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Yoga to Manage Sleep Disruption in Cancer Survivors

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Abstract – Between 15-90% of cancer patients and survivors report some form of insomnia or sleep quality impairment during and post-treatment, such as excessive daytime napping, difficulty falling asleep, difficulty staying asleep, and waking up too early. Insomnia and sleep quality impairment are among the most prevalent and distressing problems reported by cancer patients and survivors, and can be severe enough to increase cancer mortality. This article provides a systematic review of existing clinical research on the effectiveness of yoga for treating insomnia and sleep quality impairment among cancer patients and survivors.

Keywords: *Yoga, Sleep, Insomnia, Cancer, Survivorship, Exercise.*

INTRODUCTION:-

Between 15-90% of cancer patients and survivors report some form of sleep quality impairment both during and post-treatment, such as excessive daytime napping, difficulty falling asleep, difficulty staying asleep, and waking up too early.¹⁻¹⁰ These sleep quality impairments are also symptoms of insomnia, which is defined by one or more of these symptoms (e.g., difficulty falling asleep or difficulty staying asleep) in severe and persistent forms (3 or more days per week for one month or longer).¹¹ Insomnia and sleep quality impairment are among the most prevalent and distressing problems reported by cancer patients and survivors, and can increase the risk of cancer-related fatigue and depression, impair cancer-treatment adherence, physical function and quality of life, and, when severe, increase cancer mortality.^{12,13} Despite the ubiquity of insomnia Between 15-90% of cancer patients and survivors report some form of sleep quality impairment both during and post-treatment, such as excessive daytime napping, difficulty falling asleep, difficulty staying asleep, and waking up too early.¹⁻¹⁰ These sleep quality impairments are also symptoms of insomnia, which is defined by one or more of these symptoms (e.g., difficulty falling asleep or difficulty staying asleep) in severe and persistent forms (3 or more days per week for one month or longer).¹¹ Insomnia and sleep quality impairment are among the most prevalent and distressing problems reported by cancer patients and survivors, and can increase the risk of cancer-related fatigue and depression, impair cancer-treatment adherence, physical function and quality of life, and, when severe, increase cancer mortality.^{1-10,12,13} Despite the ubiquity of insomnia

YOGA FOR THE TREATMENT OF INSOMNIA AND SLEEP QUALITY IMPAIRMENT

The study suggests that yoga is helpful in treating depression, anxiety, fatigue and other conditions associated with sleep disorders among healthy individuals and those with cancer.¹⁴⁻¹⁶ Herein, we review the extant literature on yoga and its use in the treatment of sleep problems among cancer patients

It is estimated that 30% to 90% of patients with cancer experience impairment of sleep quality post-treatment, and such impairment can be severe enough to increase morbidity and mortality. Preliminary evidence indicates that yoga may improve sleep in cancer patients.

Yoga participants had significantly greater improvements in global sleep quality, subjective sleep quality, daytime dysfunction, wake after sleep onset, sleep efficiency, and medication use.

YOGA THEORY AND CLINICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Asana, pranayama, and meditation are core components of classical hatha yoga, which is part of the Indian Systems of Philosophy and closely related to Ayurveda, the traditional medical system of India. Restorative poses that use props such as blocks, bolsters, and blankets to facilitate total relaxation into a pose have evolved since the 1970s, most notably by the Iyengar style of yoga (a form of hatha yoga with an emphasis on detail, precision, and alignment in posture and breath control). The objective use of actigraphy as a clinical endpoint as well as a

standardized yoga intervention allow for more widespread generalization of trial results. While the authors identified posture, breath, and awareness as the unifying components in both hatha and restorative yoga, both the tempo of transitions and holding time also should be considered in future research.

Sleep problems and fatigue are among the most common problems experienced by cancer survivors, and can have a profound impact on quality of life. Sleep problems are very common during cancer treatment, but can persist even after treatment ends. In fact, 30 to 90 percent of cancer survivors report impaired sleep quality after treatment. Yoga is a mind-body practice and form of exercise that may improve sleep among cancer survivors.

CONCLUSION:

Impaired sleep quality is a concerning problem for many patients with cancer, and pharmacologic treatments come with many negative effects. Several small studies indicate that yoga improves persistent fatigue, sleep disturbance, anxiety, and quality of life, in addition to reducing the need for sleep medication. A systematic review and meta-analyses found reductions in distress, anxiety, depression, and fatigue, but the effects on sleep were small and not significant. The recent study provides the use of a standardized multimodal yoga intervention to improve sleep quality.

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