



Newsletter July 2022

Amenia Yoga - a Place for Wellness

The cozy little studio with a big heart

Sarcopenia

is a relatively new word in the English language, it was introduced in 1988, and it's taken from Greek: sarco= flesh, penia= loss of. In 1988 it didn't exactly go viral; even now, many people don't know what it means. But, little by little, as Sarcopenia became the subject of research papers, in 2016, it found its place on the list of the International Classification of Diseases. Sarcopenia means decreased muscle strength, reduced muscle mass, and impaired physical performance. It sounds like what happens with aging.

After it made the list, it took off in the science world. Within a few years, researchers deemed muscle mass so crucial that it be included as a vital sign along with pulse, blood pressure, breathing, and temperature. In addition, scientific studies have shown that people with more muscle mass and strength had better survival rates, responded better to therapies, and spent less time in hospitals. In fact, these studies have shown that strength training reduces chronic inflammation, improves cardiovascular health, improves cancer outcomes, reduces cognitive decline, and helps prevent injury and falls.

So, where does that leave us? Do we accept losing strength and muscle mass as part of aging or change the narrative of what aging means? I'm going for the second choice because I know lifestyle plays a huge role in chronic and cardiovascular diseases, cancer, and the length of our health span. So many changes we go through and accept as everyday aging issues are, in fact, more related to our sedentary lifestyle and lack of movement, poor nutrition, stress, depression, and crappy attitudes. We have so many automations we barely have to lift a finger. And, because we work so hard, we often accept that our value as human beings is related to our productivity. That's a huge stressor!

The older we get, falling becomes an important issue, and it's serious business; it's the third-highest cause of accidental death - after poisoning and road traffic accidents. Building our strength and muscle can help prevent falls because falling goes hand-in-hand with Sarcopenia; greater the muscle loss, greater the risk of falling. I'm a yoga instructor certified in Yoga for Osteoporosis, and I agree 100%. Consistent yoga practice is one of the best ways to prevent falls and fractures - it builds bones, increases muscle strength, and focuses on balance and posture - all in one. Also, don't forget all the mental and emotional benefits! Don't let people think for a second they're too old for yoga or too inflexible. Those are often the people who need it the most, and yoga is such that if you sustain it, it will sustain you throughout the years.

Sources:

americanbonehealth.org

Deep Fitness by Philip Shepard and Andrei Yakovenko 2021.



***This Month
features
Lea-Ann
Durcan!
Find out
Why!***



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Meet Lea-Ann!

she's featured this month because she teaches here, and she's getting trained in Yoga Therapeutics from July 11 for two weeks at Kripalu.

How did you get into yoga? I started practicing yoga after purchasing a VCR tape done by actress/singer Dixie Carter while I was at a garage sale. I had seen my aunt practicing on her own in her living room and I was always curious about what she was doing. I took the tape home and did it a few times, then went onto something else. After a period of time I picked it up again and started practicing in the mornings before work. I got into a pretty good groove and then found out I was pregnant, I wasn't sure if or how to practice during pregnancy so I stopped again, and started after my son was a few months old.

Why did you become interested in teaching? I think I knew I wanted to teach yoga from the time I started taking classes at Yogaworks. I was very interested in the different styles of yoga and how each teacher had a unique way of structuring the classes, transitioning from pose to pose and creating awareness of what we were doing and how it felt. I thought of it more as sharing what I was learning about yoga and shared it teaching family and friends. I always felt I needed to know more in order to share more, and teacher training provided that information.

What is your favorite style of yoga to teach?

I've learned that we as teachers tend to gravitate toward teaching the yoga we like to practice. This is certainly true for me. I have always enjoyed practicing Hatha yoga because it allows me to spend time in a pose to explore it and perfect something about it each time I do a pose.

I also enjoy teaching Yin Yoga, the "parent" of Hatha yoga. Yin focuses on the connective tissue, fascia, and ligaments surrounding our joints. Movement and flexibility are the center of traditional yoga classes; Yin works the harder, more rigid parts with longer supported holds to stress the tissues connected to the joints. Anyone who practices yoga can add yin to their routine. There is also a mental component to yin, which allows the mind to settle into waiting while releasing the angst associated with pausing. Many students comment on how well they sleep after a yin class; I agree.

What advice do you offer to your students?

In yoga poses we are always moving in opposition, ie: reach your fingertips to the ceiling as you draw your shoulder blades down your back; draw your right knee toward your chest as you straighten and ground your left leg. It's a balance between opposites and isn't this what we are all doing every day finding our own unique balance?

Thank you Lea-Ann!

We're so happy you're here, and we're looking forward to your new insights after your training!