

Get fit and lean with yoga

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Last year model Jennifer Hawkins cut back on weight training and did yoga and Pilates to help her maintain her fantastic beach body, saying her body shape changed for the better.

Pilates Fitness Institute of WA director Frances Cahill said Hawkins could not do without her regular Pilates classes for staying in shape.

"We know this for sure as we have spotted her in Pilates classes in Sydney with our mentor, Sally Anderson," she said.

Ms Cahill said lots of other celebrities practised Pilates.iston and Gwyneth Paltrow are a few," she said.

Ms Cahill said Pilates was fantastic for giving the body a long, lean look.

"The unique combination of resistance work and stretching exercises in Pilates tones the muscles differently to other types of exercise," she said.

"It is the constant focus on lengthening and working from the core during a Pilates class which gives lean muscle results without bulking."

The Yoga Space co-director Jean Byrne said yoga, depending on the type, was great for improving muscle tone with one's own body providing the resistance.

"In yoga, muscles are strengthened and elongated so we may not bulk up as much but we also use a huge variety of muscles so that the body is balanced without overworking one part of the body to the detriment of

other parts," Dr Byrne said.

Ashtanga yoga was one of the main forms that would build up muscle tone while also elongating the muscles. "Gwyneth Paltrow, Sting and Madonna all practise Ashtanga yoga," she said.

Ms Cahill said certain types of Pilates would build muscle tone more quickly and said Power Pilates was a more flowing and dynamic type of Pilates with a results-driven focus that gave the quickest and most efficient toning results.

"Power Pilates using reformers, which are Pilates spring-loaded machines, is the ultimate choice for lean muscle toning due to the adjustable resistance and huge variety of exercises available," she said.

"Reformer classes will provide the fastest lean toning results."

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