Read This Before You Hit the Mats

Yoga can be good, but you must observe certain rules.

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The benefits of yoga are often promoted, but lately it's the dangers of this ancient art that have been a hot topic. So is this exercise system of poses, breathing and meditation actually a hazard to your health?

"Yoga only becomes harmful if you push beyond physical limitations and put any stress or excessive strain on your body," says Latham Thomas, a certified yoga teacher and the founder of Tender Shoots Wellness in New York City.

Here are the facts. While staying active is an integral part of healthy living, any repetitive physical movement (running, yoga, dancing) done incorrectly can be stressful and harmful to your body. The danger lies in committing to a fitness program (of any kind) without understanding correct postures, movements or your own limits.

To stop problems before they start, Dashama, the founder of the Pranashama Yoga Institute, says to remember these practical tips:

1. Good yoga practice should make you feel positive, full of energy and pain-free. (Your joints, tendons and ligaments should feel strong, not compromised or strained.)
2. Good yoga practice should allow you to breathe in every pose. You should not be struggling.
3. Good yoga practice means you listen to your body and back off when your gut feeling tells you you've had enough. After all, yoga is about staying in tune with yourself and your body.

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http://beta.docker.realhealthmag.com/article/Yoga-Mats-Meditation-22495-6460