

Yoga beneficial for women with breast cancer

Clinical Question	What are the effects of yoga on health-related quality of life, mental health and cancer-related symptoms among women with breast cancer?
Bottom Line	Moderate-quality evidence supported the recommendation of yoga as a supportive intervention for improving health-related quality of life and reducing fatigue and sleep disturbances when compared with no therapy, as well as for reducing depression, anxiety and fatigue, when compared with psychosocial/educational interventions. Very low-quality evidence suggested that yoga might be as effective as other exercise interventions and might be used as an alternative to other exercise programmes. No serious adverse events were reported. The yoga involved complex interventions incorporating breath control and/or meditation beyond physical yoga postures. The duration of yoga programmes ranged from two weeks to six months, with a median duration of eight weeks; the frequency of yoga interventions ranged from one to 10 (median: two) weekly yoga sessions of 20 to 120 (median: 67.5) minutes in length.
Caveat	The evidence reported is from women with non-metastatic breast cancer receiving active treatment (chemotherapy or radiotherapy) or who had completed treatment. No conclusions could be reached regarding women with diagnosed metastatic breast cancer or long-term (more than 5 years) cancer survivors.
Context	Breast cancer is the cancer most frequently diagnosed in women worldwide. Even though survival rates are continually increasing, breast cancer is often associated with long-term psychological distress, chronic pain, fatigue and impaired quality of life. Yoga comprises advice for an ethical lifestyle, spiritual practice, physical activity, breathing exercises and meditation. It is a complementary therapy that is commonly recommended for breast cancer-related impairments and has been shown to improve physical and mental health in people with different cancer types.
Cochrane Systematic Review	Kramer H et al. Yoga for improving health-related quality of life, mental health and cancer-related symptoms in women diagnosed with breast cancer. Cochrane Reviews, 2017, Issue 1. Art. No.: CD010802.DOI: 10.1002/14651858. CD010802.pub2. This review contains 24 studies involving 2,166 participants.
