

July/Aug 2020

A person is seen from behind, sitting in a meditative lotus position on a sandy beach. They are wearing a light grey long-sleeved shirt and dark pants. The ocean waves are visible in the background under a clear sky.

MEDITATION: MYTH OR MAGIC?

Meditation seems to be fast gaining popularity. It seems that every health guru, magazine and Instagram influencer is telling us to get with the programme and make meditation a part of our daily routine.

So what's all the fuss about?

Meditation is being hailed as one of the best ways to reduce stress, improve energy levels, increase focus, control pain, improve sleep and promote good mental health.

But is meditation really the magic it's marketed as?

In short, yes. There is scientific evidence that meditation can do all of these things. In a review of 12 studies, they found that multiple meditation styles increased attention, memory and mental quickness in older volunteers.

Another study of 996 volunteers found that when they meditated by concentrating on a "silent mantra" they reduced blood pressure by an average of five points.

Whether you're suffering from stress and anxiety or poor energy and difficulty sleeping, meditation is a safe, simple and effective way to improve your mental and physical health.

IT'S NOT ALL ABOUT BEING STILL & QUIET

One common misconception about meditation is that it's all about sitting still and quiet and emptying the mind. In actual fact, there are many different types of meditation - some involved sitting still and quiet, others incorporate movements such as tai chi or some forms of yoga. So don't be put off if you find one style of meditation is not for you - there are plenty of others to try.

SO HOW CAN YOU GET IN ON THE ACTION?

Although meditation is easy to do once you know how, most beginners find it's best to start with a guided meditation.

There's a whole range of resources available from apps such as **Headspace** and **Insight Timer**, to YouTube videos, online courses and MP3 downloads too. Choose a resource that's easy for you to use and has a style that resonates with you.

5 SIMPLE WAYS TO REDUCE HEADACHES & MIGRAINES

1: Drink Plenty of Water

Dehydration is one of the leading causes of headaches and can be a contributing factor in migraines too. It's thought that even just a 2% reduction of water in the brain can cause headaches! Many people are chronically dehydrated and don't even realise. If you're a headache or migraine sufferer (or even if you're not!) try to drink between 1.5-2 litres of water each day.

2: Avoid Known Triggers

Many migraine sufferers have triggers that can bring on a migraine attack. The most common include chocolate, wine, cheese, sulphites and coffee. If you're a migraine sufferer keep a food diary. Log everything you eat and drink and look out for any patterns so you can avoid the foods that could be triggering your migraines.

3: Take A Magnesium Supplement

Studies have shown that magnesium supplements can help reduce the frequency and severity of headaches and migraines. Magnesium is an essential nutrient, but thanks to overfarming and the poor-quality, western diet it's thought that around 75% of

people don't meet their daily requirement through food alone. Supplements have been shown to reduce the frequency of migraine attacks by up to 41%.

4: Get Adjusted

Chiropractic isn't just for bad backs. When your spine is out of alignment it can interfere with the nerves running from your spinal cord out to the rest of your body. Getting regularly adjusted can help your central nervous system to function properly and could help reduce or alleviate headaches and migraines.

5: Reduce Your Stress Levels

Stress is a huge contributor to headaches and migraines so it's essential that you keep your stress levels in check. For most people, daily life is stressful - whether that's from working, juggling a family or other stressful situations. So if you're adding to your stress every day, it makes sense to work on reducing it each day too. Meditation is a great way to relieve stress and with the many meditation apps available it can be quick and easy too.

WHAT TO DO WHEN A HEADACHE OR MIGRAINE STRIKES

These 5 tips are great ways to prevent headaches and migraines, but what can you do when disaster strikes? What can you do to ease the pain and encourage a faster recovery?

Use Hot & Cold Compresses

Heat and ice can help ease the pain of a headache or migraine attack. Try putting a hot water bottle on your feet and an ice pack on your head or neck.

Rest & Dim The Lights

Bright lights can aggravate headache or migraine pain. If you can, try laying down in a darkened room and rest until the pain passes. If you can't rest, then turn off any bright lights in the room you're in and avoid looking at screens if possible.

Drink Some Water

Sometimes all it takes to relieve a headache is a glass of water! If you think you could be dehydrated try drinking a large glass of water.

YOGA ROUTINE

TRY THIS SIMPLE YOGA ROUTINE FOR RELAXING WAY TO STRETCH AND UNWIND.

Child's Pose — 5 breaths
(One breath means a complete breath in and out.)

Downward Facing Dog — 5 to 6 breaths

Rag Doll — 5 to 6 breaths

Sun Salutation A — 3 reps

High Plank — 10 to 15 seconds

Chaturanga Push-Ups — 3 reps

Upward Facing Dog — 1 full breath

Weighted Squats — 1 minute

Weighted Lunges With Biceps Curls — 12 reps each side

Lawnmower Rows — 12 reps each side

Oblique Twists — 16 reps

Glute Bridges — 8 reps each side

Chest Fly — 10 reps

Weighted Crunch With Oblique Twist — 20 reps alternating sides

Leg Lifts — 12 reps

Figure Four — 30 seconds each side

Reclined Spinal Twist — 30 seconds

Savasana — 30 seconds to 2 minutes

Lentil & Feta Salad

Serves: 1

Time: 20 mins

INGREDIENTS

¼ cup almonds, chopped
¾ cup dry green lentils
1 garlic clove - whole
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
1 tbsp apple cider vinegar
1 tsp fresh oregano, finely chopped or ¼ tsp dried oregano
Pinch salt
Pinch pepper
1 cup cucumbers, diced
¾ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
¼ cup red onion, diced
1 tablespoon fresh parsley, chopped
¼ cup feta cheese, crumbled

INSTRUCTIONS

1: Bring a large pot of salted water to boil. Add in the lentils and garlic. Reduce the heat and simmer, uncovered for about 20 minutes.

2: While the lentils are cooking, pop the almonds in a dry frying pan and keep stirring until golden which will be about 5 minutes. Pop them into a bowl and set aside.

3: Add the oil, vinegar, oregano, salt and pepper to a large bowl and mix well.

4: Once the lentils are cooked, drain them and rinse them in cold water.

5: Add the lentils, cucumber, tomatoes, onion and parsley into the bowl with the oil mixture. Stir well.

6: Mix in the almonds and the feta. Serve and eat!

You can make this salad in advance and store it in the fridge for up to 2 days making it perfect for packed lunches on busy days!

WORDSEARCH CHALLENGE

MIGRAINE
HEADACHE
RELAXATION
MEDITATION
YOGA
SALAD
PILATES
CHIROPRACTIC
STRESS

E	N	S	L	X	C	I	R	S	A	T	L	M	R
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From everyone at Spineworks, we are
delighted to resume service and look
forward to seeing you very soon!