

Although the popularity of Bikram yoga, or hot yoga as it is more commonly known, is on the rise, many critics maintain that its risks outweigh its benefits. Founder Bikram Choudhry maintains in his books and on his website that the combination of the twenty-six postures performed in a heated room is a harmless, therapeutic practice. Critics' concerns are primarily with the overheating of the body and with Bikram's belief in the value of competition, a belief that deviates in many ways from the traditional practice of yoga that values inner peace and a sense of community. Given these concerns, Bikram yoga should be practiced with extreme caution. While the enjoyment of commercial and monetary success is not always reason to be suspicious of an individual's motives, Bikram yoga, and all of its financial exploits, raises suspicion as an authentic part a long line of spiritually and physically satisfying yoga practices.