helps promote healthier organs, which is important in the prevention of diseases. If an athlete practices yoga regularly, then he or she will have a decreased chance of getting certain diseases, such as kidney failure or heart failure. When yoga is performed, the exercises basically massage the internal organs, which can help the body fight off or prevent disease and illness. An athlete will also become more aware of his or her body during yoga exercises, which will allow him or her to notice slight internal changes quicker, and allow him or her to get diagnosed before a disease progresses. Yoga also promotes healthier organs due to the increased circulation going on within the body, and an athlete is likely to notice better cholesterol or blood pressure because of this.

Jeanne Rose worked in the dietary department of a hospital for three years, obtained certification in nurse assisting, and also went to vocational school for Allied Health.