

yoga4cancer Certified Teachers Scope of Practice

A “scope of practice” defines the specific role of a professional by determining what roles, responsibilities and limitations the individual is qualified by education and experience to perform. The scope should define what a professional should, and should not do.

The scope of practice for an Oncology Yoga Professional is based on what training or clinical experience in the specifics of yoga for cancer patients and survivors. IAYT adequately defines a scope of practice to be *‘procedures, actions, and processes that a healthcare practitioner is permitted to undertake in keeping with the terms of their professional certification. The Scope of Practice is limited to specific education, experience, and demonstrated competency, and acknowledges the requirements of the regulating agency and any laws applicable to healthcare providers in the jurisdiction.’*

Being aware of, and adhering to one’s ‘scope of practice’ is essential in the emerging field of Integrative Oncology - including Oncology Yoga - as it will ensure credibility with currently licensed fields like medicine, psychology, social workers and beyond. It is important for an Oncology Yoga professional to remain focused on what their certification, training and clinical experience has informed and draw lines on what they might not know, do not have experience or training, or what is un-proven or in early stages of research.

What does this mean for a yoga4cancer Certified Teacher?

Our intention here is to provide a guide to our existing teachers and those that are training with us to help assess what is in a yoga4cancer Scope of Practice, and what is not.

Please review these caveats before reviewing the list:

- These guidelines will likely evolve and change as new research, information and guidance is provided. Our field is emerging and we must allow for evolution.
- These are examples of procedures, actions and processes that might arise for an Oncology Yoga professional and where, today, we believe it sits within or outside the scope of practice.
- The list is not comprehensive and additional examples exist.
- Many of our community have additional qualifications, experience and credentials beyond Oncology Yoga. Therefore, this list might not be comprehensive for those individuals. For example, if a yoga4cancer Teacher is also a trained nutritionist, they have qualifications beyond the below scope. This list relates to the scope of practice for a yoga4cancer Trained Teacher alone.

Within Scope of Practice	Outside Scope of Practice
Providing movement and meditation-based yoga interventions to manage cancer treatments side effects.	Suggesting medicinal supplements or dietary options to manage cancer treatment side effects <i>unless separately licensed of certified to do so.</i>

Supporting a survivors' emotional and mental challenges with Oncology Yoga techniques.	Providing counselling or psychotherapy for a cancer patient or survivor - <i>unless separately licensed or certified to do so.</i>
Sharing experience-based practices (practices that are recommended but not backed by research) with a note of caution/stating they are not (yet) back by research.	Telling a student that a yoga intervention will work solely and completely based on anecdotal evidence.
Doing desktop research (using PubMed or other recognized research & guidance publications) or asking healthcare professionals on potential side effects from treatments to help inform a yoga intervention.	Suggesting or providing any information to the patient on treatments that could be seen to be counter to a medical professional's advice.
Refer to patient to seek consultation with other Integrative Medicine modalities such as nutrition, acupuncture or massage about non-yoga interventions.	Recommending a student to take medicinal marijuana, dietary supplements or acupuncture for side effects or symptoms that they are facing - <i>unless separately licensed or certified to do so.</i>
Encouraging a cancer patient and survivor to practice yoga in accordance to American Cancer Society Recommendations of 150 minutes per week to manage side effects and support long term survivorship.	Telling anyone that yoga is a cure for anything.
If a student is less than size weeks out of surgery, or if the teacher/therapist doesn't feel comfortable without doctor clearance, encourage the cancer patient to obtain doctor permission to participate in yoga interventions.	Any attempt to diagnose or suggest treatment protocols.
Providing a work/business email for the patient to reach out to with questions or concerns.	Looking up a patient's EMR (electronic medical record) or connecting with the patient on social media.

As a reminder, this list is likely not comprehensive. It is designed to help an existing yoga4cancer Certified Teacher or a teacher in training to develop critical thinking about what is within their scope of practice and what should be led by another professional in the cancer patient or survivor's oncology care team.

We will commit to review this at least annually and update the website. This will ensure both practitioners, healthcare providers or cancer patients can access if necessary.