

RANJANA YOGA CLASS

Yoga Therapy

A Beginner's Guide (Doctor First)

What yoga therapy is, how it differs from a class,
and how to find a qualified practitioner

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General education only. Not medical advice. Speak with your doctor before starting any new practice.

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1. What yoga therapy is

Yoga therapy is the use of yoga practices, such as movement, breathing and relaxation, tailored to an individual's needs, usually one-to-one. It differs from a regular class, where the teacher teaches the whole group the same practice.

Standards and training vary between countries and schools. In many places the title is not legally protected, so check the practitioner's training and how they work with medical professionals.

The short answer

Yoga therapy is personalised yoga guidance, not medical treatment. A good practitioner works alongside your doctor, asks about your health history, and does not promise cures.

2. Before you begin: safety first

General education only. Check with your doctor first if you are pregnant, have high blood pressure, a heart, lung, joint or spine condition, osteoporosis, an eye condition such as glaucoma, or have had recent surgery or injury.

Stop and rest if you feel:

- sharp, pinching or burning pain (a mild stretch is fine, pain is a stop sign);
- dizziness, nausea or breathlessness;
- numbness or tingling, or pressure in the head or neck.

Doctor first

See your doctor for any diagnosis and treatment. A yoga therapist should not diagnose, change medicines or promise cures. Share your medical history with them, and keep your doctor informed.

Stop and get medical advice if you notice:

- promises of cures or guaranteed results;
- advice to stop medicines or treatment;
- pressure to buy expensive packages.

3. Class versus yoga therapy

Feature	Group class	Yoga therapy
Focus	General practice for a group.	Your personal needs and goals.
Format	Group, led by the teacher.	Usually one-to-one.
Intake	Brief or none.	Health history and goals.
Pace	Set by the class.	Set by you.
Medical role	None.	Complementary only, with your doctor.

4. Questions to ask a practitioner

Question	Good sign
What is your training?	Clear answer, with named school and hours.
Do you work with my doctor?	Yes, when needed.
What can you not help with?	Honest limits.
What does a session cost?	Clear, upfront.

Check the answers before you book.

5. A first-week plan

Time	Practice	Notes
10 min	List your goals and health history	Prepare for the session.
10 min	Talk to your doctor	Ask what to avoid.
5 min	Slow breathing	Practise daily.
10 min	Book an introductory session	Ask questions.

6. Your four-week plan

Week	Focus	Length	What to notice
1	Talk to your doctor	Visit	Any restrictions?
2	Book an intro session	45 min	Do you feel heard?
3	Practise the plan at home	10-15 min	Note what helps.
4	Review with the practitioner	45 min	Adjust together.

7. Choosing a class or teacher

Look for a practitioner with recognised training, insurance and a clear approach, who asks about your health and works with your doctor.

- Tell the teacher about your condition, medicines, injuries and pregnancy before class.
- Ask about their training for your situation.
- Avoid anyone who says yoga can replace your treatment.

8. Practising at home

At home, follow the personalised plan, keep short notes, and tell the practitioner about changes.

9. Honest expectations

Yoga therapy may help some people feel more able to manage conditions, but it is complementary. Research is still developing, and results vary. It does not replace medical care.

10. Common mistakes and fixes

Mistake	Fix
Treating it as medicine	Keep your doctor involved.
Skipping the training check	Ask about qualifications.
Believing cure claims	Be sceptical.
Dropping treatment	Never without your doctor.
Doing too much alone	Follow the plan.

11. Questions people ask

Is yoga therapy medical treatment?

No. It is complementary guidance.

Who regulates yoga therapists?

It varies by country. Check training and standards.

Is it covered by insurance?

Sometimes not. Ask in advance.

How is it different from a class?

It is personalised and usually one-to-one.

12. A pre-session checklist

- Have I eaten lightly, at least two hours ago, and had some water?
- Is my space clear, warm and free from interruptions?
- Do I know what I will practise, and how long I have?

- Is there anything in my body today (pain, tiredness, illness) that means I should do less?
- Do I know my stop signs: sharp pain, dizziness, breathlessness?

Running through these five questions takes less than a minute and prevents most beginner problems.

13. Your first week, day by day

Day	Suggestion
1	Read this guide. Try just the warm-up and the final rest.
2	Rest, or a five-minute walk.
3	Repeat day 1 and add one new pose or step.
4	Rest.
5	Practise a short version. Notice how you feel afterwards.
6	Write a few lines in the practice log.
7	Rest. Plan next week from what you noticed.

Three short sessions a week are a good start. Regular, gentle practice builds confidence, and rest days let the body adapt.

14. Glossary

Term	Plain meaning
Intake	The first interview about your health.
Complementary	Used alongside medical care.
Practitioner	The trained person working with you.

Reminder

This guide is general education and not medical advice. It does not diagnose, treat or cure any condition. If you have a health concern, speak with your doctor before starting a new practice.

Practice log

Print this page and keep a short record. Notes help you see patterns over time.

Day	Minutes	Session notes	How it felt	Notes
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				
9				
10				
11				
12				
13				
14				