

# Benefits of Meditation and Relaxation

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There is a great deal of information out there today about the importance of stress reduction. We are living in a world that seems to be constantly moving faster and faster, and in this 'rush around world', opportunities to relax and relieve tension are becoming harder to find.

One very practical way we can relieve stress, and thereby begin to experience a real sense of peace, is through a regular practice of meditation. By incorporating a few minutes of meditation into our daily life, so many positive effects can be gained. The process shared during the meditation and yoga classes will help a person achieve these positive effects.

Below are a few physical and mental benefits (gathered from Wikipedia) of taking time to do regular meditation practice.

Mind-body relaxation reduces the risk of heart disease by 30% and reduces deaths due to heart disease by 23% according to a study in the American Journal of Cardiology, which also showed that relaxation increases life expectancy. Furthermore, mind-body relaxation techniques significantly reduce the risk of high blood pressure, heart attacks, and fatal heart attacks according to a study in the British Medical Journal.[5] Not only does mind-body relaxation reduce the risk of heart disease, and it can also reverse hardening of the arteries according to a study published in the American Heart Association journal.[6]

Mind-body relaxation reduces the risk of a depression recurrence by 50%. Approximately 10-30% of people will suffer at least one episode of depression in their life. Relaxation techniques in conjunction with medication reduce the risk of recurrence of depression significantly more than medication alone.[7] Mindbody relaxation is effective in treating and preventing substance abuse and addiction. Approximately 10% of people suffer from drug and alcohol addiction. Numerous studies have shown that relaxation provides long-term improvements in self-esteem and psychological health, and significantly reduces the risk of substance abuse.[8]

Mind-body relaxation helps treat anxiety and panic attacks. A study at the University of Massachusetts showed that patients who suffered from generalized anxiety or panic disorder felt significantly better after learning relaxation techniques, and continued to use those techniques over the long-term.[9]

Mind-body relaxation can strengthen the immune system. One study showed that after just eight weeks of learning how to relax, participants had a stronger immune system.[10]

Mind-body relaxation relieves chronic pain and relieves chronic low-back pain. In one study, after a ten-week mind-body relaxation course, many patients needed less pain medication. After fifteen months, not only did they suffer less pain, but because they suffered less pain they also suffered less from depression and anxiety.[11]

Mindbody relaxation reduces the symptoms of fibromyalgia. In one study, 51% of the patients experienced moderate to a marked improvement in their fibromyalgia symptoms. That is rare in most treatments of fibromyalgia.

These are just a few examples of possible benefits that can be gained from regular meditation and relaxation techniques. There is much more to be gained from meditation, yoga, and other relaxation. Just trying to illustrate, the fact that meditation, can not only improve mental health, but it also can lead to better physical health when done regularly.