

Special yoga classes aimed at breast cancer survivors improves recovery

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University of Alberta research fellow Amy Speed-Andrews has examined how a specialized Iyengar yoga program for women currently in treatment for breast cancer, and who have completed treatment, makes a difference in their recovery.

For two years groups of study participants were asked to fill out a questionnaire about their physical and mental health at the beginning of a 10-week session of Iyengar yoga and again at the end. After analyzing the data that was collected Speed-Andrews, from the Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, found that after the yoga 94 per cent said they had improvements in their quality of life; 88 per cent felt better physically; 87 per cent reported being happier and 80 per cent were less tired. Other improvements were reported in body image and in decreased levels of stress, anxiety and depression. This is significant, considering breast cancer treatments often leave women in pain, immobilized, tired and depressed.

Speed-Andrews is available to talk about her research that was recently published in the journal *Cancer Nursing*. She plans to add an additional component to her research once the next session of Iyengar yoga classes begin this September and wants to examine how Iyengar yoga affects these women's joint range of motion, upper body strength and balance. Speed-Andrews also hopes one day to study how this type of [yoga](#) might benefit [women](#) with advanced-stage [breast cancer](#).

Provided by University of Alberta

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