

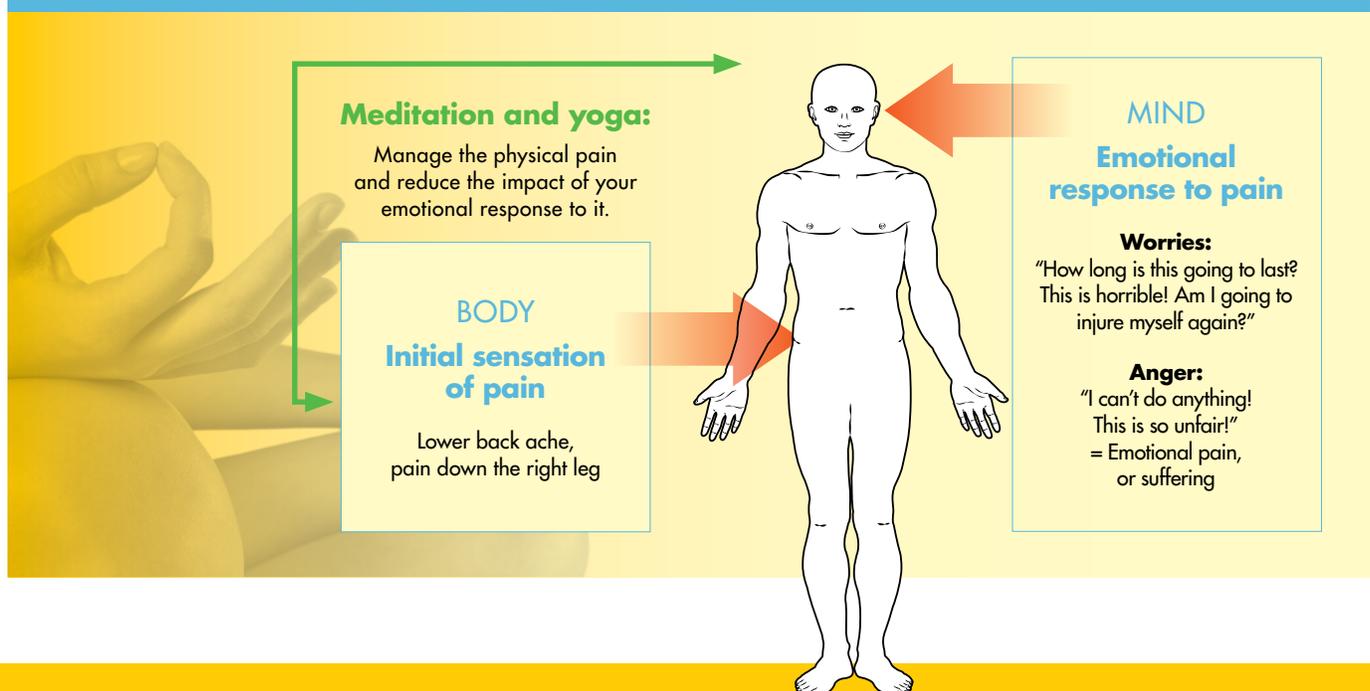
## MEDITATION AND YOGA CAN HELP YOU FEEL GOOD IN YOUR MIND AND YOUR BODY



The verb “to meditate” comes from the Latin *medeor* which means “to heal.”

Yoga is a discipline dedicated to the harmony of body and mind. Both meditation and yoga have been around for thousands of years, and their benefits are now widely recognized by science. These practices can help people live better with chronic pain and its associated symptoms, and can be done by anyone regardless of age or physical condition. Better still, they are easy to incorporate into your daily routine, require very little equipment, and can help control your pain.

How do meditation and yoga act on pain? It's all about the mind-body connection.



## Practising mindfulness meditation

Mindfulness is a type of meditation that involves developing a sense of being fully present and aware of your **thoughts, sensations and emotions** without judging whether they are “good” or “bad”.

**Regular meditation can even teach certain areas of your brain to control pain more effectively.**

### EXERCISE 5 minutes of focus on breathing

- Assume a comfortable position.
- Slowly bring your attention to your belly and the air going in and out of your nostrils. Observe every aspect of your breathing.
- When your mind wanders, or if you feel an unpleasant sensation, simply take note of it calmly and bring your focus back to your breathing. Learning to focus on your breathing teaches you to train your focus away from your pain.

## Reconnecting with your body through yoga

Using specific poses combined with breathing, yoga helps you:

- Prevent and manage the effects of pain with simple tools.
- Become aware of poor posture or habits you may have developed in response to your pain.
- Identify and use the existing strength of your body.

### Practise 10 to 30 minutes of yoga and meditation every day to improve the following:

- ↑ Mental and physical well-being
- ↑ Mobility, endurance and muscle strength
- ↑ Self-confidence
- ↑ Cardiovascular health
- ↑ Sleep quality
- ↑ Healthy lifestyle
- ↑ Memory
- ↓ Pain intensity
- ↓ Stress, anxiety and sad feelings

## Try a yoga pose

### 1. Prepare

- Massage your feet one at a time by **slowly rolling a tennis ball under your heel, arch and toes**.
- Wiggle your toes when you are done.



3. Feel the stability of your feet on the ground and the effects on your back and your mental state.

**Benefits:** relaxes the whole body while relieving the back.

### 2. Mountain Pose

- Stand with your feet parallel, about hip-width apart.
- Stretch out your toes for maximum contact with the ground.
- Shift your weight back onto your heels.
- Breathe deeply.



## Start yoga safely

Yoga is particularly good for people who suffer from back, joint and muscle pain.

- Find out about the different kinds of yoga that are appropriate for people with chronic pain (e.g. Iyengar, adapted, restorative, yin and chair yoga).
- Look for private classes with a trainer who can adapt poses to your personal needs.
- Overcome your fear of injury by going at your own pace. Don't compare yourself to others.

## Learn to become "mindful" in your daily life

Take advantage of waiting time on public transit, in line at the bank, or in the doctor's office to incorporate mindfulness and yoga techniques.

- Be more aware of:

**Your posture:** How are you sitting or standing as you read this brochure? Is it a good posture for your back?

**Your breathing:** When you find yourself becoming angry or worried about your future, bring your focus back to your breathing to anchor yourself in the present.

**Your emotions and attitudes about your body:**  
Am I holding tension in any of my muscles?  
Am I afraid to do something or move in a certain way that will aggravate my condition?

Practise Mountain Pose as soon as you stand up to correct your posture and relieve tension in your back.

Keep bringing your attention back to the present, no matter what you are doing: eating, bathing, listening to music, etc.

Done regularly, these simple practises can become valuable allies in improving your sense of well-being and relieving your pain. At the same time, they allow you to regain control over your body and yourself. You should definitely include them in your everyday routine.