



LIFESTYLE

Acupuncture eases cancer-related fatigue



ACUPUNCTURE MAY HELP relieve fatigue in women who have had breast cancer, as well as easing anxiety, depression and quality of life, according to a UK study.

For the research, which appeared in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*, Alexander Molassiotis from the University of Manchester and his colleagues tracked 227 women with moderate or severe cancer-related fatigue treated with six weekly acupuncture sessions and another 75 fatigued women who didn't get acupuncture.

The women had all received chemotherapy for breast cancer in the five years before the study, and most had felt

chronically tired for a year or more. After six weeks, general fatigue had dropped by almost four point on a 0-20 scale among women who had acupuncture, compared to a less than one point decline in the comparison group. "Acupuncture is an effective intervention for managing the symptom of chemo-related

fatigue and improving patients' quality of life," wrote Molassiotis and his colleagues.

The improvement was "mild to moderate," according to Amit OVRSood at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota - not enough to allow someone who is stuck in bed to start walking, but maybe enough to get people who

are too tired to exercise to start doing some activity.

Anxiety and depression scores, measured from 0 to 21, dropped by two additional points post-acupuncture, compared to scores in women given educational materials only. Emotional and physical well-being got a greater boost with acupuncture therapy as well.

An editorial says close to one-third of cancer patients have persistent fatigue that may continue for years after treatment. Doctors typically encourage moderate exercise and talk therapy.

Carol Enderlin, at the University of Arkansas said acupuncture may help as an add-on. She recommended "maintaining activity to tolerance, unless there are other problems with that, good nutrition, getting adequate sleep, and if the fatigue continues, considering there might be an alternative that complements those things." *Reuters*

ALIGN YOUR LIFE

Garden fun

AS THE WEATHER gets better in the UAE, most of us are spending more and more time outdoors. The smell of shisha and barbecue is in the air on a daily basis. People are hurrying to buy a variety of garden furniture and rushing to gardeners for seasonal plants and flowers. By following some simple principles of feng shui, you can make your garden bloom and enhance the good energy in your outdoor area.

The rule of thumb is to always buy plants and trees that grow upwards as it signifies growth. Your garden should be rendered the same treatment as your home. Clean all the dead leaves from the garden, keep your patio clean, stow away all cleaning and gardening equipment in outdoor storage and avoid clutter in your garden. Clear out clogged drains and repair any leakage, as it affects your wealth energy flow. Planting tall trees closer to your backyard door will block the natural light. Therefore plant them to create a boundary wall around your home.

Replace all broken pots, along with any damaged tiles in your backyard. A small pond or a water feature can enhance the energy movement in your garden. If you do have a pond, ensure it is cleaned regularly to avoid energy stagnation. It is highly recommended to have pole lights around your garden to rotate light within your backyard. Garden furniture should be proportionate to your garden size. Avoid placing too many chairs or lounges near your backyard door. Buy simple furniture with regular shape. Avoid any furniture with sharp edges.

If you have any unpleasant sight opposite your garden, place a convex mirror on the outer wall of the garden to deflect the energy away from your garden. Any sharp angles facing your garden or tall buildings overlooking into your backyard can be dealt with by planting tall trees to block the unwanted exposure and energy. Creating a small herb garden will help in creating a soothing aroma and nourish your health and senses at the same time.

Plant lavender, rosemary, basil, mint and oregano and see the energy transform instantly. Select seasonal colourful flowers to enhance yang energy in your outdoor space. If you need to place some slides or swings for children, keep them away from the backyard door to segregate yin and yang energy. Pick plants that grow upwards, are lusciously green and diverse to give your garden a balanced look. Remember, a little effort can help you to transform your garden from a cluttered dump to a blooming haven.

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Parivrtta Trikonasana - Revolve Triangle pose

THIS POSTURE WILL help to get rid of lower back pain and it will help to transfer the vital force towards the heart.

Parivrtta Trikonasana (or Revolved Triangle) is one of the more challenging poses, for beginners and more experienced students alike. This is perhaps because the pose works on many levels - as well as a strong standing pose, it is also a twist and a balance.

But the rewards are worth it, and include strengthening and stretching the legs and back, improving balance and opening the chest.

TECHNIQUE

- Begin standing in Tadasana, Mountain Pose. Position your feet a leg-length apart, and turn the right foot out about 90 degrees. Ensure the toes of the left foot are turned towards the right foot.
- Square the hips to the front and root the feet firmly into the mat, without scrunching the toes. If possible, the front and back feet are in line. If this up-



- sets your balance, take the right foot to the side a few inches, keeping the hips square.
- Inhale and take the arms wide to the side, in a T shape. Relax the shoulders.
- Exhale and move the chest and naval towards the right leg, twisting through the upper body. Place the fingers on the floor outside the right foot, or place the hand on the calf or on a block.
- Inhale, lift the right hand towards the sky. Beginners should keep the right hand placed on the lower back.

- If your neck is okay, turn your head and look at the right hand. If this causes strain in the neck, keep looking forward, keeping the spine and neck in one long line.
- Keep breathing, even through your breath is naturally constricted in this twist. Keep the sacrum flat and keep rooting the back foot towards the ground.
- Breathe for between five and 10 breaths, focusing on the exhale. Come out of Parivrtta Trikonasana on an inhale, untwisting the same way you

came into the pose. Repeat on the other side.

BENEFITS

- Stretches hamstrings, groins, and hips.
- Opens out chest and shoulders.
- Relief from lower back pain, stress, and sluggish digestion.
- Strengthens thigh, hip, and back muscles.
- Improves balance and stability, both mentally and physically.

CAUTION

- Do not practice if you have low blood pressure or are experiencing insomnia, migraine, headaches, or diarrhea.
- Women who are pregnant should also avoid this pose.
- Those with neck injuries should not turn their heads to face the top hand, but should continue looking straight ahead.
- Always work within your own range of limits and abilities.
- If you have any medical concerns, talk with your doctor before practicing yoga.

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