

Inside Integrative Medicine

November 2021

**Integrative
Medicine Virtual
Group Classes
Now Available**

Yoga for Body and Mind Health

By Gabriel Lopez, MD, Smitha G. Mallaiah, MS, 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 to speed 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 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

Currently, 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 weekly group yoga class entitled Yoga for Health. This moderately active program features a gentle form of yoga including stretching, breathing, relaxation, and meditation. The classes are available for patients and caregivers. Participation in Yoga for Health does not require a referral and is offered multiple times a week as listed in this newsletter.

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.

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.

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

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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Yoga for Health 1:30	Cooking for Optimal Health Noon – 1:00 (2nd Tues)	Yoga for Health 10:30–11:30	Connect & Reflect with Music 1:30–2:30	Yoga for Health 10:30–11:30
Healing Through Writing 2:00–3:00 (2nd & 4th Mon)	Connect & Reflect with Music 1:30–2:30	Collage Studio 1:30–3:00 (1st & 3rd Wed)		Journaling Workshop 1:00–2:00 (1st & 3rd Fri)

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.

Collage Studio- offers the chance to play with color, shape, and composition while making personalized collages. In the Collage Studio, we'll be cutting, tearing, and gluing a variety of papers to create new images. Chance and surprise are the key ingredients.

Journaling Workshop- Journal writing can be a form of meditation, stress relief, and self-expression. Journeys is a guided journaling workshop for patients and caregivers to practice creativity and express themselves in a safe space.

Healing Through Writing- Using expressive writing as a tool to identify and process difficult emotions in a supportive environment.

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.

Pumpkin Corn Muffins

Total Time 40 minutes

Serving: 12 muffins

Calories: 476 kcal

Author: Cynthia Lair

Website: www.cookusinterruptus.com



Ingredients:

- 1 cup corn meal
- 1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
- 1 cup baked and pumpkin or sweet potato
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup milk (cow, almond, soy, hemp, etc)
- 1/2 cup melted butter, coconut oil or grape seed oil
- 1/4 cup maple syrup
- 2 eggs

Instructions:

1. Preheat oven to 350o F. Oil muffin tin or line with cupcake papers.
2. Combine cornmeal, flour, baking powder and salt together in a large bowl, and set aside.
3. Place pumpkin, milk, melted butter, and maple syrup into food processor or blender. Blend until smooth. Add eggs and pulse briefly.
4. Pour wet ingredients into bowl with dry ingredients. Mix together using fewest strokes possible, taking care not to over-mix. Batter should be thick but not dry. Stir in a little extra milk if needed.
5. Spoon batter into twelve muffin cups, dividing evenly.
6. Bake about 25-30 minutes until center of bread is firm.

