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'Mindfulness' stress reduction helps breast cancer survivors

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(HealthDay) -- A mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) program provides significant and lasting improvements in mood, breast- and endocrine-related quality of life, and well-being, according to research published online March 19 in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*.

In an effort to compare the effects of an eight-week MBSR program with standard care on mood, breast- and endocrine-specific quality of life, and well-being, Caroline J. Hoffman, Ph.D., of The Haven in London, and colleagues conducted a randomized controlled trial involving 229 women with stage 0 to III breast cancer who had undergone surgery, chemotherapy, and radiotherapy treatments.

The participants were evaluated using the Prolife of Mood States total

mood disturbance and its subscales; Functional Assessment of Cancer Therapy-Breast; Functional Assessment of Cancer Therapy-Endocrine Symptoms; and the World Health Organization five-item well-being questionnaire. The researchers found that, at eight and 12 weeks, compared with standard care, women in the MBSR group experienced mostly statistically significant improvements in mood, breast- and endocrine-related quality of life, and well-being.

"To our knowledge, this study was the largest adequately powered trial to date that tested the effects of the MBSR program in women with stage 0 to III breast cancer," the authors write. "Important findings from this study included statistically significant improvements after MBSR compared with those of controls in overall mood, anxiety, depression, anger, vigor, fatigue, and confusion; breast- and endocrine-related quality of life; emotional, physical, social, and role functional well-being; and general well-being."

More information: Abstract
Full Text (subscription or payment may be required)

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