Yoga Benefits Prostate Cancer Patients By Reducing Radiation Treatment Side Effects - Dr. David Samadi

Dr. David Samadi gives his opinion on a recent study showing men undergoing radiation treatment for prostate cancer who practiced yoga had an improvement in fatigue, sexual and urinary function over men who did not participate in a structure yoga intervention.

New York, New York (PRWEB) April 25, 2017 -- Men who are undergoing cancer radiation treatment may need to strongly consider taking up yoga as a means of reducing common side effects associated with that treatment. This is according to new research led by scientists at the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania. This study found that men with prostate cancer and undergoing radiation treatment who practiced yoga twice a week had significant reduction in common side effects of radiation which include radiation therapy fatigue, urinary and sexual dysfunction.

“This is a very interesting and exciting study and one that can be of tremendous hope and benefit to any man who is being treated for prostate cancer with radiation,” stated Dr. David Samadi. “Yoga is a perfect exercise for most people, whether they have cancer or not. I would highly endorse and have no problem recommending any man wanting to reduce side effects from treatment for prostate cancer to look into taking up yoga as a very safe and practical way of doing so.”

The study enrolled 50 men with prostate cancer who had undergone between six and nine weeks of external beam radiation therapy. The patients were divided into two groups. One group of 22 men practice yoga twice a week and the control group made up of 28 men did not practice yoga. Patients excluded from the study were any who had a previous history of practicing yoga as well as patients who had previously undergone radiation therapy or those with metastatic disease.

Men in the yoga group attended yoga sessions lasting 75 minutes in which they performed breathing and centering poses. Each class ended with a common yoga position of total relaxation called Savasana.

Researchers evaluated three different parameters in patients who performed the yoga sessions of fatigue, sexual, and urinary function. To evaluate fatigue, patients filled out a nine-item questionnaire before and during the yoga sessions.

“When the patients started the study and taking yoga sessions, their fatigue was considered low,” said Dr. Samadi. “What was interesting was that the men practicing yoga had no change in their fatigue level but the men in the control group did show an increase in their level of fatigue. Usually a patient’s fatigue heightens around the fourth or fifth week of radiation treatment but this was not observed in the yoga group. That means men who experience less fatigue are more likely to continue leading a normal work and social life even while going through radiation therapy.”

Dr. Samadi went on to add, “Another discouraging side effect for men undergoing radiation treatment is erectile dysfunction with up to 85% of men having this during treatment.”

Each patient’s sexual function was evaluated by the International Index of Erectile Function (IIEF) questionnaire with a score range of 0-25. If the score falls below 12, this identifies erectile dysfunction while any score above 21 indicates normal sexual functioning. At baseline, each group reported a score of 11.
“Here again, the men in the yoga group’s score remained almost the same as in the baseline but the men who did not practice yoga, saw their score decrease during the course of treatment,” exclaimed Dr. Samadi. “Urinary functioning also improved among the patients in the yoga group. Having strong pelvic floor muscles are necessary for good urinary function and yoga is known for having a positive effect on that.”

“I would have no problem with any man who wants to and is capable of practicing yoga during cancer treatment to do so,” said Dr. Samadi. “The more we can get men to engage in activities such as yoga during prostate cancer treatment, the greater chance of them maintaining energy levels along with sexual and urinary functioning leading to a better quality of life for them during a difficult time.”

Patients newly diagnosed with prostate cancer can contact world renowned prostate cancer surgeon and urologic oncologist, Dr. David Samadi, for a free phone consultation and to learn more about prostate cancer risk, call 212-365-5000.
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