

Inside Integrative Medicine

November 2022

Integrative
Medicine Virtual
Group Classes
Now Available

Yoga for Body and Mind Health

By Gabriel Lopez, MD, Smitha G. Mallaiah, MSc, C-IAYT, Lois Ramondetta, MD, C-IAYT, and Lorenzo Cohen, PhD

Yoga can strengthen your body and mind, but what role does it play in a cancer setting?

Research shows yoga can lessen the severity of symptoms, improve quality of life at a physical, psychological, and spiritual level, and improve biological parameters.

Yoga is a quintessential mind-body practice combining movement, controlled breathing and breathing exercises, and meditation. The focus on the breath in all aspects of yoga helps to reduce stress, leading to a healthy balance between mind and body.

Yoga can help reduce our 'flight-or-fight' response that is common in the face of stressful situations and instead activate a state of relaxation and calm that can help relieve feelings of anxiety and distress. This can lead to improvements in overall health, as chronic stress is harmful to all aspects of our lives, including biological functioning, and has been found to be associated with shorter cancer survival and speeds up the aging process. Other health benefits of yoga include increased flexibility, increased balance, improved mood, and reductions in fatigue, sleep disturbances, and inflammation.

In 2021, the National Comprehensive Cancer Network listed yoga as a way to help manage cancer-related fatigue and nausea. Research also shows that yoga can help improve multiple aspects of cancer patient's physical and mental health, overall quality of life, and biological outcomes such as immune function. A study conducted by the Integrative Medicine Program at MD Anderson found yoga helped improve aspects of quality of life and lead to better regulation of cortisol (a stress hormone linked to poor survival among breast cancer patients) in women with breast cancer undergoing radiotherapy through six months later. Our own research at MD Anderson also suggests the following benefits of yoga:

- Improved sleep
- Decreased treatment side effects such as fatigue
- Improved quality of life, physical function
- Improve stress hormone regulation
- Increase in finding meaning from having cancer

There are many different types of yoga and there is no evidence that one style is more beneficial than another. Taking into consideration safety and your level of physical conditioning, it is important to find an instructor, class, and type of yoga that best matches your individual needs. It is also important to consult with your primary medical care team before participating in exercise if you have any physical limitations.

Yoga Services Available for You at MD Anderson and Virtually

All yoga and meditation services are offered virtually either through MyChart/Epic Zoom video-conferencing platforms. All programs are taught by a certified yoga therapist who specializes in cancer care.

You can participate in a group yoga class entitled Yoga for Health. This moderately active program features a gentle form of yoga including stretching, breathing, relaxation, and meditation. We are excited to add a **NEW** Yoga Nidra class to our group offerings! Yoga Nidra is a form of guided meditation known as "yogic sleep" or "effortless relaxation." It's usually practiced lying down with a yoga therapist teaching the session. The classes are available for patients and caregivers and does not require a referral.

One-on-one Yoga/Meditation consultation sessions are also available for inpatient and outpatients. Yoga therapy sessions will explore techniques to help you relax and feel calm, such as gentle stretching, breathing, yoga postures, meditation, and relaxation. All aspects are tailored to meet your unique needs.

Ask one of your Integrative Medicine Center team members for your consultation today.



The mission of the Integrative Medicine Program is to optimize health, quality of life and clinical outcomes through integrative medicine education and research-driven clinical care.

Integrative Oncology Consultation

Our physicians can give guidance on achieving a comprehensive and integrative approach to your cancer care via MyChart/Epic Zoom.

Exercise/Physical Activity Consultation

A senior physical therapist provides recommendations on achieving safe and optimal exercise during each consultation via MyChart/Epic Zoom.

Oncology Acupuncture Treatment

Acupuncture is a safe and often effective medical treatment that can be used to manage side effects from cancer and related treatments, including nausea and vomiting, pain, neuropathy, hot flashes, fatigue and dry mouth. Treatments range from \$65 to \$75.

Oncology Massage Treatment

Oncology massage may help patients address anxiety, relieve pain, decrease fatigue and improve sleep quality. Treatments are \$55.

View audio and video resources online:

www.mdanderson.org/integrativemedcenter

Due to COVID-19 precautions, several integrative services are now available using a virtual format. Please contact the Integrative Medicine Center for more details.

How to Register for our virtual classes:

1. Call Integrative Medicine Center at 713-794-4700
2. All classes are free
3. Complete e-update *liability waiver and telemedicine consent in MyChart at least 48 hours prior to scheduled class

Class Descriptions:

Yoga for Health - Features a gentle form of yoga including stretching, breathing, relaxation, and meditation techniques.

Connect & Reflect with Music - An interactive and supportive music group, led by a Board-Certified Music Therapist, using music engagement and conversation to enhance well-being and encourage connectedness. No music experience is required.

Cooking for Optimal Health - Learn new recipes and different tips for preparing whole food plant-based meals. Participate in the comfort of your own kitchen or observe and ask questions.

NEW Yoga Nidra* - This is a guided meditation in the supine position to bring you into a state of deep rest. No prior experience with yoga or meditation is required. Starts November 22nd and will be held on the 4th Tuesday of every month.

Health Psychology Consultation

A licensed clinical psychologist will provide both evaluation and interventions to help with lifestyle change and address symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression via MyChart/Epic Zoom.

Nutrition Consultation

A registered dietitian provides personalized nutrition counseling and education to help patients manage side effects and reach their goals during and after cancer treatment. Education emphasizes a whole food, plant-based diet for optimal health via MyChart/Epic Zoom.

Yoga/Meditation Consultation

Yoga/meditation lowers stress, depression, and anxiety, improves sleep, memory, physical functioning, and overall quality of life, as well as increasing spiritual well-being. A yoga/meditation therapist would provide interventions via MyChart/Epic Zoom. Cost: \$50 per session.

Music Therapy

Individual music therapy is provided by a board-certified music therapist (MT-BC) and involves engaging in music interactively in a variety of ways, with outcomes including anxiety reduction, fostered well-being and exploring ways of reconnecting to music for daily quality of life. Cost: \$50 per session.

November 2022

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Yoga for Health 10:30 - 11:30	Cooking for Optimal Health Noon - 1:00 (2nd Tues) Connect & Reflect with Music 3:30 - 4:30 Yoga Nidra* 3:30-4:30 (4th Tues)	Yoga for Health 10:30-11:30	Connect & Reflect with Music 1:30-2:30	Yoga for Health 10:30-11:30

Whole-Grain Vegetable Pilaf

Total Time: 30 minutes

Serving: 6

Calories: 107 kcal

Author: Cindy Gershen

Website: <https://atthetable.mdanderson.org/recipe?id=644>



Ingredients:

- 1 cup cooked barley
- ½ cup cooked wheat berries
- 1 cup cooked bulgur (cracked) wheat
- ½ cup carrots, scrubbed and chopped
- ½ cup celery, chopped
- ½ cup onion, peeled and chopped
- ½ cup zucchini, chopped
- ½ cup bell pepper, ribs and seeds removed, chopped
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 tsp salt, or to taste
- 1 cup Vegetable broth (see recipe)

Instructions:

- Saute carrots, celery, and onion in oil until tender, about five minutes.
- Add zucchini and bell peppers cook additional three minutes, until tender and browned. Add grains and stock, lower heat to medium. Cook covered for five minutes, adjust seasoning and then turn off heat, and let sit until ready to serve.

