



Instructor Tyler Franz focuses intently as he leads a class into "Standing Bow" pose -photo by Jeremiah T. Anderson

health & wellness 2010 SPOTLIGHT

Hot Yoga
beats heat
with more heat!



stay fit
this summer
as you

find that healing feeling

spl to the Daily News
Bowling Green, (KY)
by Kassandra Reeves

Keeping yourself active during the summer months is relatively easy in comparison to other seasons, as the warmth of the sunshine and the fresh, clean smells of flowers and cut grass seem to call us to get moving.

We enjoy golfing, boating, lawn work, walking, running, baseball, soccer, swimming, skiing, cycling, and a myriad of other fun and fitness-building activities. This is great for our bodies and our minds as we burn calories and get the endorphins pumping, creating the workout "high" which keeps us going back to the activity again and again.

But, what about building lasting strength, flexibility and fitness while healing overtaxed muscles and tendons? Very few activities can accomplish all the things that sports and high impact workouts do, and still offer recovery and true healing.

After searching through and participating in a wide variety of exercise regimens, the one standout is also one of the most popular: Hot Yoga.

The best advantage to doing Hot Yoga on a regular basis is the all-inclusive nature of the practice. You can build muscle and muscle tone, lose weight, improve balance, flexibility, cardiovascular health, improve concentration and focus, increase lung capacity, jumpstart the healing process of the body, improve cholesterol levels, improve blood pressure, and enjoy many other benefits. In short, Hot Yoga improves everything which supports every other activity imaginable. Little wonder why Hot Yoga has grown so explosively popular worldwide, including right here in Bowling Green!

My question was always, "What do you folks do in all that heat?" It was an inexplicable mystery why so many people loved working out in a room heated to more than 100 degrees, while moving together and concentrating in sometimes challenging positions.

Well, all one needs to do is go into Hot Yoga and sign up for their one-week unlimited introduction. This allows you to do several classes in close sequence and feel immediate and positive results. Just so you have a "clue" (as I did not), allow me to share my experience:

I purchased the "Newbie" special one week for \$25, online at www.hotyogabowlinggreen.com and arrived about 15 minutes before my scheduled first class. I was more than a little nervous as I walked into the lobby. My apprehension was immediately eased as I was greeted by several yoga students casually chatting, a clean and bright reception area and a man with a wide smile and rosy cheeks who spoke to me as if he

had known me all my life. "I think I can do this" was my response to myself, after the man introduced himself as 'Tony B.' and assured me I could.

After storing my shoes, hoodie and handbag, I checked out the dressing room. Very nice, open and clean. Lockers for everyone and two roomy showers. Cool, clean ceramic tile everywhere and blues and yellows on the inviting walls. Now on to the yoga room!

As one of the instructors Trinity Gonzalez said in her testimonial, "Seriously, it's hot!" I walked into the studio room and was surprised by how hot and steamy the air was, but how good it felt to me after I set up my mat and towel and had a couple of minutes to relax. The room was quiet, with soft music playing and it smelled of aromatherapy essential oils. Not at all like the stories I had heard of some "hot" studios which were known for lingering unpleasant smells. The room was huge, with beautiful mirrors adorning three quarters of the walls, and featuring a soft, warm rubber like floor which really made my tired back feel great as I lay on it.

The teacher entered the room, introduced herself as Ashley and proceeded to - big surprise - turn on some of the best rock and roll music ever! What was this? I was in love with this haven of coolness that was so hot!

We moved moderately to quickly through a series of positions and techniques, some of which I was familiar with from other forms of exercise that use yoga as a base (most do) and some which were new and coolly exciting! Ashley was the perfect leader, reminding us to go where we could today and not overtax joints and ligaments. At the end, I was happily exhausted

A recent Hot Yoga class moves smoothly together while holding the "Awkward Chair" posture. There are actually 84 basic "asanas", or poses, in Hatha Yoga. Many other exercise programs are deeply rooted in yoga. -photo by Leslye Davis



Monica Houchens, in background, balances in the Bow Pulling/Lord of the Dance pose while her fiancé Josh Poynter works into the posture in the foreground. -photo by Leslye Davis

The WHO and HOW of Hot Yoga

Golfers

How you benefit: Greater strength and incredible flexibility in the shoulders, core strength, open hips - all contribute to powerful swings. Improved breathing and control. Greatly improves heat tolerance levels.

