

# MAX

SPORTS & FITNESS

NEW  
MAX MUSCLE  
GEAR IS HERE!

FITNESS  
FASHION  
PERFORMANCE  
MEETS STYLE

JET INTO  
SHAPE

WILD WATER  
WORKOUTS

PUMP UP  
YOUR HEART  
IN THIS 12 WEEK  
CARDIO PROGRAM

SLEEK  
STRONG  
MUSCLES  
YOGA FOR WOMEN

SPICE UP  
YOUR DIET  
TIPS YOU CAN  
TRY TODAY

Compliments of



August 2006

[www.fox.com/news.com](http://www.fox.com/news.com)





# Sleek **Sexy** Muscles

Try yoga to get that lean, hard body you've always wanted.

By John Platero, CPT, RTS

**T**he exact origin of Yoga is still unknown as it predates written history. We do know soapstone seals depicting figures in yoga positions have been found in archeological sites in the Indus Valley of India dating back to 5,000 BC. The first exposure of yoga to America occurred with Swami Vivekananda who spoke at the Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1883. He then traveled extensively and attracted many students, opening the door for Eastern gurus in the West. Vivekananda's second tour of America in 1899 founded the New York Vedanta society (which is still open today) and subsequently, in the early 1900's, ashrams and the Hindu Vedanta temple would open on the West Coast.

Regardless of how it got here, yoga is a wonderful way to obtain lean, strong muscles. It has also been recommended by the medical community as a manner

of reducing stress, healing musculoskeletal problems and even easing PMS.

## **Benefits of Yoga**

There are both physical and mental benefits to practicing this art form. Yoga not only develops your flexibility, but can make you strong by using your body weight as a form of resistance. It can also help improve joint mobility, increase circulation and improve balance, coordination and symmetry.

The most important mental benefit is the sense of connection between breath and movement. Yoga can increase your kinesiological awareness (sense of where your body is in space), which helps with your mind/body connection. Yoga also helps you explore the edge of your physical limitations and transcend them. Turn the page to learn some muscle-toning moves. Turn to page 61 for proper yoga breathing.



## THE EXERCISES:

Try these moves for long, lean muscles.

### CHAIR POSE

Begin with your feet together or slightly apart. Sweep your arms up and over your head. Draw your belly in. Bend your knees to about 60 degrees as you exhale. Hold this for one to two minutes.

### TREE POSE

Stand on both feet. Transfer your weight to a leg and rest the opposite leg against the stance leg. Make sure your resting foot is above or below the knee joint. Draw your belly in and hold this position for 30 seconds to a minute on each leg.

### HAND TO BIG TOE POSE

From the tree pose, lift the resting leg and take hold of the big toe between your first and second fingers. Keeping your face soft and breathing calmly, draw the belly in as you slowly extend your leg ahead holding the big toe. Hold this pose for 30 seconds to a minute and then switch legs.

### WARRIOR 3

Start with your feet together with both arms overhead. Transfer the body weight onto the front leg, bend and reach forward with hips facing the floor. Keep the belly drawn in and the glute on the lifted leg tight. Hold for 30 seconds to one minute and switch legs.

### STANDING FORWARD BEND

Stand with feet together. Sweep the arms overhead as you breathe in, bend forward drawing your belly in on exhalation, and if possible touch the fingertips or hands to the floor. Keep legs straight and relax the head and neck. Hold this pose for 30 seconds to one minute.

### DOWNWARD FACING DOG

Move to your hands and knees. Place your hands and feet shoulder



Tree Pose



Hand to Big  
Toe Pose



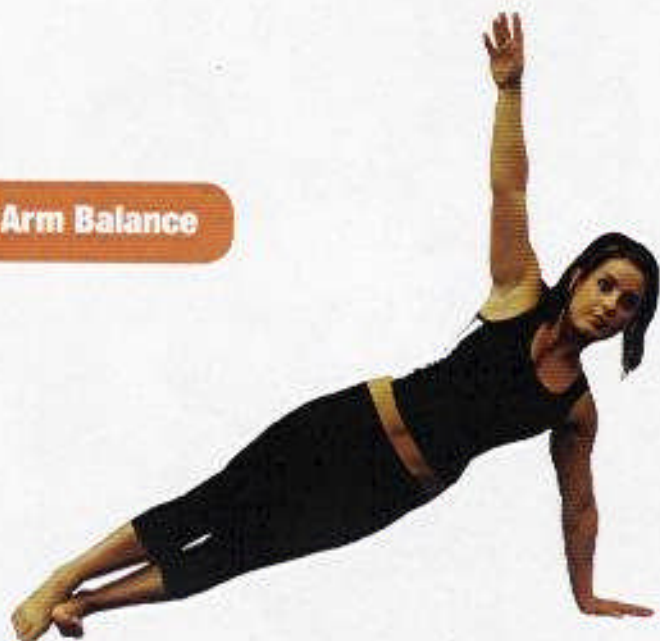
Warrior 3



Downward  
Facing Dog



## One Arm Balance



## Four-Limbed Staff Pose



## Upward Facing Dog



## Bridge



and hip width apart. Place or tuck your toes under and straighten the legs. Feel your hips moving towards the sky, while your heels push towards the floor. Draw your belly in and relax your head and neck. Hold for 30 seconds to one minute.

### PLANK

From downward facing dog, shift your weight forward so you end up in a push-up position. Draw the belly button in and hold for 60 seconds.

### ONE ARM BALANCE

From the plank position, turn your entire body to one side and shift all your weight onto one arm. Stack the free leg on top of the stance leg. Now extend the free hand towards the ceiling in line with the stance hand. Keep the belly drawn in. Hold for 30 seconds to one minute, return to plank and then switch sides.

### FOUR-LIMBED STAFF POSE

From the plank position, engage your belly towards the spine and slowly bend your elbows lowering your body to about an inch or two off the ground. Keep the elbows close to the body and hover for 30 seconds to one minute.

### UPWARD FACING DOG

Let yourself go to the ground with the tops of your feet on the floor. With your palms on the floor, begin to straighten your body lifting your upper body until your arms are straight. Keep the thighs off the floor. Slightly squeeze your glutes. Don't forget to draw the belly in and open up the chest. Hold for 30 seconds to one minute.

### BRIDGE

Lie on your back with your feet on the floor hip-width apart. Draw the belly in and lift your hips to the sky. Interlace your fingers and tuck your shoulders under squeezing your shoulder blades together. Hold for 30 seconds to one minute. For more of a challenge, straighten one of your legs, lifting it off the floor.

Photos by Gaby Alonso