ORIGINAL ARTICLE

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The Effect of Yoga on Lymphedema Volume, Range of Motion and Quality of Life in Breast Cancer-Related Lymphedema

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Abstract

Introduction: This study aimed to evaluate the effects of yoga on lymphedema volume, range of motion and quality of life (QOL) in women with Breast Cancer Related Lymphedema (BCRL).

Methods: This is a non-randomized semi-experimental clinical trial. Women with BCRL were allocated to receive either Complete Decongestive Therapy (CDT), n = 18) or CDT with an 8-week yoga intervention (n = 18). Outcomes were the volume of arm lymphedema, range of motion (ROM) and QOL. A measurement was conducted at baseline, post-intervention and 4 weeks after the end of intervention.

Results: It was shown that the edema volume decreased and QOL and ROM increased compared to baseline measurements. However the inter-group changes were not significant regarding the scores of QOL ($p = 0.536$), edema volume ($p = 0.846$) and ROM ($p = 0.209$) during the study.

Conclusion: It appears that the yoga intervention with CDT is not superior to CDT alone in lymphedema treatment. Regarding patients' access to yoga classes and absence of side effects, further studies about its effects and cost-effectiveness are recommended.

Keywords: Lymphedema, Breast Cancer, Yoga, Quality of Life.

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