

Yoga Does Your Heart Great! **By Nanette Tummers**

Benefits of yoga - a mind body exercise!

- Empowerment for your future health with confidence, focus & clarity
- A new way of thinking about inner body strength
- A holistic approach that promotes a healthy lifestyle including strengthening poses, relaxation, stretching, breathing, healing imagery & a healthy diet
- Yoga strengthens the cardiovascular system, reduces harmful blood lipids, chest pain, blood pressure and progress of heart disease
- Yoga decreases stress, improves ability to relax and healing
- Complements any fitness program, medical care or medication
- It strengthens bones, prevents injury & improves balance

Dr. Dean Ornish and his colleagues at the nonprofit Preventive Medicine Research Institute in ground breaking clinical trials demonstrated that lifestyle changes that included yoga significantly reduced harmful blood lipids, chest pain, and coronary artery blockages in ninety percent of cardiac patients who stayed with the lifestyle program for one year.

Since 1993, on going research utilizing the Ornish approach at 20 hospitals and other sites, has found that eighty percent of patients who comply with the program have been able to safely avoid costly and invasive cardiac surgery such as coronary bypass grafts or angioplasty. Along with these findings, there has been a significant reduction in blood pressure and chest pain.

How do I get started?

Tip: Always practice from a point of safety and what is best for you-it's the yoga way!

- Find yoga class in your community-look for classes listed as "Hatha Yoga" or "Beginning Yoga"
- Find a yoga instructor in your area that work with cardiac patients and/or beginners
- There are excellent Videos/DVDs such as GAIIM's: Yoga for Beginners, Yoga for Weight Loss, Gentle /Stress relief Yoga for Beginners
- Books: A Women's Book of Yoga and Health: A Lifelong Guide to Wellness by Sparrowe & Walden; Yoga for Wimps: Poses for the Flexibility Impaired by Austin; Yoga for Beginners by Ansari & Lark