



Only two weekly sessions of any type of yoga (Vinyasa, Hatha, Iyengar) yield a range of body benefits!

### **Better, longer zzz's**

Insomniacs fell asleep 15 minutes faster and slept an hour longer each night after two months of doing a 45-minute series of yoga poses daily before bed. Researchers from Brigham and Women's Hospital speculate that regular practice helped people relax, making it easier to switch off. No trouble hitting the hay? Doing three weekly sessions at any time of the day may still help you doze more deeply, according to study authors. Sounder nights, brighter days!

### **Steamier sex**

You can amp up your desire and ensure an O-mazing time between the sheets by practicing daily asanas, a study from *The Journal of Sexual Medicine* suggests. The love connection: Yoga helps reduce anxiety, increase body awareness and even speed the release of hormones that rev arousal. All of that translates to a boost in libido, lubrication and ability to achieve orgasm, experts say. If you can't squeeze in a daily session, two hours a week may make a difference. Yoga—satisfying couples since 200 B.C.

### **Top-to-toe toning**

Smart yogis know dumbbells aren't the only way to sculpt. "Yoga is strength training," says Loren Bassett, an instructor at Pure Yoga in New York City and creator of Bassett's Bootcamp, a vigorous, athletic-style yoga class. "You're using your body weight to move from posture to posture, and in certain poses, you're lifting every pound of it." For surefire firming, focus on muscle-building asanas, like Crow, Crescent, Warrior III and plank.

### **Crazy-high confidence**

Yoga could be your ticket to body love, research from the University of California in Berkeley finds. Women who practiced regularly rated their body satisfaction 20 percent higher than did those who took aerobics, even though both groups were at a healthy weight. The secret may be that yoga asks you to tune in to how your body feels and what it can do—not how it looks.

### **A sense of calm**

Namaste the stress away! Women who had gone to the mat at least once a week for two years or more released 41 percent less of a tension-triggered cytokine (a type of protein) that can make you feel tired and moody compared with yoga newbies, a study in *Psychosomatic Medicine* notes.