

MIND–BODY INTERVENTION FOR SYMPTOM MANAGEMENT IN BREAST CANCER SURVIVORSHIP: A FEASIBILITY QIGONG PILOT STUDY

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INTRODUCTION & AIM

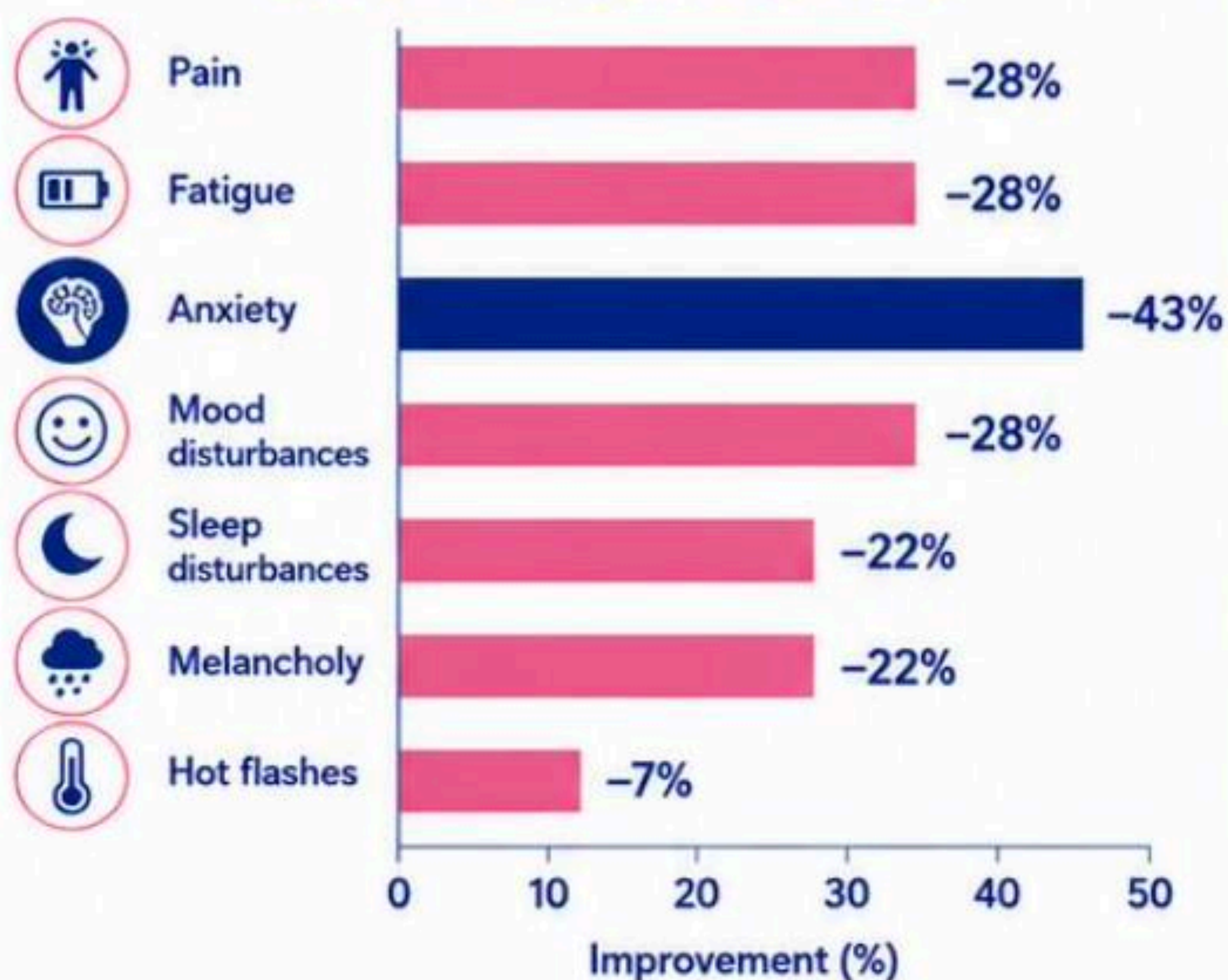
Breast cancer survivors often experience persistent symptoms after surgery, including fatigue, pain, anxiety, sleep disturbances, and reduced quality of life. Interest in integrative oncology has increased, particularly in mind–body interventions. Qigong is a gentle practice combining movement, breathing, posture, and meditative attention. This pilot study aimed to evaluate the feasibility, acceptability, and preliminary effects of an 8-week Qigong intervention on symptom burden and quality of life in post-surgical breast cancer survivors.