Runners, Walkers and Cyclists

How you benefit: Lung capacity increases tremendously, cardiovascular system greatly improves, overall endurance increases, detoxification of the body improves physical readiness and body awareness. Promotes healing of joints, muscle strains and injuries. Lengthens the IT bands, increases flexibility in all muscle groups including hip flexors.

New Mothers

How you benefit: Brings the body back to healthy condition, look and feel by toning muscles, flattening the abdominals, strengthening the core and pelvic floor, slimming and shaping while sculpting better than any other activity. Improves sleep and increases energy levels. The best stress reliever on the planet.

Those who wish to Lose Weight

How you benefit: Superior calorie burning, with some students burning more than 1,000 calories per class. Creates cardiac drift, controls heart rate with breathing techniques so to avoid anaerobic state. No impact on the joints, tendons and ligaments. Greater body awareness encourages healthier habits, including better eating.

Team Sports

How you benefit: Breathing is huge here. Greater lung capacity, endurance, combined strength and flexibility greatly reduces chance of injuries, and promotes faster healing of existing injuries.

Weight Trainers

How you benefit: Lengthens and strengthens muscles while taking flexibility to the next level. One of the best regimens for improving definition, sculpting and overall health inside and out. Detoxifies the body. Lowers chances of injuries.

Senior Citizens

How you benefit: Better balance, endurance, muscle tone, breathing and flexibility.

and almost fell asleep during "savasana" (final, total relaxation pose).

There is so much concentration during the class, I didn't realize we had been in the room 75 minutes. I have never in my life worked so much, including areas of my anatomy I may have never used. Is that possible? Evidently so, as I felt my breath and heartbeat seemingly for the first time. I was in love - with yoga. I even found myself praying at the end of class and feeling refreshed, renewed and physically stronger. "This is it!" I said to myself and exited the lobby to talk with some of the other "yogis".

Most of the regular practitioners are totally dedicated to their Hot Yoga practice. Jennifer Moonson, a journalist and author from Barren County, said she loves the mind/body connection along with the fact that it creates a great "cut" in the muscularity of the body.

Sweet! WKU student Jenni Allison says Hot Yoga is even better during the hot summer months, as it not only creates great tolerance of the heat, but keeps your body "beach ready" all year. Their oldest student is an energetic 88 year old, and has seen a significant improvement in flexibility, balance and endurance. Instructors Tyler Franz and Tony Bishop both sang the praises of the healing effects of the practice, as they have seen knee, ankle and hip issues resolved while practicing Hot Yoga. All this is great, but I just love the way it makes me feel, and how well I sleep now. It's the feeling of "...aaaaahhhhhhh..." for me. So, don't be afraid. Don't be intimidated. Don't think it's uncool, because it is the coolest. It's worth the trip to 730 Fairview Avenue just to find yourself - or lose yourself - at Hot Yoga!



Western student Samantha Hillis enjoys the workout, the yoga and the music at Hot Yoga B.G. -photo by Leslye Davis

Special Events at Hot Yoga

Hot Yoga Day, Bowling Green USA
Next Saturday, May 29th
All Classes

8:45 am - 10:30 am - 4:30pm

The "Bring a Friend" Special Day. Bring a friend to Hot Yoga, and your friend will receive a FREE Class. If you have never been, bring a friend and split the cost. One free class with paid class when you come together.

Kids Yoga Series
Saturdays from 2pm - 3pm
June 19 - July 31

Fun series, low heat. Taught by "Yoga Mama" Anice Bishop, CYT

Hot Yoga Summer Challenge

60 days of Hot Yoga in 12 weeks. Great for taking fitness to the next level. Life-changing and incredible 12 week journey to rev-up the summer.