

# Newsletter

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## Yoga and Pranayama in Cancer Patients

Cancer patients who undergo treatments like Chemotherapy and Radiation usually experience many side effects. It is because of cytotoxic nature of these therapies. We come across many such patients in our Rasayu Cancer Clinic. We manage such patients with Rasayanas and also recommend dietary changes and lifestyle modifications. At the same time we advise patients to practice Yoga and Pranayama according to their Cancer type. A pilot study was conducted at our Rasayu Cancer Clinic to see the effects of Pranayama and Yoga on cancer associated symptoms and Quality of Life. The information given below is based on the feedback given by patients.

- 1) Subjects: Twenty patients taking treatments such as chemotherapy or radiation therapy.
- 2) Interventions: Patients were recommended to do certain Pranayama and Yoga for 30 days and for the duration of 45 minutes daily on empty stomach. The various Pranayamas & Yoga advised were as given below:

- Dirghashwasan
- Ujjai
- Nadishodhan Pranayama
- Bhramari
- Bhastrika
- Kapalbhathi
- Tadasana
- Pashchimottasana
- Shalabhasana
- Bhujangasana
- Shavasana

- 3) Outcome measures: Following symptom parameters were taken into consideration:

- Energy levels
- Appetite
- Nausea
- Disturbed sleep
- Anxiety
- Depression

(Symptom grades 0= No symptom, 1= Mild, 2= Moderate and 3 =Severe)

### Observations:

Out of 20 patients, 16 patients were included in the final analysis. The reason of exclusion for 4 patients was hospitalization and therefore they could not complete one month schedule

### Results:

Results were determined on the basis of symptoms that patient mentioned before starting Yoga and Pranayama and after practicing Yoga and Pranayama

**Table 1: Effect of Yoga Therapy**

Symptoms	Before	After
Energy levels	1	2
Appetite	1	2
Nausea	2	1
Disturbed sleep	2	2
Anxiety	3	2
Depression	3	2

(Before - Symptom grades 0= No symptom, 1= Mild, 2= Moderate and 3 =Severe)

(After - 0= No improvement, 1 = Slight improvement, 2 = Better improvement)

Related to Nausea:

The grade is 2 before which means moderate and after is 1 which means slight improvement

**Dr.Vrushali Pawar**

## What is Yoga?

Yoga is the union of body and mind. Yoga is a type of exercise in which you move your body into various positions in order to become more fit or flexible, to improve your breathing and to relax your mind. Yoga is a philosophy which first developed in India, in which physical exercises and meditation are believed to help people to become calmer and united in spirit with God.

Basic Yoga Practices consists of

1. Working with breathing (Pranayama)
2. Stretching exercises
3. Postures (Asanas)
4. Meditation.

### Need of Yoga and Pranayama in Cancer Patients:

Cancer affects both physical and psychological health of a patient. A cancer patient needs to maintain high moral and calm mind. Yoga and Pranayama are effective in dealing with the physical illness as well as mental health. Yoga when performed properly helps to stimulate every system of our body.

### How Yoga and Pranayama works in Cancer Patients:

In cancer patients many systems of the body are affected either due to the disease or due to the side effects of conventional treatment.

Yogic practices including Pranayama helps to stimulate nervous system, regulate digestive system and endocrine system and also strengthen the muscles and make joints flexible. They relax the mind and the body. Most importantly regular Yogic practices and Pranayama makes a cancer patient feel good and they cope up with the cancer effectively.

Most of the cancer patients undergo treatments like Radiotherapy and Chemotherapy which have side effects. Yoga and Pranayama helps to reduce these side effects such as pain, tiredness, sleep problems and depression. Yoga is a natural way to help individuals to relax and cope up with stress, anxiety and depression.

Yoga is helpful in getting back to moving around after cancer surgery.

At Rasayu Cancer Clinic many patients practice Yoga and Pranayama along with Ayurvedic medicines. The cumulative effect is "Better Quality of Life".

So practising Yoga and Pranayama is highly recommended for Cancer patients.

**Dr.Mrunal Satpute**

# Newsletter

## Cancer Stress and Yoga

Stress is a basic response to prepare the body for a physical activity in certain situations for fight or flight. Stress can cause and also aggravate cancer. Past history of many of cancer patients shows a chain of stressful life events that eventually led to cancer. The diagnosis and treatment of cancer can produce intra-physical and interactional stress.

