



Supporting Cancer Treatment Through Naturopathy And Yoga

WHAT ARE NATUROPATHY AND YOGA?

Naturopathy is a holistic approach to healthcare based on natural practices such as good nutrition and a healthy lifestyle to support the body's natural healing abilities. Yoga is popular today as a type of exercise, but it was originally developed as a practice to benefit the mind and spirit as well as the body.

Our Purpose

Our purpose is to be a global facilitator of health and wellness through access, education and advancement of Traditional & Complementary Medicine (T&CM). The World Health Organization (WHO) advises that lifestyle-related diseases (or non-communicable diseases) are responsible for more than 70% of deaths worldwide each year.

Knowledge represents empowerment. By sharing this evidence-based, peer-reviewed research, we aim to support everyday people to take ownership of their wellness, by making informed decisions and choices in conjunction with their health professional.

How This Study Could Help Support Your Cancer Treatment

Cancer is second only to cardiovascular disease as one of the world's leading causes of mortality, the WHO estimates cancer was responsible for one in six deaths globally in 2018. This randomised controlled trial investigated how naturopathy and yoga might support chemotherapy for cancer, and is titled:

EFFICACY OF YOGA AND NATUROPATHY AS AN ADJUVANT IN THE MANAGEMENT OF NON-HODGKIN'S LYMPHOMA.

You can read the full study here: <https://bit.ly/30MbApt>



Why Is This Study Important?

Non-Hodgkin lymphoma is a type of cancer that affects the lymphatic system, and white blood cells called lymphocytes. In some countries, including Australia, it is reported to be the fifth-most-common form of cancer. Conventional treatment options are often effective at curing the disease or slowing its development, however can also cause side effects such as nausea and fatigue.

Cancer patients report that these side effects, as well as the consequences of cancer on mental health, are often not addressed directly as part of standard care. This is part of the reason why, in Australia, an estimated two-thirds of cancer patients utilise “at least one form of complementary therapy during or after their cancer treatment.”

The authors of this study commented that “symptom management and quality of life are an essential part of survivorship”. For this reason, it is valuable to find evidence for modalities that can support the body's natural healing processes, which are weakened by conventional treatment.

Promoting psychological wellness is another important aspect of providing quality care, as research suggests depression may have a negative influence on the outcome of cancer treatment.

What Does This Mean For My Wellness?

In this study, after an initial 10-day inpatient program was concluded, the participants in the treatment group were provided with support materials and entrusted with taking ownership of their care. Follow-up naturopathic treatments were provided three weeks after each cycle of chemotherapy, but on the whole, the lifestyle adjustments adopted by the participants were their own responsibility.

Long-term improvements in mental wellbeing and quality of life were documented by the researchers using industry-standard diagnostic tools as well as purpose-designed questionnaires. These findings that suggest empowering cancer patients with options such as naturopathy and yoga, and encouraging them to take an active role in supporting their own treatment, can have ongoing benefits for quality of life.

The authors noted that their finding of increased haemoglobin levels in the treatment group was consistent with previous research that suggested both the consumption of fruits and vegetables and the practice of yoga may promote the production of new blood cells. Besides the benefit for people diagnosed with non-Hodgkin lymphoma, this may be useful information for those seeking options to boost their haemoglobin levels.

How Does This Relate to Naturopathy and Yoga?

Although it is often associated with prevention, naturopathy was not investigated in this study as a way of avoiding cancer, or as a way of directly treating the disease itself. Instead, the naturopathic therapies and yoga sessions were intended to introduce positive attitude and lifestyle changes, in order to reduce the impact of physical and psychological side effects of cancer treatment.

In 2019, researchers affiliated with the Indo-American Cancer Hospital and Research Centre in Hyderabad, India, published the results of a study exploring naturopathy and yoga as ways of supporting conventional chemotherapy for non-Hodgkin lymphoma.

The authors noted that modalities such as massage therapy and meditation had been previously researched in connection with cancer treatment. However, there was a lack of reliable evidence for the effectiveness of naturopathy as a way of supporting chemotherapy for this type of cancer.

The study involved 100 patients with early stage non-Hodgkin lymphoma, all undergoing chemotherapy. Half were randomly allocated to a treatment group, while the remainder were assigned to a control group.

The treatment group received naturopathic care which included mud pack treatments, hydrotherapy, massage and a vegetarian diet based on naturopathic principles. They were also instructed in yoga practices such as breathing exercises, physical poses and meditation techniques.

The control group received a standard diet and “psychosocial counselling”.

Key Findings About Naturopathy and Yoga to Support Cancer Treatment

- The researchers reported a statistically significant improvement in psychological wellbeing, including decreased depression, anxiety and distress scores, among participants undergoing naturopathy and yoga. The treatment group also reported a significant reduction in side effects of their cancer treatment and an improvement in quality of life.
- A statistically significant increase in haemoglobin levels was detected in the participants receiving naturopathy and yoga treatment, but no significant changes were noted with regard to other aspects of blood composition.
- The psychological benefits associated with naturopathy and yoga were reported to still be significant nine months after the commencement of treatment.

Disclaimer: The above does not constitute medical advice, and as with any exercise or wellness program, please consult your medical professional before commencing naturopathy and/or yoga to support your cancer treatment.

[International Journal of Health Sciences and Research](#) is an Indexed, peer-reviewed, refereed, open access international journal dedicated to promotion of research in health and allied sciences.

Quoted from journal description

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