

Frequently Asked Questions Rejuvenation Retreat (India)

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Who is this program for?

This program is designed for anyone who has or had cancer and would like to rejuvenate the energy and learn yogic approach to preventing reoccurrence of cancer. This includes the role of nutrition and environment.

This program is perfect if you:

- Are undergoing or finished chemotherapy and/or radiation
- Want to regain the hope and will to live
- Want to learn about cancer prevention
- Seek to turn the cancer journey to your advantage

The program is highly experiential. Through the use of yogic science it addresses the needs of the whole person – body, mind, emotion and spirituality. At the end, the program provides individualized take-home yogic practices to sustain or even deepen the positive changes achieved during the program.

Here is what other participants say after taking this program:

“This is a profoundly healing program, on all levels--physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual...”

“I was able to let go of crazy amounts of tension (physical and mental) and to truly experience relaxation and rejuvenation of body, mind, emotions, and soul. I saw others do the same. Everyone got more clarity on a number of issues that they were dealing with in their lives, even beyond those related to cancer (or asthma). We all experienced increased levels of Joy! We all learned better how to become observers of our emotions, of where our feelings are located in our bodies, and how to effectively lessen any emotionally distressing sensations via the Yoga Nidra process. We all experienced the healing power of a wide variety of yoga practices--just taking the time to practice these yogic practices changed and healed us all! Everyone experienced lessening of negative symptoms such as depression, anxiety, anger, confusion, fatigue, and also experienced an increase in physical and mental vigor...”

“I think the group support and the length of the program were vital for the cancer patients to be able to open up to what's holding them back from healing, and to learn new ways of coping with the challenges that cancer brings to one's life and relationships. All the yoga practices undoubtedly helped in the overall healing experiences. I think the Guided Visualizations with building a cocoon of Loving Light and the Yoga Nidra experiences were particularly valuable in giving clients effective tools for helping them stay out of their negative emotional reactions and to enable them to feel their abilities to choose more positive ways of thinking and viewing what's going on with them...”

How does it work?

The program is residential, which means that you stay at the center for full 21 days. It is based on Yoga science, which means that we use evidence based yoga practices to help participants to heal. When we say yoga we mean not only gentle body postures (asana) but also more importantly breathing techniques (pranayama), meditation, yogic relaxation techniques (yoga Nidra) as well as chanting (repetitive singing).

The program progresses from day one to twenty one, developing participants' skills in yogic practices, awareness of the body and of the personal inner world. Because of that there is no option of taking 2 or 1 week of the program. The vegan meals are provided 3 times a day and the herbal tea and fruits in the afternoon. The price includes room, board and all the classes.

The schedule is very intensive but not taxing. The groups are no more than 8 participants and there is a room for individual modification of program according to the level of energy and physical skills of participants. The classes are from 6:45 am till 8:45 pm 6 days a week. Sundays are off and available for visiting local tourist attractions.

If you have, please bring your laptop and memory stick (pen drive). During the retreat it will be recommended that you keep an electronic diary after each class and at the end of the day. At the end of the retreat you will receive a number of electronic files with recordings, which you will be able to use at home.

There will be time available for personal electronic communication and the Wi-Fi Internet is available at no extra charge. In the hall/class room the phones are banned.

What is the program's syllabus?

This three-week yoga intensive retreat aims at cancer patients who finished chemotherapy and/or radiation. The goal is to:

- Improve the health and well being of patients
- Understand the human existence as a multilevel process and bring balance to all levels through knowledge and yogic science practices
- Reconnect and build awareness of the physical, emotional and mental body
- Introduce and practice the awareness and management of thought processes
- Move from victimhood to empowerment
- Design appropriate yogic practices for individual to practice at home

Week 1

Lectures:

Introduction of yogic techniques – asanas, pranayama, meditation, restorative yoga, yoga Nidra and chanting - as effective and research based ancient science both on practical level and through the lectures on anatomy and physiology of yoga.

Practical:

- ⇒ Emphasis on experiencing the connection with and awareness of the body.
- ⇒ Asana as the way to experience the integration of the mind, the breath and the body.
- ⇒ Introduction to yogic breathing and basic pranayama.
- ⇒ Body/breath awareness with So Ham Meditation
- ⇒ Restorative yoga as the means to deep relaxation techniques
- ⇒ Yoga Nidra basics, healing visualizations
- ⇒ Chanting – Ra Ma Da Sa

Week 2

Lectures :

Introduction of endocrinal and nervous human physiology. We teach about carcinogenic factors in patient's diet and life style and the environmental toxicity with emphasis on natural detoxification. Patients prepare an individualized "Fridge List" of 24 health-promoting changes they will implement at home after the retreat.

