

Benefits of Yoga for Triathletes

Over the last several years, [yoga](#) has gained acceptance among athletes. The uptight jocks of the past, who thought of yoga as something only for incense-burning hippies, have been replaced by today's more open-minded trainers, who will try anything that promises to improve their competitiveness. Yoga definitely does that. It increases balance, strength and flexibility - three of the five essential components (along with speed and endurance) of physical fitness. And, maybe most important of all, it teaches focus and relaxation, integrating mind and body. Anyone who is prepared to swim, bike and run for three to six hours knows the importance of mental, combined with physical, strength.

Professional triathletes use yoga as part of their strength training regimen. As healthy history attests, strength is key to avoiding [injury](#). Yoga is also a welcome respite from high-impact aerobic workouts. Training schedules published in various newsletters included yoga on rest days. Restorative sessions, that put the mind and body back in balance and deeply open tight muscle groups, provide an ideal way to relax... while staying ready for the next challenge.

As a former professional triathlete, Kimberly Fowler knows bikes as well as an athlete's mind and body. Fowler is the founder and owner of YAS, Yoga and Spinning Studio in Venice, California. Fowler is also a survivor; her body, mind, and spirit are testaments to the power of will, the ability of the body to repair itself, and the healing potential found in yoga. The challenges she has faced include inoperable brain cancer, bicycling accidents, and a near-fatal climbing injury. Yoga has contributed to her rehabilitation, more than once.

Driven to teach the practice, Fowler is on a mission to make the practice accessible to people like herself. She considers herself her target audience—made up of type A personalities who push themselves to the max and need to learn how to create balance, relax, and breathe