### Types of Stress in Cancer Patients:

- Mental Stress: Fear of death, fear of procedures e.g. Chemo/ Radiation /Surgery
- Physical Stress: Caused by disease, caused by procedures

### Positive Impact of stress:

Stress opportunities (the impact) → Growth Enhancing Reaction → Strength → Resistance → Stress- opportunities (the impact)

### Negative Impact of stress:

Stress (the impact) → Stress Overload → Weakness → Vulnerability: Insecure people can be attacked physically and mentally → Stress (the impact)

### Human Levels as defined by Yoga

- Annamay Kosh (Somatic Phase) – Physical Body
- Pranamay Kosh (Psychosomatic Phase) – Vital Forces
- Manomay Kosh (Psychic Phase) – Psychic Self
- Vidnyanmay Kosh (Intellectual Phase) – Intellectual State
- Anandamay Kosh (Organic Phase) – Blissful State

### Effects of Stress on Koshas and Useful Yoga Practices

**Annamay Kosh:** Stress causes imbalance in endocrine and nervous system, high blood pressure, sweating, tremors, indigestion, cramps. Diet, Shuddhi kriyas, Asanas – Sukshma Vyaayaam and Relaxation techniques are useful in this condition.

**Pranamaya Kosh:** Stress causes imbalance in vital forces, imbalance on Ida and Pingala, palpitation, shallow or irregular breathing. Proper breathing techniques and methods to relax body and mind through conscious breathing are effective in this condition. These techniques include cleansing techniques like Kapalbhathi, Bhastrika, relaxing techniques like Nadishuddhi, Shitali, Sitkari, Sadanta, Bhramari, Chanting etc.

**Manomaya Kosh:** Stress causes emotional imbalance, anger, fear, greed, hatred, attachments. Yoga Improves mental and emotional balance, creates harmony and brings a sense of calm and peace. OM chanting, Yoga-nidra, Mind Sound Resonance Technique (MSRT), Mastering the Emotions Technique (MEMT) are very useful.

**Vidnyanmay Kosh:** Stress weakens Vidnyanmay kosh because of wrong notions, lack of knowledge and blind faith. Authentic counselling from genuine experts, books, Gurus, doctors and positive affirmations. Yoga works at the intellectual level and helps in acceptance of reality, getting rid of wrong beliefs and superstitions. It increases positive mental attitude

**Anandmay Kosh:** Stress has adverse effects on organs and can damage them. This can lead to health issues like ulcer, asthma, diabetes, heart disease and cancer. Yoga helps people to get blissful state. It nurtures the concept of being happy.

### In Cancer patients Yoga helps in:

- Prevention of disease progression
- Adjunct to Treatment
- Rehabilitation
- Improving outcome of terminal Cases
- Stress Management

### Role of Yoga in Cancer

Yoga therapy is recommended in all the following stages of Cancer.

- After Diagnosis: Yoga helps with the acceptance process of having cancer and providing strength to fight the disease
- Before Surgery: Yoga prepares the patient mentally, emotionally and physically
- After Surgery: Yoga helps with the rehabilitation through Pranayama and Sukshma Vyaayaam
- During / After Radiotherapy
- During / After Chemotherapy
- During Remission Period
- In Terminal Cases: Yoga helps with accepting the ultimate truth with equanimity, courage, stability and detachment

**Dr. Kshitija Jujam**

## Walking: An adjunct for Cancer Patients...

Walking for 15 minutes every day helps to reduce tiredness in cancer patients. JAMA Oncology, a renowned journal of New York University of Rochester Medical Centre has published a research proving that the tiredness which is most commonly seen in patients suffering from cancer can be better addressed with exercise as compared to medications.

The fatigue and tiredness experienced by cancer patients is much severe as compared to the tiredness caused by daily activities. The weakness experienced by them is so severe that minor movements of going to washroom without support, lifting the TV remote, lifting the morsel while eating food, even changing the position of one's body becomes extremely difficult in such patients. Due to this constant tiredness, the quality of life of the patient worsens as day to day activities of the patient are hampered.

Researchers insist that both the patients and the doctors should stress more on the importance of exercise and psychological wellbeing than medications to combat this tiredness of cancer patients. This research was conducted in 11525 cancer patients suffering from this type of tiredness and much better improvement was seen in patients doing regular exercise as compared to those on medications. The conclusion of this research was that as compared to consumption of coffee or resting or depending on medications, walking for 15 minutes have shown better results in reducing tiredness and improving quality of life in cancer patients.

**Dr. Pravin Gund**

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