

# **12 Good Reasons for Doing Sun Salutations as a Warm-Up**

1. To increase the decomposition of oxyhemoglobin, the oxygen-carrying molecule in the blood. When oxyhemoglobin decomposes, the O<sub>2</sub> (oxygen molecule) set free is more available to the exercising muscle.
2. To increase the body's temperature, thus reducing the risks for injuries to the otherwise cold skeletal muscles and connective tissue. If we stress joints and muscles that are cold because there is no flow of warm blood through them, then small muscles tears and muscle spasms will be the result.
3. To increase blood flow to the muscles to be exercised, thereby bringing glucose and fatty acids where they are needed for exercise. The elasticity of muscle, tendon and ligament depend upon the level of blood saturation; cold muscles have a low blood saturation level.
4. To increase the flow of blood to the heart, thus reducing the risks of exercise induced cardiac abnormalities.
5. To decrease the viscosity of the muscles, thereby making their actions more efficient and powerful. Without the warmth of flowing blood, the elasticity of the connective tissue will be inhibited. Warming up shifts the tension from the muscle attachments to the belly of the muscle.
6. To promote early sweating so as to cool the body before heavier exercise.
7. To increase the speed of nerve impulses so that neuromuscular coordination improves.
8. To increase the blood saturation of the muscles, thus making them warmer and more elastic for stretching.
9. To bring the cardiovascular system up to speed for the tasks that are to come.
10. To ease into more strenuous work so that muscle soreness is minimized.
11. To increase lubrication of the joints prior to moving them to the limits of their range of motion.
12. To enhance the activity of muscle enzymes.