

Nourish to Flourish

Integrative Medical Group Visit Programs for Post-Acute Sequelae of COVID-19

Welcome to Integrative Medicine Group Visits!

We are thrilled that you have joined us on this journey – one that will take you one step closer to wellness and provide you with lifelong tools of self-care. As you know all too well, long COVID and other illnesses take a toll on one's quality of life and one's ability to work, play, and do routine activities. Medication may help some, but often it does not give the relief or wellness that you may need or want. That is why we are working towards finding more safe and effective ways of treating these chronic conditions.

As you will learn in the coming sessions, this model of care is based around the principles and skills of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MSBR) and integrative medicine, a model of care which incorporates both traditional western medicine such as medications with proven and safe holistic models of care such as meditation, yoga, massage, acupuncture, and nutrition. You will be taught many tools here and will be given suggested practices to do at home.

By being in the ***Integrative Medicine Group Visits***, you have the chance to make a difference in the quality of your life. Although we cannot guarantee the result of all of the healing practices for you, we sincerely hope and believe it can be helpful for you. For you to receive the greatest possible benefit, we encourage you to commit yourself to coming to all the groups, practicing the tools at home, and filling out all the surveys. Your commitment to these groups can also make a difference in the lives of others as you help further research about Post-Acute Sequelae of COVID. Thank you again for the time and energy you are committing to Integrative Medicine Group Visits.

Please feel free to contact the Group Visit Coordinator, Gracia Mbiya Kayembe, at graciak@live.unc.edu, with any questions or concerns. If you are unable to attend group, call 984-974-9747 to cancel your visit. If you have questions related to your health and Post-acute Sequelae of COVID, you can call this same number and ask to talk to Ashlye Thorpe, Nurse Coordinator of the COVID Recovery Clinic. If you have a medical emergency, call 911.

Thank you in advance for your participation,

Gracia Mbiya Kayembe
Group Visit Coordinator

Yoko Morris
Integrative Medicine Group Visit Co-facilitator

Jessica Barnhill, MD
Integrative Medicine Group Visit Co-facilitator

Malik Tiedt
Research Assistant

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Week 1: Introduction to the Integrative Medical Group Visit

Daily Agenda

- Meet our facilitators
- Group overview
- Discussion on confidentiality
- Discussion on ground rules
- Introduce additional resources and the website
- Introduce the weekly medical check-in
- Introduce Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)
- Introduce Integrative Medical Group Visits (IMGV)
- Meet the group (individual introductions)
 - » What brought you to the group?
- Rolling Breathing Technique
- Break
- Introduction to meditation
 - » Grounding and Arriving Meditation
- Group discussion
 - » What do you want to cover in the group?
- Orientation to home practice assignments
- Poem
- One-on-one check-in meetings

Guidelines for Class Ground Rules

- Please arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of class.
- If you must miss a class, please cancel 24 hours in advance (to avoid being charged a co-pay)
- If you have last-minute absence or be late, please call the Group Visit Coordinator at 919-445-6109
- Maintain confidentiality by not repeating or discussing what is said in class with people who are not participating in the class.
- You are welcome to exchange contact information with other people in the group visit. We expect that you will respect each other's boundaries around type and frequency of contact outside of the group.
- Avoid taking notes during class; trust yourself to remember what's important. Copies of important documents are in your manual.
- If you're having trouble hearing what's being said, please ask the speaker to speak up.
- Please keep yourself on mute when not speaking, silence your watch, and turn off your cell phone.
- Making yourself as comfortable as possible is essential. Take off your shoes; find a comfortable place to sit. Please dress comfortably, in clothes that you can move in.

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- Use your own good sense for bathroom/medication needs as there will not always be scheduled breaks.
- Self-care is central to our practice. If something doesn't feel right for you, ease off, and feel free to speak with the facilitators of your group or the leaders of the session about any problems or questions that may arise.
- During class discussions, please do your best to listen with full attention.
- Please refrain from giving advice to other people in the class. You can speak about your own experience and what has worked for you.
- If the group is cancelled due to weather or emergency we will contact you.

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)

What is Mindfulness?

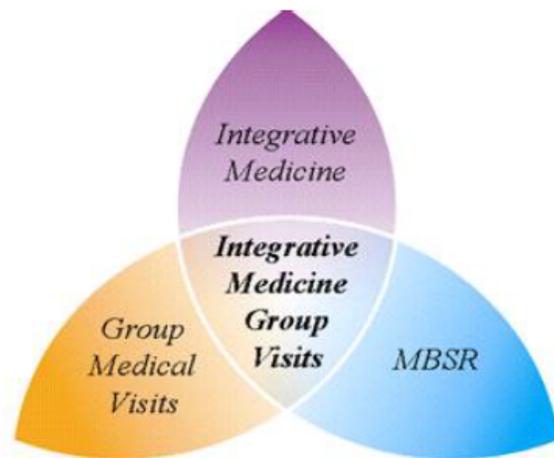
- Mindfulness means paying attention in a particular way: on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally. Practicing mindfulness can help us begin to develop a sense of curiosity and patience with our experiences, whether positive or negative. This is fundamental, since the present moment is the only time anyone has to learn, grow, and change (Kabat-Zinn, J., 1990).

What is Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)?

- MBSR is a formal eight-week program that was created by Jon Kabat-Zinn in 1979 and is in many hospitals around the country, and many more around the world. This program supports people with anxiety, depression, chronic pain, stress, and other medical conditions.
- We will learn about stress and explore our own physical, mental, and emotional patterns of behavior. We will also learn more mindful ways to communicate, and how to choose nourishing foods, behaviors and activities.

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What are the potential benefits of meditation?

- Increased concentration
- Some people report experiencing a quieter mind, sense of balance, and enhanced well-being
- New ways to cope more effectively with our own conditions, like: pain, depression, and low energy
- Learn how to take better care of ourselves
- Many benefits of MSBR have been suggested by research, like: a reduction in pain, lowered blood pressure, and an improvement in mood and energy levels

What are Integrative Medicine Group Visits?

- The Integrative Medicine Group Visits (IMGVs) program is a 8-week clinical program that combines Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction with health education and integrative medicine therapies. The Nourish to Flourish Program has been adapted from the 'Our Whole Lives' curriculum for patients with chronic pain and depression developed at the Program for Integrative Medicine and Health Disparities, Department of Family Medicine, Boston Medical Center.

Introduction to Home Practice

Home practice is the opportunity to practice what you have learned in our weekly groups. Consistently practicing the tools that you learn in this program will help you add mindfulness and healthy living into your daily life. The IMGV website, "[Nourish to Flourish](#)" can help you practice and review topics. Positive changes in your health and well-being will happen when you commit to practicing the tools you learn for at least 30 minutes every day.

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- » **Mind-Body Practice**
 - For the upcoming sessions, this section will include reminders for daily meditations, yoga, and other mind-body activities.
- » **Daily Life Practice**
 - For upcoming sessions, the “daily life practice” section will include suggestions of what you can do in your everyday life to continue the lessons you learn each week.
- » **Manual Activity**
 - This section will have links to worksheets to help you with certain topics each week.
- » **Health Topic Video**
 - You will find reminders to watch videos on the website here. These videos are about 5 minutes and highlight the topics you talked about in group.

Home Practice for Next Week

Daily Life Practice

- Tell people in your life that you are doing this course.
- Notice how the weather affects your thoughts, sensation and emotions this week.
- Dedicate a quiet and comfortable space in your home for the home practice each week.