



# Virtual Classes, Real Benefits

PAID PROMOTIONAL FEATURE

Cancer treatments like surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation involve travel to facilities. But what we do at home can amplify treatment's benefits and decrease its side effects.

A recent clinical trial shows that participants in virtual mind-body fitness classes reported less fatigue, less depression, and fewer physical symptoms related to cancer treatment, compared to people who did not take the classes. They also were less likely to be hospitalized, and those who were hospitalized had shorter stays.

The study, done at the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, tested a program called Integrative Medicine at Home (IM@Home). Delivered over Zoom, the program's 20+ live classes included movement-based activities like yoga and meditation-based practices like mindfulness.

The researchers were surprised to learn that IM@Home participants also had fewer visits to urgent care centers than people who did not participate.

This early-phase trial builds on past research, including one study in which yoga helped improve quality of life in men with prostate cancer, and another in which mindfulness meditation reduced depression in younger women with breast cancer.

The success of IM@Home shows that cancer patients can benefit from classes delivered virtually. The research was inspired by constraints resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, when many facilities converted their programs to virtual formats.

RBOI offers virtual support groups and guided meditation sessions in addition to in-person meetings. Give us a call to learn more.

## Groups for Women New to Treatment



RBOI's two new Women's Cancer Support groups invite those currently in cancer treatment or maintenance care, or who have recently completed care. We focus on making connections and encouraging each other in a supportive, positive environment.

The Lecanto group meets on the first Thursday of each month from 2-3 PM at 522 N Lecanto Hwy. Wendy Hall, LCSW, facilitates. For more information call 352-527-0106 or email [whall@rboi.com](mailto:whall@rboi.com).

The Ocala group meets on the second Thursday of each month from 2-3 PM at 2020 SE 17th St. Amy Roberts, LCSW, facilitates. For more information call 352-732-0277 or email [aroberts@rboi.com](mailto:aroberts@rboi.com).

Please call ahead to confirm attendance.

### by the numbers

## 1 to 2

Turn computer and phone screens off 1-2 hours before bed for better sleep.

## 111,174

Estimated deaths per year that could be prevented if US adults (aged 40 to 85 years or older) added 10 minutes a day of moderate-to-vigorous physical activity

## 1 in 9

Cases of depression that could be prevented if adults did 150 minutes of physical activity per week

## 20 and 3

Writing in a journal for as little as 20 minutes a month for 3 months can benefit physical and emotional health.

## Healthy Brain, Healthy Body

"Our brain does everything that's important to our functioning," says Wendy Hall, LCSW. Hall outlines five ways to maintain a healthy brain:

- 1.** Be socially active, whether in person or remotely.
- 2.** Stay mentally stimulated with activities like puzzles and reading, or with hobbies that involve hand-eye coordination, like knitting and woodworking.
- 3.** Get enough sleep, which benefits both our mood and our reasoning ability. The National Institutes of Health found that volunteers who slept 8 hours outperformed those who slept only 6 or 7 hours when it came to learning a task.
- 4.** Stay well-nourished with healthy eating habits. Eva Selhub, MD, at Harvard Health writes, "[W]hat you eat directly affects the structure and function of your brain and, ultimately, your mood."
- 5.** Exercise is the most important way to maintain a healthy brain. "It can be daily walking," Hall says. "Whatever we can start out with, whatever kind of exercise, is what we should do."

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