

Valley Hospital's Yoga Program Calms Patients' Bodies And Minds

by John Haffey 02/04/2016 lifestyle Content Partner: The Valley Hospital



Valley's Cardiac Kula for Karma provides many health benefits to participants. Photo Credit: *Contributed*

RIDGEWOOD, NJ, -- Yoga practitioners have been touting yoga's psychological and physical benefits for more than 5,000 years. Increasingly, yoga is being recommended for some patients with heart disease.

Valley Medical Group's Center for Integrative Medicine recently introduced a free cardiac yoga program designed to help patients deal with the stress of a diagnosis of heart disease on all levels: physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. The program takes a gentle approach to cardiac rehabilitation and each class includes adaptive yoga poses and sequences, restorative yoga poses, gentle breathing techniques, relaxation and guided meditation.

"Participants in the class experience numerous physical and psychological benefits, which can include decreased levels of stress, reduction in blood pressure, lowering of cholesterol levels and lessening of harmful inflammation," says cardiologist Dr. Benita Burke. In addition to

serving as Medical Director of Valley Medical Group's Heart Care for Women practice, Dr. Burke is a board-certified integrative medicine practitioner.

Valley's cardiac yoga program is being offered in conjunction with Kula for Karma. Loretta Turner, a Senior Program Director with Kula for Karma, explains that their "yoga instructors are specifically trained to work with cardiac patients. Each instructor must complete an advanced teacher training that outlines the physiological considerations when working with this population. The instructors meet each participant at his or her own level and provide self-care tools that often become invaluable both in class and throughout life."

Allendale resident Linda Parise says that "This is not something I would have considered because I was embarrassed about my level, but there is no judgment here. The instructors are wonderful and concerned about me. I feel a physical change."

Adds Fair Lawn resident Beth Goldberg, "There is a sense of community in this class -- whatever the path was that brought us here -- we have a common purpose. The class is not intimidating and it is a welcoming group."

Valley's Center for Integrative Medicine also offers specialty yoga classes for patients who are recovering from spinal surgery and patients and survivors of cancer. A physician's prescription is required to participate.

For more information or to register, contact Kathy Newberg at 201-291-6090, knewber@valleyhealth.com.

To learn more about Kula for Karma, visit it' website .

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