



*strength * spirit * solace*

Newsletter

July 2004

Dear friend...

I believe that a yogic lifestyle and proper eating habits go hand-in-hand. I recommend that my yoga students eat the foods that create balance in their system, for balance is an essential element of yoga.

There is no perfect diet, and no ideal food. So, each of us should monitor our food intake to determine what works for each of us and what doesn't – every body is biochemically unique. There are, however, a few simple rules to go by:

- Eat clean, organically grown food.
- Avoid all pesticides and artificial fertilizers as well as chemicals of any kind.
- Avoid foods such as sweets, coffee, and alcohol.
- Reduce meat and animal products intake to a minimum.
- Eat when you are calm and relaxed, and not when stressed or in a hurry.
- Chew your food well and eat as slowly as possible, finding gratitude and joy while savoring each morsel.
- Eat in a calm atmosphere in silence or with soft music as this aids digestion.

In summary, trust your instincts as to what to eat. Eat slowly and peacefully, enjoying whatever is presented on your plate!

Keep up the great work and let your light shine on!

Namasté,

Sara

Private Yoga Lessons

Have you been wanting to try yoga, but are afraid to venture into a yoga studio? Do you have a particular physical condition you need help in treating? Are you training for a marathon, triathlon or do you just need some deep stretching? I can come to your home and give you a private yoga lesson in the comfort of your own surroundings with your own music! Private lessons are 75 minutes long and cost \$60.00. If you would like more information, please email me at yoga@saradelaney.com.

Meditations

Home Sweet Home

Each of us has a resting place within our own minds, within our own self. This is our center, our place to relax, our home base. When we are able to relax and come “home,” we are able to nourish ourselves and to draw sustenance from an internal source. We can quench our thirst by drinking from an internal well. When we feel secure that we have this center for relaxation within ourselves that we can return to at any time, we don’t have to constantly run away from ourselves or search the outside world for an identity. We can relax and come home. Living this way allows us to construct a self-identity that grows naturally from an internal source. We need to guard time each and every day to relax and just be with ourselves, and in this way, connect with a little piece of eternity.

Poses You Can Do at Home

Paripurna Navasana (Full Boat Pose)



An abdominal and deep hip flexor strengthener, Boat Pose requires you to balance on the tripod of your sitting bones and tailbone.

Benefits

- Strengthens the abdomen, hip flexors, and spine
- Stimulates the kidneys, thyroid and prostate glands, and intestines
- Helps relieve stress

- Improves digestion

Contraindications/Cautions

- Asthma
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Heart Problems
- Insomnia
- Low blood pressure
- Menstruation
- Pregnancy
- Neck injury: Sit with your back near a wall to perform this pose. As you tilt your torso back rest the back of your head on the wall.

Step by Step

1. Sit on the floor with your legs straight in front of you. Press your hands on the floor a little behind your hips, fingers pointing toward the feet, and strengthen the arms. Lift through the top of the sternum and lean back slightly. As you do this make sure your back doesn't round; continue to lengthen the front of your torso between the pubis and top sternum. Sit on the "tripod" of your two sitting bones and tailbone.
2. Exhale and bend your knees, then lift your feet off the floor, so that the thighs are angled about 45-50 degrees relative to the floor. Lengthen your tailbone into the floor and lift your pubis toward your navel. If possible, slowly straighten your knees, raising the tips of your toes slightly above the level of your eyes. If this isn't possible remain with your knees bent, perhaps lifting the shins parallel to the floor.
3. Stretch your arms alongside the legs, parallel to each other and the floor. Spread the shoulder blades across your back and reach strongly out through the fingers. If this isn't possible, keep the hands on the floor beside your hips or hold on to the backs of your thighs.
4. While the lower belly should be firm, it shouldn't get hard and thick. Try to keep the lower belly relatively flat. Press the heads of the thighbones toward the floor to help anchor the pose and lift the top sternum. Breathe easily. Tip the chin slightly toward the sternum so the base of the skull lifts lightly away from the back of the neck.
5. At first stay in the pose for 10-20 seconds. Gradually increase the time of your stay to 1 minute. Release the legs with an exhalation and sit upright on an inhalation.

Beginners Tip

You can practice a preparation for this pose periodically throughout your day without even leaving your chair. Sit on the front edge of a seat with your knees at right angles. Grab onto the sides of the seat with your hands and lean slightly forward. Firm your arms and lift your buttocks slightly off the seat, then raise your heels slightly off the floor (but not the balls of your feet). Let the heads of your thighbones sink into the pull of gravity and push the top of your sternum forward and up.

Deepen the Pose

Full Boat is often presented as an abdominal strengthener, which it is to a certain extent. But more importantly this pose strengthens the deep hip flexors that attach the inner thighbones to the front of the spine. Learn to anchor the heads of the thighs bones deep in the pelvis and lift from that anchor through the front spine. Remember that the lower front belly should never get hard.

** Poses You Can Do at Home are from Yoga Journal.*

Nutrition – What does caffeine do to the body?

Can caffeine soothe your migraine? Or lift your tennis game? Or help you lose weight? Here are some things it can — and can't — do.

Alcohol. Caffeine may make a drunk wide-awake, but it won't make him sober.

