



Moments of wellbeing with eye yoga Eye relaxation is in!

Linz, April 2009. Stars like Paul McCartney know: Eye yoga is the secret for a relaxed look. Simple exercises can provide gentle and comforting relaxation to these highly efficient organs that take in about 80% of all our impressions. Silhouette specialises in "comfort eyewear" and has compiled a simple eye yoga program with the help of Belgian yoga expert Jozef Kiekens. Ultimately, the eyes make the first impression – therefore, they should radiate as much freshness and relaxation as possible.

"Yoga supports body, mind, and soul, enhances blood circulation and thus a general feeling of well-being; we may therefore assume that somebody practising yoga has better sight as well. Furthermore, there are very special exercises for the eyes," reveals Jozef Kiekens from Belgium, who has dedicated almost fifty years to philosophical yoga theory and works at the Yoga Vendata Centre in Aalst. Jozef Kiekens regularly travels to India and in particular to the ashram of Rishikesh, which was also visited by the Beatles.

A big advantage of eye yoga: you can do it nearly anywhere - and you should, as often as possible, especially at the office. People working in front of a computer often moan about their tired eyes, but more relaxed vision can easily be achieved with yoga exercises, because yoga provides a balancing and relaxing effect. A few minutes a day are sufficient.

It is important only that you exercise regularly and don't overdo it, "because", according to expert Kiekens, "there are only two failures in yoga: you don't do the exercises at all or you do too much." Regular exercising may result in small miracles for the eyes.

Eye yoga

In the morning...

Start your day with eye yoga

It is important to stretch extensively after getting up. After that, it is best to sit cross-legged on a cushion on the floor and to concentrate on breathing in and breathing out.

Now look up and down 5 times and close the eyes again.

Open the eyes again, look to the right and to the left 5 times and close them again.

Open the eyes again, look to the upper right and to the lower left 5 times and close them again.

Open the eyes again, look to the upper left and to the lower right 5 times and close them again.

Then rub your palms firmly together and lay them on your eyes (see yoga for tired eyes).

Your head doesn't move at all during the exercises; only the eyes move.

After a few days some additional exercises may be added to the morning eye yoga:

Roll the eyes clockwise and counter-clockwise: Start by looking down and fixing on a point on the floor. From there, look slowly to the left and then up to the ceiling, then to the right and back to the floor. This exercise must be executed very slowly and the eyes must move in a large circle. The head stays still the whole time. Blink a few times after the exercise, close



the eyes, and rest with closed eyes by lying on the back for 3 minutes and then repeat the same exercise counter-clockwise.

The eyes should be relaxed after these intensive exercises. Both of the following relaxation exercises are suitable here:

Relaxation of the eyes after exercise

Sit with open eyes and blink quickly 10 times. Keep your eyes closed for min. 20 seconds. Repeat this exercise at least 5 times.

Relaxation of the eyes after exercise 2

Close your eyes as firmly as possible. The eyelids must be pressed together firmly and the eye muscles must be noticeably tensed. Hold this contraction for 3 seconds and then quickly release it. Blink a few times and repeat the exercise at least 4 times.

For relaxation during the course of the day...

Special moments

Another possibility to relax your eyes is to move them in a special way.

Sit comfortably - e.g. lie back in your office chair - and begin to move your eyes in a special way: up and down, from the right to the left, across and in circles. Start slowly and go faster and faster.

Energy for tired eyes

This exercise relaxes and rejuvenates the eye muscles and stimulates the intraocular fluid circulation. It is an in-between exercise for the eyes and quickly revives tired eyes again.

Close your eyes and rub your palms firmly together until they are warm. Once the hands are nicely warm, put the arched palms gently on both of the eye lids without directly touching them. The palms' warmth passes over onto the eyes and relaxes them. This exercise should be repeated at least 3 times.

Twinkle with your eyes

This exercise requires you to first deeply breathe in and out, and then to gently open and close your eyes. It is important that the forehead remains completely relaxed. Then close the right eye and cover it with the right hand, lightly touching the eye lid with the fingers. Then start blinking with the left eye. Imagine that the eye lashes draw the eye lid down and lift it up again. The eye lid just follows the movement of the eye lashes but itself is without tension. Move the left eye lid so gently that the right eye lid remains without tension and there is no movement that the finger can feel. Massage your forehead gently during this exercise: The left hand's fingers touch the thumb, and then the fingers open slowly, massage the forehead with this movement.

After the exercise with the left eye, the exercise is now done with the right eye. Cover the left eye gently with the left hand's fingers. Blink relaxed and slowly with the right eye. Massage the forehead gently with the right hand's fingers during this exercise.



Although this exercise is very simple it is very powerful. It should comfort the eye and not stress it. It may be done during the course of the day, standing in a queue, waiting for the bus, or just at the office.

Before going to bed...

Cleaning of the eyes

The oldest yoga exercise for eyes is called Trataka. It is very simple and yet has a spectacular effect as it cleans the eyes.

Just sit and relax cross-legged on a cushion, 1 meter away from a lit candle and stare at the flame until the eyes start burning and tears run down. Then lie back, relaxed on your back, with your arms and feet loosely out to the side. Remain lying down for about 10 minutes.

Do this exercise immediately before going to bed; it cleans the eyes and enhances concentration.

A selection of relaxing yoga exercises and more wellness tips for the eyes can be found in the Silhouette booklet "24 Hours Eye Care Programme", which is distributed free-of-charge, worldwide through eye care professionals.

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