



The Top 10 Things To Know About Yoga and MS Summary of Interview with Mindy Eisenberg

1. **If you have multiple sclerosis, *exercise is very important!***
2. **Anyone can do yoga. Whether you walk on your own, or use a cane or walker, or are in a wheelchair, you can do yoga. People can stand, sit, or lie down to do yoga. However, like with anything, people can get hurt if they don't do it right so find a qualified instructor to help you learn adaptive yoga for MS.**
 - a. **Mindy had a neurologist with MS in her class who couldn't move her toes when she started and after a few months of doing yoga she was able to move her toes. Another person in her class had spasms from her MS and with improved breathing techniques from yoga her spasms dissipated.**
3. **The benefits of yoga are the same for those with multiple sclerosis as for those that don't have MS: increased strength, flexibility, sleeping better, mind-body connection, balance improvement, helps fight fatigue**
4. **To find a teacher that is experienced with adaptive yoga you can start with Karen O'Donnell Clarke's database of adaptive yoga teachers <http://www.yogahealsus.com/FindAdaptiveYogaTeacher.html>**
 - a. **If there are no teachers in your area that have experience with multiple sclerosis, then find a yoga instructor who has had ALIGNMENT training...it doesn't matter what type of yoga they teach, but more that they have alignment training and also that an instructor should have at least a few years of experience.**
5. **Here are two good yoga poses for people with MS**
 - a. **This pose helps with inflammation and fatigue and is called "Legs up the wall" <http://www.yogajournal.com/pose/legs-up-the-wall-pose/>**
 - b. **A yoga pose to help reduce spasticity is "reclining hand to big toe pose" <http://www.yogajournal.com/pose/reclining-big-toe-pose/>**
6. **If you can't get to a yoga studio you can use Mindy's book entitled Adaptive Yoga Moves Any Body (will be out in fall 2015) which will have pictures and also videos.**
7. **Studies are starting to show the benefits of yoga. The Cleveland Clinic is looking at starting a MS and yoga study.**
8. **Right now insurance does not cover yoga for MS, although she has heard that Aetna is covering yoga therapy.**
9. **It doesn't take long to see results from yoga. It varies by person but almost everyone notices that they feel better even after one class.**
10. **People think about yoga as just poses, but it is more than that. Jon Kabat-Zinn's mindful meditation online program is a well studied 8 week program <http://www.umassmed.edu/cfm/Stress-Reduction>. It is very helpful for people dealing with pain. It teaches learning how to cope with pain rather than running from pain and helps with anxiety and depression as well.**