

Health Benefits from Mindfulness Stress Reduction Program (MBSR)

as reported from UMass

Coronary Artery Disease: The addition of meditation training to standard cardiac rehabilitation regimens has been shown to reduce mortality (41% decrease during the first two years following, and 46% reduction in the recurrence rates) morbidity, psychological distress, and some biological risk factors (plasma lipids, weight, blood pressure, blood glucose) to reduce exercised-induced myocardial ischemia in patients with coronary artery disease (Zammara 1996, Ornish 1983)

Hypertension: Meditation training has been shown to reduce blood pressure in amounts comparable to the changes that are produced by medication and other lifestyle modifications such as weight loss, sodium restriction, and increased aerobic exercise (Schneider 1995, Linden & Chambers 1994, Alexander 1994)

Cancer: A randomized trial with cancer outpatients showed MBSR was effective in significantly decreasing mood disturbance (65%), including depression, anxiety, anger and confusion, and also in decreasing the symptoms of stress such as cardiopulmonary and gastrointestinal symptoms (Specia 2000). These changes were sustained at six-month follow up (Carlson 2001). Survival rates of both melanoma and metastatic breast cancer patients have been significantly improved by relaxation and meditation training (Fawzy 1993, Speigal 1989) and psychological distress was lessened in women with early breast cancer (Bridge 1988). Anticipatory nausea and vomiting due to chemotherapy is also inhibited (Green 1991).

Chronic Pain: Mindfulness meditation has been shown to reduce both the experience of pain and its inhibition of patients' everyday activities. Further, mood disturbance and psychological symptomatology (including anxiety and depression) are also reduced. Pain-related drug utilization was decreased and activity levels and self esteem increased. This was in marked contrast to a traditional pain and clinical comparison group, which showed no change on these dimensions (Kabat-Zin 1982, 85). These gains were nearly all maintained at four-year follow up (Kabat-Zin 1997).

Fibromyalgia: Mindfulness training resulted in clinically significant

improvements in physical condition and both psychological and social spheres (Grossman et al, 2007; Weissbecker 2002).

Diabetes –Type I & II: Type II – HA1c was reduced by 0.48% (P = .03); mean arterial pressure was reduced by 6 mmHg (P = .009) (Rosensweig, Reibel at al 2006). Type I Meditation training significantly lowered glucose levels in patients with poorly controlled type I diabetes (McGrady 1991).

Irritable Bowel Syndrome: Meditation training has been shown to be effective in improving this condition (Blanchard 1991).

Anxiety: Mindfulness training has been shown to clinically reduce symptoms of anxiety, psychological distress and secondary depression (Kabat-Zin 1992). These changes were maintained at 3-year follow-up (Miller 1995).

Asthma/Respiratory Disorders: Relaxation training has been shown to improve the psychological well-being, functional status and frequency of attacks of asthma patients as well as adherence to treatment (Devine 1996). It has also been shown to have a beneficial effect on dyspnea and psychological well-being among adults with obstructive pulmonary disease (Devine & Percy, in press).

Psoriasis: Published research has shown that mindfulness meditation increases skin-clearing rates four-fold when used in conjunction with phototherapy and photo chemotherapy (Kabat-Zin 1998).

Headache: Meditation has been shown to decrease headache activity (Anastasio 1987).

Depression: The skills derived from mindfulness training and cognitive therapies have been shown effective in significantly reducing the recurrence of major depressive episodes in patients who have been treated for depression (Ma and Teasdale 2004, Segal et al 2002). (Teasdale 2002, Teasdale 2000).

Multiple Sclerosis: Training in mindfulness of movement resulted in MS patients reporting improvement over a broad range of symptoms, including balance (Mills 2000).

Health-Related Quality of Life: MBSR has been shown to significantly improve health-related quality of life (functional status, well-being, reduced physical symptoms, psychological distress) (Grossman 2006 Reibel 2001).

For more information read about the history of MBSR

<http://www.umassmed.edu/cfm/stress-reduction/history-of-mbsr/>