Practical:

Basic work with emotions and thought processes:

- ⇒ Deepening connection with the body through emphasis on awareness of the body and slow deep breath during asana practice.
- ⇒ Deepening pranayama practices
- ⇒ Open heart and forgiveness guided meditation
- ⇒ Restorative yoga and Yoga Nidra – working with negative emotions and sub consciousness
- ⇒ Chanting Maha Mryunjaya

Week 3

Group work:

Life Mandala – a meditative process of reexamining the core belief system and reconnecting with one's heart calling through the process of mapping the changes on Mandala drawing

Practical:

Deepening work with emotions and thought processes

- ⇒ Advancing with asanas as a means to deepen the self-awareness and connection to breath and mind. Self-practice of the recommended individual sequence of yoga practices.
- ⇒ Deepening pranayama practices
- ⇒ Silent meditation of the choice (Forgiveness, Mindfulness, Mantra or Open heart)
- ⇒ Restorative and yoga Nidra – working with negative self beliefs and sub consciousness
- ⇒ Chanting Pranava

Daily schedule:

6:45-8:15 – Yoga – Gentle Asana/Pranayama

8:30 – Breakfast

9:30 – 10:30 Lectures/Group activity

11:00-12:00 – Pranayama/Meditation

12:30 – Lunch

3:00-4:30 – Restorative Yoga

4:45 - 6:00 – Yoga Nidra

6:30 – Dinner

8:00-8:45 – Chanting/Meditation

Upon completion of the retreat patients will:

- Dramatically reduce the levels of depression, confusion, tension, anger, at the same time increasing the well-being, self-empowerment and vigor.
- Take full responsibility for their health and choices they make in every day life
- Understand and eliminate the carcinogenic factors on all levels of their life where possible
- Establish consistent daily practice at home of individualized yogic techniques, to manage their well being and health in every day life
- Establish and practice ways to manage the thought processes and emotions.

If I still am undergoing treatments can I come?

Yes, however please keep in mind that we do not provide facilities for intravenous chemotherapies nor can we provide supervision in any allopathic treatments that your oncologist might have prescribed for you.

If I didn't go through with chemotherapy or radiation, can I still come?

Yes – any cancer patient can come regardless of treatment taken.

What cancers do you work with?

We do not work with cancers but we work with people who have or had cancer. Our focus is on holistic approach using yoga science to bring the body to balance and strengthen the immune system. We also educate participants with regards to carcinogenic factors in our daily lives and how to prevent them. Finally we provide the tools, which participants can use in their daily lives at home.

We accept patients with all cancers.

What stages of cancer do you accept?

We accept patients with all cancer stages providing they are self-sufficient and can move around without any help. For stage four we usually advise the participant to obtain doctor's approval before coming.

Can you provide cure for cancer?

We do not focus our work on cancer. We work with people who have or had cancer respecting their physical limitations. Our focus is on holistic approach using yoga science to bring the body to balance and strengthen the immune system. We also educate participants with regards to carcinogenic factors in our daily lives and how to prevent them. Finally we provide the tools, which participants can use in their daily lives at home.

I had cancer 10 years ago but I would like to enroll in the program - can I be accepted?

Yes – providing that there is space available.

Why this retreat is so long?

Retreat last 3 weeks. Participants are taken out of their normal surroundings and placed in high energy, healing environment where they are introduced to healthy habits and diet. It takes 3 weeks for yogic practices to start taking effect and result in positive transformation, which participants can clearly feel. This positive transformation becomes a major motivation for continuing the practices at home and to make healthy change within themselves and in their home environment. It also takes 3 weeks to develop basic yoga skills, which participants then can use confidently on their own at home.

Can I come for one or two weeks only?

We do not accept participants after the program has started. From day one the participants develop close relationships and the group becomes a major support factor for the duration of retreat. Therefore it is very important for all to attend the retreat from day one and participate in all activities.

Each week we progress to the next level of yoga skills and self-development in our program. Therefore we ask that you to participate from the beginning to the end in order to gain all the benefits of the retreat.

What language the program is available in?

At the moment the retreats are available only in English.

What are the age limitations?

The retreats are designed for mature participants. Therefore we accept adult from 21 to 70 years old providing that you are able to move around without any help.

What is the diet?

We provide 3 wholesome vegan meals. We buy the produce from local growers with as much organic produce as is available.

