

About 1 in 6 U.S. adults practice yoga, data show

June 12 2024, by Ernie Mundell



Nearly 1 in every 6 U.S. adults have engaged in the ancient practice of yoga over the past year, new government data shows.

In fact, as Americans increasingly turn to alternative or complementary health approaches, "the largest increases [have been] in the practice of yoga," noted researchers Nazik Elgaddal and Julie Weeks. They're with the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), which is part of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Their new report is based on 2022 data from the ongoing National Health Interview Survey.

According to the data, yoga remains more popular among women (23.3% reporting past-year use) than men (10.3%).

It's also more popular among the young (ages 18 to 44), with 21.3% in that age group saying they practiced yoga, than the middle-aged (14.1%) or those aged 65 or older (8%).

The well-off are also more likely to engage in yoga than less affluent folks. Overall, 23% of people in the survey's highest income bracket said they practiced yoga versus 10.4% of those at the lowest income level.

As to why Americans are engaging in the ages-old Indian practice, about 80% of [yoga](#) practitioners cited "restoring overall health," the CDC team found. That was especially true for folks ages 45 to 64.

Meditation is often being performed in conjunction with yoga: Just over 57% of all practitioners said they meditated as part of yoga practice. Lower-income people were more likely to engage in [meditation](#) and yoga together compared to better-off folks, the data showed.

Pain relief was another reason cited by many who practiced yoga: About 29% said they engaged in yoga to help "treat or manage pain," the survey found.

Again, [lower-income people](#) who engaged in [yoga](#) were more likely to say that they used the practice to ease pain compared to higher-income people.

The findings were published June 12 as an [NCHS Data Brief](#).

More information: There's more on the potential health benefits of yoga at [Johns Hopkins Medicine](#).

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