Athletic Performance. Low to moderate doses of caffeine, maybe two to three cups of coffee, improve performance, at least in well-trained athletes in the laboratory. That may be why the excessive use of caffeine is restricted in international competitions.

Blood Pressure. Caffeine may cause a slight, temporary rise. But cutting back doesn't appear to reduce the risk of or help treat hypertension.

Caffeine Dependence. Yes. It's true. Go cold turkey and that headache is for real. How do you know if you're dependent? One clue: You want to cut back but can't.

Headaches. Caffeine increases the power of aspirin and other painkillers by about 40 percent. That's why it's in products like Anacin and Excedrin. Caffeine also appears to work by itself. In a 1991 study, 65 mg of caffeine as just as effective as 648 mg of acetaminophen in alleviating non-migraine headache symptoms. And doctors often treat migraines by prescribing combinations of caffeine and other drugs that constrict blood vessels in the brain.

Osteoporosis. Caffeine can be hard on your bones. The more regular coffee a woman drinks, the more calcium is excreted in her urine. The loss amounts to about five milligrams of calcium for every six ounces of coffee or two cans of cola.

Premenstrual Syndrome and Breast Lumps. Can eliminating caffeine lessen the symptoms? Some women swear that it does, but the research isn't clear.

Problem Solving. Caffeine speeds up reaction time and improves automatic processing skills like doing arithmetic problems and proofreading. But for more complicated tasks, like complex word problems, caffeine has also been shown to worsen performance.

Sleep. Caffeine can delay the onset of sleep. It can also interfere with rapid eye movement (REM) sleep, the stage when people dream. In a recent study, women in Iowa who routinely took caffeine-containing medications reported having more trouble falling asleep at night than women who took no caffeinated medications.

Questions about nutrition? Email me at sara@saradelaney.com.

Your Questions Answered!

Do you have a question? Email it to me at sara@saradelaney.com.

Q:

Why is losing weight so hard?

A:

Before we can answer the question of why losing weight is so hard, we need to define the term “overweight.” It is simply a state where your body, due to age (metabolic slowdown), illness or inactivity has begun to store too much caloric energy in fat reserves. Being overweight means you have too much stored body-fat; which is the amount of weight, measured in pounds, by which you exceed your ideal body weight. One single pound of body-fat is equivalent to 3500 calories of stored energy. That amount is much greater than the average person's daily caloric needs.

Haphazard and repeated dieting can upset your body's natural processes for effective assimilation of food nutrients, cell rejuvenation, muscle building, and energy conversion. Prolonged dieting can also cause catabolism, a breakdown of your lean muscle, as well as decreased vitality, increased body toxicity, and a long-term reduction in body metabolism. Lean muscle is essential for you to have an effective, healthy metabolism and to help maintain your ideal body weight. But if you lose lean muscle mass during an extended diet, you will actually increase your chances of gaining weight in the future.

If you have tried a low-calorie diet, your body adjusted to conserve energy by automatically slowing down its metabolic rate. However, when you returned to eating normal amounts of food again, your body's metabolism probably did not readjust back to its normal rate. Now, more of the calorie-energy from the normal amount of food you eat goes into storage as body-fat. Thus, the Yo-Yo Syndrome continues because the next time you try to lose weight, those additional pounds and inches pose an even bigger weight challenge. It cannot only be frustrating, but downright depressing.

Being overweight is actually and outward sign that one or more of your body systems are out-of-balance. It is these internal health imbalances that cause you to gain weight in the first place and also prevents you from achieving any long-term weight loss success. How the body reacts to the way we eat is one important system. When you eat, your body goes to work to extract all of the nutritional value from your food. Food is broken down to its elemental form through the digestive process. Vitamins, minerals, enzymes,

proteins, amino acids, carbohydrates and fats are all assimilated for energy production and rejuvenation.

The higher the quality of food you ingest, the closer you come to eating foods in their natural state, the greater chance your body has of finding the materials it needs to build and regenerate healthy tissue, bones and muscles. It follows that assuming proper digestion and assimilation of the food you eat, a nutritionally balanced diet will yield health and vitality. However, if the food you eat daily is lacking nutritional value, your body will be forced to rebuild from a lesser grade materials, causing it to postpone or even retard its natural processes of rejuvenation. Over enough time, this can yield deteriorating or chronically poor health, meaning lowered energy levels, difficult weight challenges, and a high susceptibility to sickness and disease.

The result is that over time your body can become metabolically imbalanced. Your metabolism will slow down, and this can result in ineffective digestion, nutrient absorption, and fat-burning ability. If your goal is permanent weight loss, with full health and vitality, a course of action must be taken that will naturally rebalance, detoxify, re-hydrate, and oxygenate your body.

Here's to your health!

Questions about nutrition? Email me at sara@saradelaney.com.

Contemplate...

Blueberries...these little blue marvels lead in antioxidant power thanks to anthocyanins, the pigment that gives them their midnight-blue color. With nearly four grams of fiber per cup and a good dose of vitamin C, blueberries also contain cancer-protective ellagic acid and tannins that help prevent urinary tract infections, plus they may boost brain health and vision. For “the power of blue,” eat ½ cup of cultivated or wild blueberries, fresh or frozen.



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*"When you come to the edge of all that you know, you must believe one of two things:
There will be earth upon which to stand, or you will be given wings to fly."*