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Media Release – Mind-body and Yoga for Your Wellness and Activity
From: NZ Register of Exercise Professionals



Mind-body and Yoga for Your Wellness and Activity

Mind-body practices such as yoga have been around for a long time. In fact yoga can be dated back over 5000 years.

In more recent times yoga has become more accepted in the mainstream, with exercise options in this area increasing. This includes a big surge not just in mainstream exercise facilities but also standalone studios offering specialist mind-body exercise options.

Persephone Singfield, a NZ national yoga advocate and teacher says “As yoga becomes more diverse in what is on offer, more people can easily access it. No matter your age, gender, body shape or size - there's a form of yoga out there for you. Yoga has become more accessible by different brands creating styles of yoga practice for every market.”

There is plenty of research to indicate that getting your heart rate up and working with heavier weights and intensities is beneficial. Equally, there is understanding on the other side that indicates the inclusion of more gentle, mindful exercise practices can also have positive effects on health and exercise levels.

For many the option of intense workouts is not appropriate. When injury, ability or life stage prevents high intensity activity, a mind-body workout such as yoga is essential to staying active. Those who do enjoy a more intensive exercise workout are also finding the addition of a more focused workout amongst their higher session intensity adds to their exercise enjoyment, and their results.

Mind-body refers to a state where interactions and connections are made between your mind, your body and the world. Generally speaking, a mind-body exercise form is one in which the pace is slow enough for this connection to be focused on. That's not to say there isn't a sense of being connected on a run or during a weights session, but that this is not the main focus of the activity.

The benefits of yoga go beyond the physical, although this is one of its attractions as part of an exercise routine. The main physical benefits relate to the stretching component, bringing benefits such as reduced muscle tension, improved range of movement in the joints, better muscular coordination and increased circulation of the blood to the body.

Where yoga really becomes the star of the show is in its stress reducing and relaxation benefits. With people living more busy lives, constantly connected to stimulation and data even during down time, the need for consciously created mindfulness becomes more important. It's an opportunity to slow down and connect, with mind and body.

Persephone says “I often say to my students that we are losing touch with how to live a simple life and that's putting our health and happiness at risk. Carving out time to practice yoga leverages our downtime massively. For example, the difference between taking time out to breathe and connect versus watching TV to blob out is huge when it comes to our overall well-being. My students report significant changes in their lives as a result of attending the yoga course. They sleep deeper, they are happier, less stressed, and are practicing the tools that yoga gives them throughout each and every day. Overall they are more connected to living a meaningful life.”

While the injury and health risks associated with more gentle mind-body practices are lower than those of a higher impact or intensity workout, keeping safe and exercising at a level that is suitable for you is just as important.

The first sign that you are in the right place to get a safe and effective mind-body workout is that the instructor or facility does an activity pre-screen to make sure there are no risks, or things to think about before starting that would indicate participation is a risk.

Secondly, the teacher or instructor should offer modifications throughout the class to enable all participants to achieve at the right level.

From October 2017, the New Zealand Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) will be recognising yoga teachers through their new Registered Yoga Teacher registration level. Those registered at this level will hold relevant knowledge and skill to deliver safe and effective yoga to New Zealanders.

Contact details for further information about the exercise industry:

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NZ Register of Exercise Professionals (REPs) - Independent not for profit quality mark of exercise professionals and facilities. Using REPs Registered Exercise Professionals is the "warrant of fitness check" that exercise professionals and facilities meet New Zealand and internationally benchmarked standards to deliver safe exercise advice and instruction. REPs is affiliated globally to other national exercise professional registers representing over 210,000 exercise professionals through the International Confederation of Registers for Exercise Professionals (ICREPs) - www.icreps.org

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Exercise Association of New Zealand - Not for profit exercise industry representative organisation. Its *mission is to proactively support a sustainable exercise and fitness industry in New Zealand by growing participation in structured exercise through advocacy, information and industry standards.*

