

DOCTOR'S ORDERS

THE CRUELEST TWIST

Is yoga killing you?

NEED EVIDENCE THAT yoga — for eons practiced mainly by circus freaks and hairy, malodorous Bill Walton types — has gone thoroughly mainstream? Look no further than the CBOT, which has a yoga studio in-house to help traders reduce stress and stay as limber as a stalk of winter wheat.

But just because it's lower-impact than most workouts — you're unlikely to be flattened by free weights while doing the downward dog — doesn't mean it's low-risk. "Yoga injuries are common," says Dr. Johnny Benjamin, chief of orthopedic surgery at the Indian River Medical Center in Vero Beach, Florida, who sees about five strained, sprained amateur yogis every week.

Yoga's repetitive motions can put the whole body — the neck, shoulders, spine, pelvis, wrists and knees — in peril. So even though that lithe coed across the room can put her right elbow into her left ear, you shouldn't try to — especially if you're a newbie whose typical workout consists of little more than repeated elbow curls with 12 ounces of Heineken.

What to do? First, sign up for a public class. Autodidacts who would rather buy an old *Elle Macpherson Gets Bent* DVD and sweat it out in private should think twice. "If you're doing something incorrectly at home, there's no one to tell you so," Benjamin says. "That's a perfect recipe for injury." Second, choose a reputable instructor. Consult the Yoga Alliance (yogaalliance.org), a trade group that maintains a list of certified professionals nationwide.

Finally, always limber up beforehand. Benjamin recommends at least 15 minutes of stretching before class even begins. And if something starts to hurt, know when to exit your position. "Yoga is not a competitive sport," Benjamin cautions. As those human sine curves at the CBOT will tell you, though, trading certainly is. And a smart, sensible yoga regimen will help you hit the trifecta: improvements in mind, body *and* P&L.



BLACKBERRY BENDER: This model says "om" when an e-mail comes in.

Great Moments in Trading Idiocy (FIFTEENTH IN A SERIES)



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TRADER TICKER

23

PERCENTAGE OF YOGA PRACTITIONERS IN THE U.S. WHO ARE MALE, ACCORDING TO STUDIES DONE BY A LEADING TRADE GROUP

16.5

NUMBER OF AMERICANS, IN MILLIONS, WHO PRACTICE SOME FORM OF YOGA REGULARLY, ACCORDING TO A RECENT HARRIS POLL