METHOD

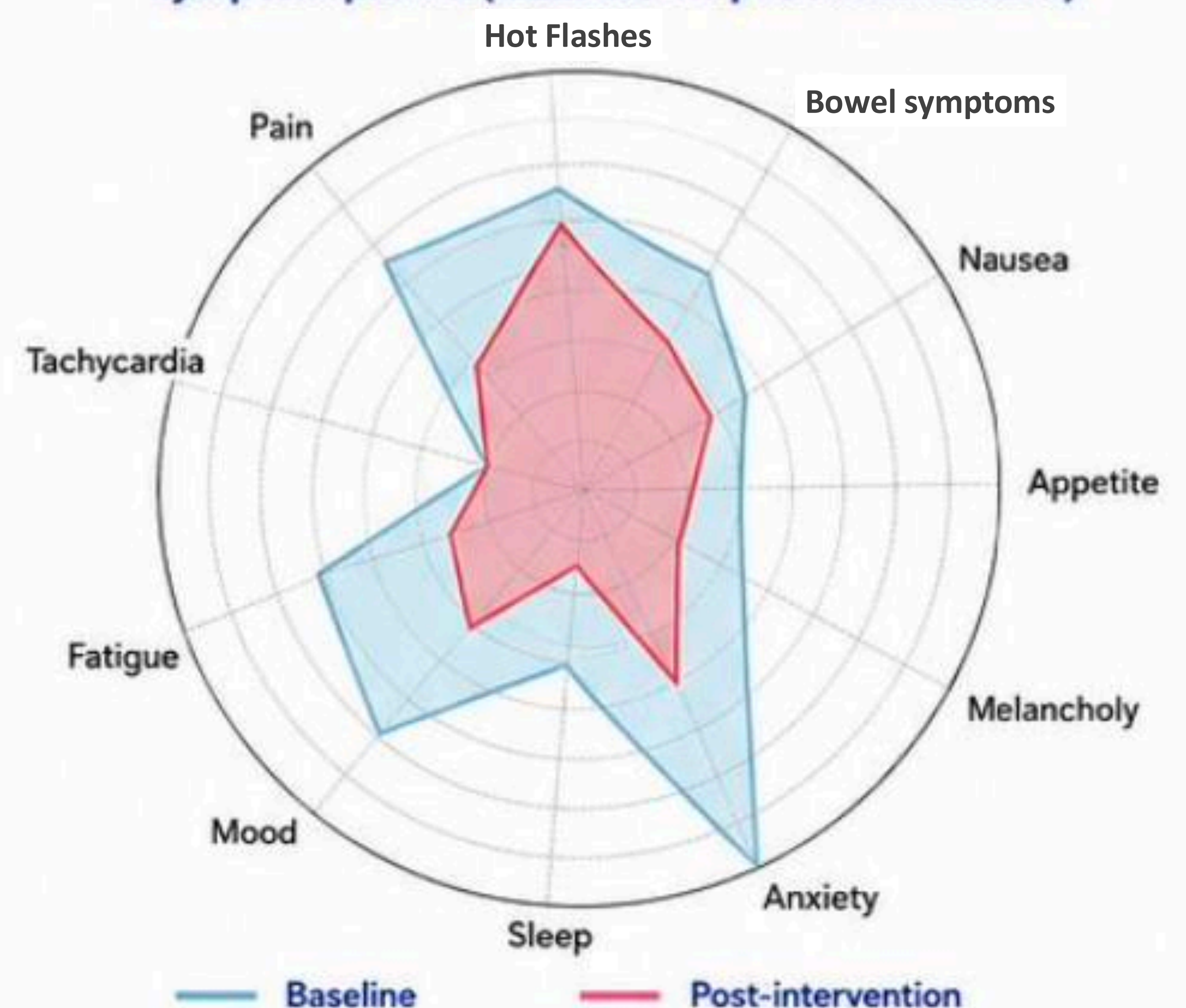
- **Single-arm pilot feasibility study**
- **Setting:** AMICO Clinic, IRCCS-CROB, Southern Italy
- **Participants:** 14 women
- **Age range:** 42–73 years
- **Stage:** I–II breast cancer
- **Intervention:** weekly 60-minute supervised Qigong sessions for 8 weeks
- **Home practice target:** 2–3 hours/week
- **Assessments:** baseline and post-intervention
- **Post-intervention qualitative exit interviews:** Edmonton Symptom Assessment System (ESAS) and 12-item Short Form Health Survey (SF-12)

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Symptom changes after 8 weeks



Symptom profile (baseline vs. post-intervention)



CONCLUSIONS

This pilot study suggests that Qigong is a feasible and acceptable intervention for symptom management in breast cancer survivors. Delivered in a public integrative oncology setting, the intervention demonstrated applicability in real-world clinical practice. Quantitative results indicate meaningful improvements across multiple symptoms, with the greatest effect observed for anxiety. Qualitative feedback highlighted enhanced overall well-being, emotional balance, body awareness, social connectedness, and engagement in self-care. These preliminary findings support further controlled studies in larger cohorts.

Qualitative findings (perceived benefits)

