Author's response to reviews

Title: Physical and psychosocial benefits of yoga in cancer patients and survivors, a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials.

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Version: 3 Date: 9 October 2012

Author's response to reviews: see over
Author's covering letter for initial submission

Title: Physical and psychosocial benefits of yoga in cancer patients and survivors, a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials.

Authors:

Version: 1 Date: 4 October 2012

Comments: see over
Dear editor,

We would like to thank the reviewer for reviewing our manuscript. Please find our point-to-point response to the reviewer below. We hope that we have satisfactorily improved our manuscript according to the reviewer’s suggestions and that you will consider it for publication in BMC Cancer.

Kind regards,

On behalf of all co-authors,

Laurien Buffart.

Abstract - Suggest change to “rated the quality of the included RCTs”
We changed this in the revised manuscript.

Abstract suggest remove comma – “intervention and beneficial effects”
We removed the comma in the revised manuscript.

Page 3 – suggest change to “psychosocial problems associated with”
We changed this in the revised manuscript.

Page 3 – suggest change to “with common physical issues such as”
We changed this in the revised manuscript.

Page 3 suggest change to “physical problems associated with cancer”
We changed this in the revised manuscript.

Page 3 – Can Yoga be accurately categorised as complementary or alternative medicine? Yoga is a combination of physical exercise, relaxation, imagery and mindfulness. These are not complementary or alternative medicines but rather legitimate exercise and psychological techniques.
We agree with the reviewer that yoga may not be considered as complementary or alternative medicine. We therefore changed this sentence as follows: “…. Patients turn to complementary and alternative medicine techniques, mindfulness, or yoga……”.

Page 4 – how is yoga a more “self paced” form of exercise than say progressive resistance or aerobic training? I don’t believe you can claim a greater appropriateness for cancer patients on this basis.
We agree with the reviewer that resistance and aerobic training can also be self-paced, and we therefore removed the sentence in the revised manuscript.

Page 5 - Detailed search profiles may be available on request from IR but a summary should be included in the manuscript.
We included a summary of the search profiles in the revised manuscript (page 4): “In order to identify all relevant papers, a search was conducted with both thesaurus terms and free terms for ‘yoga’ in combination with an extensive list of search terms to identify intervention studies. RCTs were identified using search terms for certain publication types (e.g. randomized controlled trial and controlled clinical trial in PubMed) in combination with a list of free text terms in title and abstracts that could be used to describe RCTs (e.g. randomi*ed, randomly, trial, groups).”

Page 5 – suggest change to “nine equally weighted quality criteria to”
We changed this in the revised manuscript.
Page 9 – spelling “dyspnoea”
We apologies for the misspelling and corrected this.

Page 12 – suggest change to “Although patients perceived that they had improved”
We changed this in the revised manuscript.

Page 14 – suggest change to “Another limitation is the small sample size of”
We changed this in the revised manuscript.

Page 14 suggest change to “physical or psychosocial problems”
We changed this in the revised manuscript.

Page 16 – I am still at a loss as to why Yoga would be considered more self-paced and less strenuous or pain inducing than other forms of exercise. Exercise whether it is yoga, resistance training or aerobic exercise should always be self-paced and within the limits of pain and perceived exertion.
We agree with the reviewer that other forms of exercise can also be self-paced and within the limits of pain and perceived exertion. Therefore, we changed this sentence in the revised manuscript (page 16) as follows: “Yoga is especially suitable for those who perceive barriers to other forms of exercise.”