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“What causes disk trouble? What is sciatica? How can you protect your students from a disk injury, or help an injured student heal? Read on for answers to all of these questions as well as specific asana suggestions.”

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“. . . Eric Ebbeson, 57, . . . says he fit the typical male profile of being hesitant to try yoga.

“‘There’s a perception out there that yoga is an esoteric, slightly weird, kind of female type of thing. The type of thing where real guys don’t do yoga,’ he says. ‘I never would have done yoga without an up-close look at it, seeing how much it helped my wife, and it still took me six years to try it.’

“Six years with a major pain in the back, that is. Five years after having back surgery, Ebbeson was seeing significant signs of sciatic flare-up. His doctor gave him a choice: rehabilitation or yoga. He chose yoga.
“I couldn’t drive to Portsmouth without pain getting in the way,’ he said. ‘A couple months ago I drove to Cleveland to visit our son. Twelve hours in the car without a problem.’”


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From the website: ‘Christa Rypins and her students lead you through simple, fun movements that gently relax the hips, lower back, shoulders, upper back and neck. Christa’s innovative approach to easing tightness and pain combines yoga and somatics (a system of neuromuscular re-education) to help relieve lower back pain, tight shoulders, stiff neck, sciatic pain and many other discomforts. Complete and easy to follow for beginners, Yummy Yoga is a valuable addition to the routines of experienced yoga students and athletes alike.”


Abstract: Sciatic nerve compression very rarely occurs bilaterally. The authors present a woman [on psychoactive medication] with profound lower extremity weakness and sensory abnormality after falling asleep in the head-to-knees yoga position (also called “Paschimottanasana”). Clinical and electrodiagnostic findings are discussed in detail and a brief review of the literature is presented.

From the article: Exercise-induced injuries are not uncommon, but some may have dramatic consequences. Patients in high-risk categories or those who are dependent on psychoactive medications should be counseled on the dangers that might be associated with their activities . . .

The practice of yoga by a person with an altered mental status is dangerous, more so than many other exercise regimens, because sustained postures may result in nerve compression and impairment. Physicians prescribing sedative or hypnotic medications should advise patients of the risks that are associated with otherwise benign activities like yoga. This report serves to illustrate the risk of overdosing routine medications, and the dangers that heavy sedation may present. Adjustments in medication dosage or timing, such as avoidance of sedating medications immediately prior to exercise, might prevent precarious situations and lead to less exercise-induced injury. Discussing side effects of medications and establishing regular follow-up for patients taking neuroactive medications cannot be overemphasized.


Of Related Interest


Ongoing Research

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Is doing a dissertation as part of the final year of an acupuncture degree program comparing Yoga and acupuncture as treatment for sciatica. Contacted IAYT 3/8/01.