

Encinitas Yoga

May Newsletter

Twist into Spring

Dear Friends and Students,

May is a special time for us at Encinitas Yoga. We are celebrating our first birthday on May 13th. In celebration, we have a special schedule for May 13th:

- 8:30AM - *Special Heated class with Sumathi*
 10:30AM - *Linda's always special Gentle Class*
 12:00PM - *Brinda's talk with special cake by Sara*
 6:00PM - *Florence's Heated Plus class with special adjustments with Outi*

Please join us on our special day to help us celebrate. All students will receive a free guest pass to be used by yourself or given to a friend. We also have a single schedule change for May. We are canceling our 11:00AM Gentle class on Sundays.

It has been a great start this spring at Encinitas Yoga. We would like to express our appreciation for all our students, for your enthusiasm and presence in the past month. In case you haven't had the time for your yoga class this month, hopefully this newsletter gives you an added touch of inspiration...wherever you might be.

As you probably have picked up on, spring is the time for renewal, growth, creation and development - plants,

animals and us humans. In traditional Chinese medicine spring is correlated with the element of wood, which governs the gallbladder and liver. It is not by coincidence that we have decided to focus this month's newsletter on the theme of twisting postures, since when practiced they directly affect our liver and gallbladder, improving detoxification and many other body functions.

The liver and the gallbladder play a special role in digestion and the processing of many substances we take into our bodies on a daily, and hourly basis. The liver is the body's largest organ with more than a hundred known functions and a remarkable capacity to regenerate itself after surgery, injury or illness. The liver is located in the right upper abdomen. The liver is a master organ as it stores and distributes nourishment for the entire body; it is involved in breaking down and the building of blood as well as filtering toxins (materials that are unusable for the body) from the blood. Liver manufactures bile that aids in the digestion of fats, turning them into fatty acids that are then absorbable by the small intestine. Bile is stored in the gallbladder that is connected to the small intestine as well as the liver.

The liver, amazing as it is on its own, can be coaxed and influenced to function to its full potential. Diet is one key factor, however we will focus on how by doing yoga you are actually massaging, strengthening and twisting

your muscles and internal organs, including the liver, when practicing twisting poses. When you twist in a posture, you are literally wringing out your body. Squeezing during the pose assists the body in releasing great amounts of tension leaving you feeling tension-free and pouring essential nutrients along your spine and into all of the abdominal organs. Of course this feels good. One of the reasons you feel better after a twist is due to this natural "flood".

The liver being an important detoxification organ of the body makes for the immediate connection of twisting postures and improved detoxification. The twists also massage the kidneys that are essential for good waste elimination. In fact all of your digestive organs get a great squeeze during a twist. Ensuring great condition of the organs responsible for proper peristaltic movement in your intestines - for proper digestion, absorption and elimination.

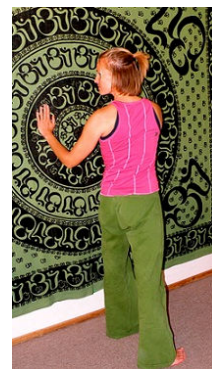
In the process of a twisting pose, you are strengthening all the small muscles that connect the vertebrae and keep the whole structure of your spine mobile. The spine tends to become very rigid and contracted in our daily lives of being seated more than is natural to our bodies. Some areas of the spine begin to lack circulation due to inactivity and contraction of the muscles. When compression or contraction sets in, these areas begin to lack nourishment and vitality. The areas of poor circulation begin to dry up. A twisting pose improves the mobility and circulation along the entire spine as well as the abdominal organs, releasing tension in the neck, shoulders and hips. This leaves you with better energy flow, filled with life force, feeling youthful, healthier and stronger.

When practiced correctly, breathing as normally as the posture allows, and with your spine lengthened at all times, you are working deeply along the entire spinal column and twisting the organs along the way. When squeezing in the twist, you are squeezing the blood out of the areas being compressed (muscles & organs). Once you release the twist, the areas that

were compressed during the twist receive a flood of fresh blood and energy, restoring the flow of prana into your spine and organs.

In yoga practice, twists also complement the forward and backward bends, balancing the spine by exercising the muscles in more complex ways. This hatha yoga approach of practicing postures that exercise the spine thoroughly in every direction, keep the intervertebral discs hydrated and nourished. This ensures a healthy and mobile spine.

A good way to restore and maintain normal rotation of your spine is practicing a twist or two a day - remember to warm up properly. During the month of May some classes* at Encinitas Yoga will be focusing on twisting postures, if you are just getting comfortable with twists, these classes will provide you with an opportunity to notice the gradual ease developing in your practice as you become more aware of their effects and how practicing twists -with proper alignment - will bring multiple benefits to your health and practice.



A simple spinal twist can be practiced anywhere. Lying down, standing next to a wall or a tree, seated in a chair, on the floor or in a seat. Be creative and remember to keep your spine elongated and breathe.

"A twist a day can keep the backache away"

NOTE: if you are pregnant, have an acute or a chronic spinal injury please proceed with extreme caution and consult your health care provider, we shall be held solely responsible for extreme well-being and feeling fantastic!!

* Wednesday and Thursday 6pm Classes

With Spring Greetings,

Namaste,
Outi

A Treat Recipe from Florence:

Raw cookies (all ingredients preferably organic):

- 4oz mixed dried fruits -I used cranberries, blueberries, and raisins on earth day- soaked for 30' with enough liquid to cover, then chopped in blender
- 2oz hemp seeds
- 1oz bee pollen
- 2tsp spirulina
- 2oz coconut flakes
- 4oz nuts of choice, processed into a food processor or blender into a semi fine meal with some chunks -I used almonds and cashews on earth day-
- 1tsp cardamom
- 1tsp cinnamon

Mix all ingredients together and roll into 1" balls. Refrigerate for an hour and serve.

Optional: 1oz cocoa powder and or 1Tsp soaked flax seeds