



Yoga: a powerful ancient art that aids recovery, increases flexibility and relaxes the mind.

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It is not uncommon to see athletes of all abilities making yoga a part of their training program. Yoga, an ancient Indian art of asanas (yoga postures) incorporates developing the 'right mind', deep breathing, postures, relaxation and mediation.

Sheila Taormina, one of the leading women in the sport of triathlon does yoga on a regular basis and takes classes three times per week.

As a triathlon coach I see the need for greater flexibility and deeper breathing in athletes. Too often incorrect mechanics in sport result from a lack of proper flexibility and poor posture. This can be corrected from the regular practice of yoga.

At the National Triathlon and Regional Triathlon Training Centers we have begun to incorporate yoga before our workouts and the athletes are encouraged to spend 15-30 minutes daily doing yoga on their own.

If you have not yet tried yoga, it is best to enroll in a beginner class to learn the basic asanas, deep breathing and mediation that are all a part of physical and mental relaxation.

If you are a member of a club or team it would be a good idea to hire a qualified Yoga instructor to teach the group once a week for several weeks or on a continuous basis.

The basic asanas are not difficult to learn and can easily be repeated on a daily basis.

Within a yoga session you will notice your mind relaxing and leaving all of your thoughts behind. The focus of the asana and breathing neutralizes the mind bringing along a meditative feeling while aiding in recovery and realigning the body's posture.

If you are time-pressured sit on the floor or your yoga mat while watching the news or your favourite sports program and do 15 minutes of asanas. Once you develop a routine of daily yoga you will find yourself looking forward to stretching and relaxing your mind and body.

If you are unable to attend a class but would like to gain the benefits of Yoga there are several good books that I would recommend that can help you get started. Some are listed below:

1. Yoga for Beginners:
by Mark Ansari and Liz Lark
2. Yoga The Spirit and Practice of Moving Into Stillness:
by Erich Schiffmann
3. Yoga Zone Introduction to Yoga: A Beginner's Guide to Health, Fitness and Relaxation.
by Al Bingham and Alan Finger