

Mindfulness Meditation for Optimal Health

Receiving a diagnosis of cancer is disruptive and frightening. Patients and their family members likely find themselves feeling overwhelmed and powerless, with few skills to cope. Being aware of these reactions to stress, and then effectively managing these symptoms, will help boost resilience to the strain of this diagnosis. One way to do this is through mediation, a practice with growing evidence that benefits patients with cancer.

Mindfulness meditation is a type of meditation that involves the practice of paying attention to the present moment, deliberately and nonjudgmentally. It is a practice of focusing on a neutral point and bringing thoughts back as the mind wanders. It involves mental training by focusing on the here and now without judging our feelings as good or bad. It is observation without criticism; being compassionate with yourself and others.

This four session weekly series is for patients who have been recently diagnosed with cancer and who want to gain mindfulness meditation skills to build strength and resilience for their upcoming journey. It will be educational and experiential, with additional time set aside for any questions or discussions from participants.

Additional Benefits of Practicing Mindfulness Meditation:

- Improves focus and reduces chaotic thinking.
- Helps you cope with pain and fear.
- Strengthens your immune system.
- Helps stabilize emotions and creates resiliency.
- Reduces stress, anxiety and depression.
- Helps improve sleep.
- Increases peace of mind, optimism and self-worth, confidence.
- Improves confidence and concentration.
- Decreases heart rate, blood pressure, and levels of cortisol.
- Reduces sympathetic arousal.

We encourage you to join the entire series, but participants are also welcome to join these sessions as individual classes.

These courses are available virtually through Microsoft Teams the first four Tuesdays of each month at 9 a.m., and are facilitated by Barbara Walker, Ph.D., an Integrative Health and Performance Psychologist at UC Health. These sessions are no cost to participants.

Session 1: Getting started with mindfulness

Session 2: Preparing for mindful living

Session 3: Building resilience, compassion and creativity

Session 4: Creating acceptance