

The Healing Effects of Laughter in Cancer Patients

Cancer is considered a killer disease. When someone is struck with cancer it leads to intense stress and fear.

How can laughter yoga help? Laughter Yoga as a physical intervention leads to real physiological and biochemical changes in our body that have a profound effect on the development of cancer.

Laughter yoga provides a non-intellectual path to laughter. Cancer patients may be in emotional turmoil and become depressed, making it difficult for them to achieve laughter through intellectual stimuli like humorous videos. Laughter yoga approaches laughter as a body exercise that can easily be done regardless of mood.

Laughter helps counter stress and fear. Hearty laughter causes the brain to release chemicals that reduce stress within minutes. It is typical to measure a 70% reduction in stress indicators after just 10 minutes of laughter.

Laughter promotes a positive outlook. Hearty laughter quickly counters depression and negative outlook, especially when practiced within a group of peers. This is partly due to chemicals released by the brain and partly caused by a powerful emotional response to the group dynamics of laughter yoga.

A positive mental state is very important when a person who is fighting a deadly disease like Cancer.

Laughter helps deal with pain. Hearty laughter causes the brain to release endorphin, a natural morphine that is also responsible for the 'runner's high'. A typical laughter yoga session can provide two hours of pain relief without drugs, making it easier for patients to retain full control of their mental abilities and keep their spirits high.

Laughter oxygenates the body. Ten minutes of hearty laughter leaves the body and all major organs super-oxygenized. Ongoing cancer research shows a strong relationship between oxygen in our cells and the development of cancer.

Nobel Prize winner (twice in the field of medicine) Dr Otto Warburg has shown the strong connection of oxygen in the cells to health. He says we fall sick due to lack of oxygen in our body cells. The lack of oxygen is due to poor breathing habits caused by stress and negative mind-set. This causes us to breathe shallow, irregular breaths and hold our breath when under stress.

Laughter yoga uses a combination of laughter exercises and yoga breathing to train our diaphragm and abdominal muscles to breathe deeply. This increases the net supply of oxygen to body cells and can play a significant role in preventing cancer by increasing oxygen levels in the body cells.

Laughter strengthens the immune system.

Medical studies around the world have shown that ten minutes of hearty laughter has a

sudden and dramatically powerful effect in strengthening the immune system. This is where Laughter Yoga can play an important role in bringing laughter from the body not from the mind. Laughter as a physical exercise helps to bring similar physiological and biochemical changes without involving the mind. This is much easier for most people to do laughter from the body, and still get the similar benefits.

There is no doubt that regular practice of laughter yoga will strongly influence whether a person develops cancer and has a very strong preventative action.

While I would never claim that laughter yoga can cure cancer, I am absolutely certain that it can help cancer patients in many ways and should be combined with other forms of treatment to provide cancer patients with the best quality of life and the best possible chance of survival.

Over the past 11 years many people with cancer have taken up laughter yoga. It has helped them to eliminate their depression and create a positive mental state, and has improved their quality of life. Many of these people beat their cancer, and some believe that laughter yoga played an important role in their success.

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