



THE ROLE OF ONLINE YOGA IN ONCOLOGY CARE: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF ITS BENEFITS AND LIMITATIONS



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Introduction. Cancer patients often experience physical and psychological side effects, such as pain, anxiety, depression, and sleep disturbances, which significantly impact their quality of life (QoL). Non-pharmacological interventions, including yoga, have gained recognition for their potential to alleviate these symptoms. However, barriers due to cancer itself, transportation difficulties, and demanding schedules may limit access to in-person sessions.

Methods. This systematic review explores the effectiveness of online yoga as a complementary therapy for cancer patients, filling a gap in existing literature. The systematic search was conducted across Medline, PsycINFO, and Scopus databases, including studies published up to October 24, 2024, using the following search string: "yoga" AND ("online" OR "web-based" OR "remote") AND ("cancer" OR "tumor" OR "oncology"). Studies included adult cancer patients participating in online yoga interventions. Only articles in English were considered. Methodological quality was assessed using the CASP and MMAT checklists.

References

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Results. 14 studies met the inclusion criteria, comprising ten quantitative and four qualitative studies. The findings suggest that **online yoga reduces stress and improves sleep quality. Moderate effects were observed for anxiety, depression, and fatigue.** However, no significant impact was noted on pain management. Qualitative studies highlighted additional benefits, such as enhanced emotional well-being and a sense of community despite the remote format. Variability in intervention protocols, session duration and frequency, posed challenges to drawing definitive conclusions.



Conclusions. Online yoga appears to be a feasible and accessible intervention for cancer patients, particularly for managing psychological distress and improving sleep. While its effect on pain remains inconclusive, the results support its role as a complementary approach in oncology care. With its flexibility and potential for wide reach, online yoga holds promise as an innovative tool to enhance cancer patients' overall well-being. Further research with standardized protocols and larger sample sizes is needed to strengthen evidence and optimize delivery.