

ADVANCED LIFESTYLES



yoga

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SENIORS IN MOTION

Yoga is a physical, mental and spiritual practice often thought exclusive to the young and active. But in its essence, it reaches all ages and can act as a healing agent in many ways. Self-esteem, mental health, physical wellness, emotional energy, productivity and spiritual awareness can all be affected while practicing yoga. For those 50 and older, the benefits can be priceless.

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“Yoga is a tremendous way to improve muscle stamina and flexibility,” said Dr. Isador Liberman, orthopedic and spinal

surgeon at Texas Health Presbyterian Plano. “These days, we are either sitting at desks or looking at computer screens or watching TV. Meanwhile, our bones, joints and muscles just deteriorate and become less functional, especially with age. Yoga is a balanced approach in that it does not overwhelm the joints but still benefits the aging society. I recommend it to everyone over 50 for day-to-day practice.”

According to yoga instructor Jan Guinn at the Carrollton Senior Center, the number one cause for

hospital room visits in people 50 and up is falling. Thus, balance is a central theme in Guinn’s classes. To teach her students how to distribute weight evenly, she incorporates an easy warrior pose, which is much like a lunge.

“It’s a pose that feels nice and makes students feel grounded and rooted,” said Guinn. “It helps not only their balance but their leg strength because they are engaging certain muscles they may not otherwise use that could deteriorate over time.”

The Carrollton Senior Center has two types of classes: regular yoga and chair yoga, with two of each per week. The first utilizes regular free-standing yoga poses, while chair yoga allows students to rely on a chair for support until they feel confident enough without it. Regular yoga is 11 a.m. Mondays and Fridays, and chair yoga is at 10 a.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays and lasts for an hour.

“Those are my most rewarding classes,” said Guinn. “You really do see a change, and I have realized that you are never too old. I

have one student who is 85 and so inspiring. It just proves that yoga can be catered to anyone who wishes to pursue it.”

The Flower Mound Senior Center offers residents over 50 the opportunity to join Seniors in Motion, an organization which recognizes the value seniors contribute to the community and allows them to participate in opportunities for personal growth. As part of its After Dark program, the center provides a senior yoga class at 5:30 p.m. Tuesdays

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