

Nourish to Flourish

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

Week 6: Movement as Medicine

In this session, we will hold space to discuss current COVID-related information, revisit nutrition concepts, and introduce the group to helpful mind-body approaches such as yoga.

Daily Agenda

- Grounding meditation
- Check-in
- Discussion: Mind-body approaches for life management
- Discussion: Introduction to yoga
- Activity: Yoga practice
- Loving Kindness Meditation
- Recipe
- Poem
- Home practice

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Mind-Body Approaches for Life Management

Acupuncture

- Acupuncture is a treatment based on Chinese medicine -- a system of healing that dates back thousands of years. At the core of Chinese medicine is the notion that a type of life force, or energy, known as qi (pronounced "chee") flows through energy pathways (meridians) in the body. Research shows that acupuncture can be an effective part of a treatment plan for several illnesses and conditions including low-back pain, osteoarthritis, high blood pressure, depression, and anxiety.
(<http://umm.edu/health/medical/altmed/treatment/acupuncture#ixzz2roiREc00>)
- Literature review, acupuncture for COVID

Meditation

- Mindfulness meditation is a practice where one focuses their attention on their thoughts and sensations, approaching from a place of non-judgment. Among its many benefits, meditation can reduce stress hormone levels and can reduce many symptoms including pain, anxiety, insomnia, panic disorders, high blood pressure and diabetes.
(<http://umm.edu/health/medical/altmed/treatment/relaxation-techniques>)

Massage

- Massage is a general term for pressing, rubbing and manipulating your skin, muscles, tendons and ligaments. Research has shown that massage may be beneficial for a range of conditions including anxiety, and stress-related insomnia.
(www.mayoclinic.org)

Tai chi

- Tai chi is an ancient Chinese involving a series of movements performed in a slow, focused manner, accompanied by deep breathing. This graceful form of movement puts very little stress on joints and muscles. It is shown to be very effective for stress management.
(www.mayoclinic.org)

Yoga

- Yoga is a mind-body practice that combines stretching exercises, controlled breathing and relaxation. Yoga can help reduce stress, lower blood pressure and improve heart function. It can also enhance your mood and overall sense of well-being, as well as increase balance, flexibility, range of motion and strength.
(www.mayoclinic.org)

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Introduction to Yoga

Yoga is a practice that unites the mind, body and spirit through a series of breathing exercises and holding various postures. There are many different styles of yoga (hatha, restorative, yin, power) and ways to adapt postures for everyone. The core components of yoga can be separated into three parts:

- » **Meditation and Relaxation:** Meditation and mindfulness practices can be incorporated into yoga to help you become more aware of the present moment.
- » **Breathing:** Controlling your breath is an important part of yoga because it can help you control your body, quiet your mind, and become in tune with your emotions.
- » **Poses:** Yoga poses (postures) are movements designed to increase strength and flexibility. Both simple and more physically demanding poses can be therapeutic and are associated with various health benefits. Today, we will focus on simple poses that can be done in a chair.

Health Benefits of Yoga

- Yoga can be beneficial for people of all ages and physical abilities. Talking with a yoga teacher or yoga therapist about your preferences can help you choose a class that is best for your health. Consistent, appropriate yoga practice can
 - Improve strength, balance, and flexibility
 - Relieve back pain
 - Ease arthritis symptoms
 - Benefit heart health
 - Improve sleep patterns
 - Improve energy levels and mood
 - Manage stress
 - Connect you with a community of support.

(<https://www.hopkinsmedicine.org/health/wellness-and-prevention/9-benefits-of-yoga>)

Like with any new physical activity, listen to your body and be mindful of what postures make the most sense for you. Be on the lookout for any sharp pains- discomfort from muscle engagement is ok, but come out of the posture if anything is painful. Feel free to modify and make the postures work for you.

Loving Kindness Meditation (see last week)

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Recipe: Curried Greens with Lentils and Brown Rice

This dish is filled with plant-based protein, fiber, and calcium to keep your body strong and healthy!

Ingredients

- 2 cups of dried brown lentils
- 2 cups of cooked brown rice
- 2 bunches of kale, chard, spinach, or collard greens
- 1 tablespoon olive oil or coconut oil
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- 1 large carrot, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ½ teaspoon salt



Instructions

1. Making the brown rice: bring 4 cups of water to boil; add 2 cups rice. Bring to a boil again, lower heat and simmer for about 45 minutes, or until rice is tender.
2. In a medium sauce pan, bring 4 ½ cups salted water to a boil. Add 2 cups brown lentils, cover, and reduce heat. Simmer covered for about 20 to 25 minutes, until most of the water has been absorbed.
3. Meanwhile, wash the greens, remove the tough stems, and chop them into ribbons.
4. In a large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon olive oil (or coconut oil) over medium high heat. Add the yellow onion and garlic and sauté until tender, about 3 minutes. Add the tomato paste, curry powder, and diced carrot. Sauté until tender, about 3-5 minutes. Add the greens and sauté for several minutes until tender and bright green.
 - TIP: Only cook greens until they are bright green; this keeps them in the most flavorful and nutrient-dense form.
5. When the lentils are done, add them to the skillet with the greens. Over medium high heat, stir in. Taste, and add additional seasonings as desired.
6. Serve over cooked brown rice.

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Poem and Quote

The Guest House

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.
Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.
The dark thought, the shame, the malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.
Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

-Rumi, Translation by Coleman Barks

“If you are moved to such a degree that you feel the pain,
and that you can feel the tears running down your face,
then you’re looking at an opportunity to make a change,
to make a difference in the world.”

-John Francis (African American environmentalist/founder and author of Planet Walker)

Home Practice

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Mind-Body Practice

- Practice the Tree Roots or Loving Kindness meditation 6 out of 7 days this week.
- Practice chair yoga every other day this week.

Daily Life Practice

- Focus on how the mindfulness you foster during yoga and meditation can be applied to your daily activities.

Helpful Resources

- The Nourish to Flourish website (<https://tarheels.live/imgvforpasc/week-6/>) is heavy in additional materials this week including:
 - COVID-related information about vaccinations and the delta variant.
 - Yoga poses that can be helpful for self-practice.
 - Nutrition information for COVID and recovery