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# YOCAS<sup>®</sup> Yoga, Symptom Burden, and Symptom Interference with Work and Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) in Cancer Survivors: A Nationwide Multicentered Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) in the United States

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**Introduction:** Cancer survivors experience many symptoms years after treatment. This overall symptom burden interferes significantly with the ability to work and perform activities of daily living (ADLs). Yoga, a form of exercise, is a promising therapy to mitigate these symptoms.

**Methods:** We conducted a nationwide, multicenter, phase III, RCT testing the effect of Yoga for Cancer Survivors (YOCAS<sup>®</sup>) on overall symptom burden (OSB) and OSB interference (OSBi) with work and ADLs. Cancer survivors, 2-24 months posttreatment were recruited via the University of Rochester Cancer Center (URCC) National Cancer Institute Community Oncology Research Program (NCORP) Research Base across the United States. Survivors were randomized to the YOCAS<sup>®</sup> yoga intervention (10-15 survivors/group; 75 minutes/session; 2x/week; 4 weeks; gentle Hatha and Restorative) or usual care. OSB and OSBi with work and ADLs were assessed at baseline and post intervention, using a Clinical Symptom Inventory.

**Results:** A total of 410 cancer survivors; 96% female, mean age 54 years, 75% breast cancer survivors were recruited. Mixed effects modeling demonstrated that YOCAS<sup>®</sup> participants experienced a significant reduction in OSB compared to usual care participants (mean change difference [MCD]-5.64, SE=1.16,  $p<0.05$ ) from pre- to post-intervention. YOCAS<sup>®</sup> participants reported significant reductions in OSB from pre- to post-intervention (mean change [MC]-6.64, SE=0.93,  $p<0.05$ ), while usual care participants did not (MC-0.96, SE=0.87,  $p>0.05$ ). YOCAS<sup>®</sup> participants also experienced significant reductions in OSBi with work (MCD-0.86, SE=0.23,  $p<0.05$ ) and ADLs (MCD-1.01, SE=0.22,  $p<0.05$ ) compared to usual care participants. YOCAS<sup>®</sup> participants reported significant reductions in OSBi with work (MC-0.97, SE=0.19,  $p<0.05$ ) and ADLs (MC-1.02, SE=0.19,  $p<0.05$ ), pre- to post-intervention, while usual care participants did not (work MC-0.04, SE=0.18; and ADLs MC=0.21, SE=0.18, all  $p>0.05$ ).

**Conclusion:** YOCAS<sup>®</sup> yoga is effective for reducing OSB and OSBi with work and ADLs among cancer survivors. Further research is needed to confirm these results.

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## Keywords

symptom burden, activities of daily living, cancer survivors, yoga

## Conflict of Interest & Ethical Approval

yes

## Abstract submitters declaration

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