

[IMAGE]

Yoga Offers Benefits for Breast Cancer Patients

Research has shown that yoga increases strength and flexibility, and helps to promote both physical and mental well-being. New evidence of yoga's benefits was recently put on display at the American Society of Clinical Oncology's annual meeting, where a study found that yoga could significantly improve the quality of life of breast cancer patients.

In this study, 61 women with breast cancer undergoing six weeks of radiation therapy were randomized to participate in a twice-weekly yoga program during or around the time of their radiation treatments, or to be put on a waiting list. (The control group also practiced yoga, but upon completion of radiation therapy). The yoga program emphasized loosening and breathing exercises, deep relaxation, meditation and postures, and excluded some positions that would be difficult for people with decreased range of motion.

Women who participated in the yoga sessions reported "significantly better" physical functioning scores in activities such as walking long distances, climbing stairs and lifting groceries. They also reported "significantly higher" overall health scores, and had lower levels of fatigue and less difficulty sleeping, than women in the waiting list group. To learn more about the physical and mental benefits associated with yoga and other forms of exercise, visit www.chiroweb.com/find/tellmeabout/sports.html.

Reference:

Cohen L, Chandwani K, Thornton B, et al. Randomized trial of yoga in women with breast cancer undergoing radiation treatment. Abstract #8505. Presented at the 42nd annual meeting of the American Society of Clinical Oncology, Atlanta, Ga., June 4, 2006.

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