If you let us know ahead of time on your dietary restrictions we will make every effort to meet your requirements to the best of our abilities. You may contact us ahead of time to check if you have any specific allergies.

Access to Internet

There is free access to Internet at designated area where you will be able to connect with the world.

What should I bring to the retreat?

Please bring comfortable clothes according to the season. The setting of the retreat is very informal and relaxed. Therefore stretchy, comfortable clothes are recommended. In addition it is recommended that you bring:

- Flashlight or headlamp (batteries!)
- Thermal flask/reusable bottle
- Women's hygiene (panty liners, etc)
- Light hat
- Mosquito repellent
- Light shawl
- Laptop if you are using one (WiFi is available) with memory stick (pen drive).

Do I need to know yoga or be yoga practitioner to take the program?

No, you do not need to know anything about yoga or be yoga practitioner. The practices you will be doing are introduced slowly and always matching your level of skill and ability. The main goal of yoga practices (asana, pranayama, meditation, chanting and yoga Nidra) is to facilitate the healing of your body, your emotions and your mind. Since cancer does not discriminate in our retreats we have those who have never done yoga

sitting next to experienced yoga teachers. All those who apply themselves to the program benefit from it equally.

What is asana class?

In the morning you will have 1 hour of class where you will do some stretching and body relaxation postures. The specific body postures in yoga are called asanas. There is a large body of research which provide an insight into health benefits of asanas – like increase of well-being and energy levels as well as decrease of many negative factors like stress, depression, anxiety etc.

We base our class on classical Hatha Yoga and use simple, easy to do asanas. We make sure that you do them only to the level of your ability and if you have any specific limitations we modify postures for your needs.

Asanas, or yogic postures, differ from normal stretching exercises in the way they are performed. In our morning asana classes the emphasis is on relaxation, reduction of stress, awareness and connection to the body and emotions. After asana class you feel refreshed and ready for the day.

What is pranayama?

Pranayama comprises of the breathing techniques where the inhale and exhale are managed in a very specific way. Pranayama has proven to be very powerful in its healing effects and aims, among other things, at controlling our autonomous nervous system (ANS). Since ANS controls main body functions the proper pranayama restores to balance many body functions. The pranayama practices are easy to perform and can be done by everyone under proper guidance.

What is yoga Nidra ?

“Nidra” in Sanskrit means sleep. It is an deep yogic relaxation practice, which in last few decades was adopted by Dr.R.Miller, PhD, a clinical psychologist, author, researcher and yogic scholar, to present day needs (see <https://www.irest.us/projects/irest>)

Yoga Nidra is integrative, in that it heals the various unresolved issues, traumas, and wounds that are present in the body and mind. It is restorative in that it aids its practitioners in recognizing their underlying peace of mind that is always present amidst all changing circumstances of life. Extensive research has shown also that effectively it supports the healing process across a broad range of populations.

What is meditation class?

In general terms the meditation is the process of inner exploration or inner journey. Since most of our participants do not have established meditation practices or even never meditated before, at the beginning we teach guided yogic meditation. One sits in comfortable position with closed eyes and is guided by the facilitator's voice. The instructions are easy to follow and there always is an individual attention and guidance when needed.

There is a large body of research documenting positive changes in those who practice meditation. As people practice with time they are able to change the physical and the functional structure of the brain. This result in positive changes in perception, ability to focus, stress release, increased inner peace and joy and other positive emotions.

Our meditations are always preceded by either pranayama or chanting. This prepares you by creating favorable states for meditation and/or contemplation
If you have your own established meditation practice you will be able to choose what you want to do.

Do I need to believe in God to sign in?

The program is not associated with any religion nor at any point will you be asked to believe in God. Yoga is a holistic approach to human health and happiness. It is a science that is available to people of all persuasions, all faiths (or no faith) and all levels of physical and emotional conditions. The yogic practices you will learn have been scientifically proven to benefit the physical, emotional and mental body.

Is yoga a religion?

Yoga is over 4000 years old science, which came to us from Indian continent. It uses various techniques and practices for the benefit of human being – the body, mind and emotions. It is important to understand that yoga is not a religion, although it contains a very deep spiritual path. For those of you who have barely heard of yoga you need to know that you do not have to change your beliefs or your religion or spiritual practice for yoga to be of positive value in your day-to-day life.

It has been said that the difference between the religion and Yoga lies in that religion requires one to believe in dogma - God. Yoga is not asking to believe anything except in your own experiences while practicing yogic techniques.

Yoga has no association with any religion and accepts students of all religions.