

# WOMEN IN SPORTS DO PRACTICE YOGA!!

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## Yoga and Athletics

Everyone is doing it – this thing called yoga. Doctors are prescribing it as an alternative therapy to reduce stress; physical therapists are recommending it to help patients rehabilitate; personal trainers are suggesting it as a complementary activity to cardio and weight training and schools are offering it as an elective in physical education courses – learning to balance the mind, body and spirit.

Simply put, yoga means “union” – uniting breath and movement, uniting mind and body – being present in every moment – not thinking about the next.

Some of the most prominent women in sports practice yoga.

Tennis pros Venus & Serena Williams and Martina Hingis swear by their regular yoga practice. Golf pro Annika Sorenstam, basketball star Lisa Leslie and the entire US Women’s Soccer team have admittedly improved their athletic performance through a regular yoga practice.

## Benefits for Athletes

All athletes can benefit from a regular yoga practice – football players, swimmers, tri-athletes, cyclists and gymnasts to name a few.

## Increased Awareness

It all starts with the breath. Through slow, rhythmic breathing we become more aware of our surroundings and what is happening within our body. The breath is the foundation of reducing performance anxiety and improving concentration.

## Increased Muscle Flexibility, Range of Motion, Core Strength, and Balance

All of these things benefit athletes no matter what the sport. All yoga poses require core strength and stability; routines are comprised of dynamic flowing poses lengthening and strengthening the muscles. By relieving tension from the muscles we can increase our range of motion in our hips, shoulders and spine.

## Injury Prevention

Probably the most important benefit of a regular yoga practice is injury prevention. When we are more aware, more focused and strong through our core – we are less likely to get hurt.

Satsang Yoga offers yoga classes for beginners, intermediate practitioners and a multitude of “special interest clients”. Please see [www.satsangyoga.net](http://www.satsangyoga.net) for more information about a class that will suit your needs.

Dana Layon is President of Satsang Yoga Studio. She is a Registered Yoga Teacher through the Yoga Alliance, member of the International Association of Yoga Therapists, Co-founder of Natural Approach to Parenting and Creator of the Prenatal Yoga Program at SW Washington Medical Center.



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