

Yoga for Cancer Patients

Yoga • Movement • Mind-body health • Patient-centered wellness

My role: Research • Content strategy • SEO • Writing

- Ghostwritten; published under client byline

At a glance: An evidence-based guide to yoga for people with cancer, covering potential benefits, appropriate styles, safety considerations, and ways to find classes. The piece translates medical research and expert guidance into practical, approachable information while emphasizing the importance of adapting yoga to individual needs, treatment, and energy levels.

A note on sourcing: I've retained the footnotes from the original draft to show how I research and source evidence-based health and wellness content. This is a component of all my work, even though I didn't preserve footnotes for most samples.

Below the excerpt, see [SEO elements](#) and [Sources](#).

Excerpt

The varied benefits of yoga make it a popular recommendation from cancer specialists.¹ Yoga is a mind-body practice that combines movement, breath and mindfulness.² It generally helps center and relax practitioners while improving strength and flexibility. Yoga has many different styles, making it customizable and approachable for anyone.

Beyond these general benefits, research shows that yoga can offer cancer-specific ones too. When used as a complementary therapy, it may help with symptoms and side effects.³ Benefits include less fatigue and pain, better sleep and improved quality of life.⁴ Studies also show yoga may significantly help with the mental and emotional toll of cancer.⁵

For example, a 2024 research review looked at 18 studies on yoga for people in cancer treatment. It found yoga effectively reduced fatigue, improved sleep quality and helped manage negative emotions.⁶ This is just one of many studies with similar findings.

¹ [Carlson 2023](#) "The next strongest recommendation is that yoga may be offered to people with cancer for both anxiety and depression symptom reduction across the treatment trajectory." and [NCCN fatigue recs](#) "Yoga has been found to reduce fatigue, improve sleep quality, and lessen anxiety and depression in people with cancer."

² [CRUK | Yoga](#) see full overview up top about yoga

³ [Hou 2024](#) "Yoga effectively reduced cancer-related fatigue, improved sleep quality, reduced anxiety and depression, and enhanced quality of life." <- quoted "Results" without data + equations [Agarwal 2018](#) "yoga interventions are beneficial in improving the adverse symptoms in cancer patients – caused either by the disease or its treatment."

⁴ [Agarwal 2018](#) "yoga interventions are beneficial in improving the adverse symptoms in cancer patients – caused either by the disease or its treatment."

⁵ [Carlson 2023](#) "The next strongest [second] recommendation is that yoga may be offered to people with cancer for both anxiety and depression symptom reduction across the treatment trajectory"

⁶ [Hou 2024](#) "Yoga effectively reduced cancer-related fatigue, improved sleep quality, reduced anxiety and depression, and enhanced quality of life."

Leading cancer groups recommend yoga as a supportive care option. Cancer groups include the American Society for Clinical Oncology (ASCO) and the Society for Integrative Oncology (SIO). Their 2023 guidelines recommend yoga to help ease various cancer symptoms.⁷

Despite what is often shown online, yoga has many styles and difficulty levels.⁸ Styles range from gentle and restorative practices to more active and vigorous ones. A cancer yoga program should be tailored to a patient's energy level, cancer stage and treatment plan.⁹

List of Potential Benefits of Yoga for Cancer Patients

- Better sleep quality¹⁰
- Greater balance, strength and flexibility¹¹
- Improved quality of life¹²
- Less fatigue and pain¹³
- Lowered stress levels¹⁴
- Reduced anxiety and depression¹⁵

⁷ [Carlson 2023](#) The next strongest [second] recommendation is that yoga may be offered to people with cancer for both anxiety and depression symptom reduction across the treatment trajectory."

⁸ <https://www.doyogawithme.com/blog/be-flexible-yoga>

⁹ [Rao 2017](#) "Although yoga is useful in improving fitness and health in both healthy and disease populations, caution is advised while dealing with cancer patients due to their disease condition and increased propensity for injury."

¹⁰ [Cohen 2004](#) "Patients in the TY group reported significantly lower sleep disturbance scores during follow-up compared with patients in the wait-list control group. This included better subjective sleep quality, faster sleep latency, longer sleep duration, and less use of sleep medications"

¹¹ [Bade 2015](#) ". Improved cancer-related fatigue, walking, balance," [Ortiz 2024](#) "Statistically significant improvements were observed for the 6-minute walk test (+35.68 m; p = 0.020), elbow-flexor strength (+7.44 kg; p < 0.001), dominant-hand grip strength" [McLaughlin 2024](#) "yoga intervention was acceptable and potentially beneficial with significant improvements and large effects observed over time in scores on measures of functional mobility ($\eta^2 = 0.29$), flexibility (η^2 s = 0.15 for right leg to 0.17 for left leg flexibility)"

¹² meta-analysis that found QOL improvements: [Hou 2024](#) "Yoga can... improve the quality of life of patients with breast cancer." [McLaughlin 2024](#) "significant improvements and large effects observed over time in scores on measures of functional mobility ($\eta^2 = 0.29$), flexibility (η^2 s = 0.15 for right leg to 0.17 for left leg flexibility), perceived stress ($\eta^2 = 0.17$), and selected quality of life and mindfulness domains (η^2 s = 0.12 for the **quality of life subscales of energy/fatigue to 0.149 for functional mobility**,"

QOL definition for the bullet: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/quality%20of%20life> "the degree to which a person or group is healthy, comfortable, and able to enjoy the activities of daily living"

¹³ [McLaughlin 2024](#) "significant improvements and large effects observed over time in scores on measures of functional mobility ($\eta^2 = 0.29$), flexibility (η^2 s = 0.15 for right leg to 0.17 for left leg flexibility), perceived stress ($\eta^2 = 0.17$), and selected quality of life and mindfulness domains (η^2 s = 0.12 for **the quality of life subscales of energy/fatigue to 0.149 for functional mobility**" /// "I've been feeling so much better, I'm not having as much back pain"

¹⁴ [Agarwal 2018](#) "Several studies have shown that yoga reduces **stress**, depression, and anxiety."

¹⁵ [Agarwal 2018](#) "Several studies have shown that yoga reduces stress, **depression, and anxiety**." Also ASCO/SIO guidelines highlight yoga specifically for depression + anxiety [Carlson 2023](#) "yoga may be offered to people with cancer for both anxiety and depression symptom reduction"

SEO Elements

Title Tag: Yoga for Cancer | Benefits & Best Tips for Patients

Meta Description: Research shows yoga may improve sleep, pain and quality of life for some cancer patients. Explore the potential benefits for people with cancer here.

Sources

- ASCO Daily News. [The Vital Role of Yoga Therapy in Oncology Care.](#)
- Bryl K, Whitley J, Lopez-Nieves I, Liou K, Chimonas S, Tortora S, et al. [Experiences and perceived benefits of remotely delivered dance/movement therapy for adult cancer patients: a multi-method program evaluation.](#) Support Care Cancer. 2024 May 27;32(6):388.
- Cancer Research UK. [Yoga and cancer.](#)
- Carlson LE, Ismaila N, Addington EL, Asher GN, Bradt J, Mehta A, et al. [Integrative oncology care of symptoms of anxiety and depression in adults with cancer: sio-asco guideline summary and q&a.](#) JCO Oncology Practice. 2023 Oct;19(10):847–51.
- Himalayan Yoga Institute. [Practicing Yoga – How Much is Too Much?](#)