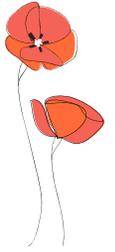




Peace - it does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble or hard work. It means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart.

-Unknown



Cultivate PEACE with

Yoga Therapy



Yoga Therapy is the adaptation of yoga practices for people with health challenges. Yoga therapists prescribe specific regimens of postures, breathing exercises, and relaxation techniques to suit your individual needs. They are uniquely qualified to help you minimize the negative side effects of cancer treatment.

No matter where you are on your cancer journey, the practice of yoga can be an asset to your healing process.

What is Yoga? The word "yoga" is a Sanskrit term which means "union." This refers to the union of the spirit, physical body and the mind. Yoga has evolved over thousands of years and now includes a wide range of styles and disciplines. Yoga practices include breath control, simple meditation, deep relaxation and mindful movement and postures.

What can I expect from a yoga therapist? Yoga therapists adapt traditional yoga practices to meet your individual needs. They are trained to accommodate treatment fatigue, nausea, anxiety, insomnia and surgery recovery.

Here is a list of the many benefits of yoga:

- Improved immune function; lower inflammatory response
- Improvement in ability to handle stress; a significant decrease in stress related symptoms
- Improvement in anxiety disorders
- Improvement in muscular tone, muscular strength, muscular endurance, and muscular flexibility; improvement in cardio-respiratory endurance and body composition; improvement in body awareness (kinesthetic awareness)
- Improvement in balance, coordination, and agility
- Increased energy
- Improvement in depression-related symptoms
- Decreased back pain; decreased neck pain
- Cessation of physical pain that had been chronic
- Greater ability to handle physical and/or emotional pain
- Mood improvement; decreased anxiety
- Improved self esteem and body image
- Improved ability to focus; enhanced creativity
- Better sleep; complete cessation of insomnia
- Weight loss
- Improvement in circulation and skin conditions
- Decrease in blood sugar levels





#1. Belly Breathing

Belly breathing can help relieve anxiety. Here's how it goes: as you inhale, gently encourage your belly to expand downward and outward. As you exhale, just let the belly soften. Repeat as necessary.

#2. Movement

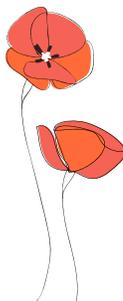
Almost any simple movement will help release tension and reduce stress hormones in the bloodstream. Below are a few simple movements.

- Shoulder rolls or elbow circles (hands on shoulders)
- Side stretches
- Standing forward bend – keep knees bent and belly engaged especially as you come up; release your head; don't go lower than you feel you can
- Lunge – hold onto something as you take one leg back behind you; keep the back heel off the floor; front knee bent; feel the front of the hip on your extended leg; keep your torso upright. Switch legs.

#3. The Twenty-Breath Meditation

This is a concentration practice. Concentration involves directing your awareness to one thing and holding it there. When the mind wanders away, just bring it back to the object of concentration without judgement.

Bring your awareness to the breath. Without changing the breath, notice all the different sensations of breathing. Begin counting your exhalations using your inner voice. With your first exhalation, your inner voice will say "one." With your next exhalation, it says "two." Keep going up to ten, then count backwards, ten to one. Remember that you're not changing your breath, just using it as an anchor for your awareness.



Michelle Stortz, C-IAYT, RYT500, MFA, is a certified yoga therapist specializing in yoga for cancer and chronic illness. She works in numerous medical settings in the Philadelphia area. Michelle also teaches mindful meditation and draws from the Theravadan Buddhist tradition as well as her training in the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction curriculum. www.MichelleStortz.com