

# Who Are Yoga Therapists?

Although all yoga is potentially therapeutic and healing, IAYT-certified yoga therapists specifically apply yoga tools—postures/exercises, breathwork, meditation techniques, and more—to address an individual’s physical, mental, and emotional needs. Many people first learn about yoga through its physical practices, and a common misconception is that the discipline is all about stretching or movement. In fact, yoga therapy can help people who can’t move at all, as well as active individuals!

**The yoga model of health is unique because it addresses every aspect of life rather than considering each body part or system separately.**



## What Conditions Can Yoga Therapy Help?

Yoga therapy is a safe way of working with the natural capacity of your body and mind to optimize well-being. Because yoga itself offers tools that touch on the whole spectrum of human experience, yoga therapy can offer support for a range of concerns:

- Pain from various sources
- Major illnesses
- Neurologic issues
- Healthy aging
- Mental health
- Death and dying

Yoga therapy can also support people who are dealing with stress, and those who simply want to increase their ability to cope with modern life.

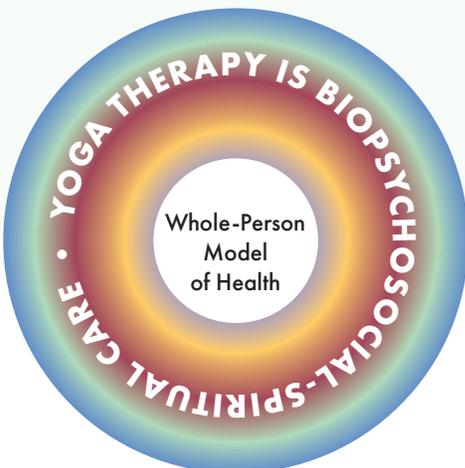
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## What’s the Difference Between Yoga & Yoga Therapy?

A general public yoga class can certainly ease everyday aches, pains, and mood complaints. Yoga therapy sessions go much further because they are tailored to the individual. Whether one-to-one or in a small group, yoga therapy also draws from all of the tools of yoga—not just the physical practices of asana—and involves personalized assessment and goal-setting in the context of a therapeutic relationship. IAYT-certified yoga therapists have in-depth training to help them assess and keep clients safe, and to interact with other healthcare professionals effectively.

## How Does Yoga Therapy Work?

Although yoga has been practiced in some form for millennia, we are just beginning to understand these mechanisms from a Western scientific perspective. A tool applied in one area—say, a breathing practice—can profoundly affect a completely different area of the body or the mind. Researchers think this works partly because of yoga’s ability to regulate the nervous system and possibly to affect the way the brain processes information. Another reason yoga therapy works so well is that it’s not a treatment done to a patient—yoga therapists instead help clients to tap into their own innate healing capabilities.



**Yoga therapy can complement a client's usual healthcare.**

**IAYT** THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF  
**YOGA THERAPISTS**