The practice of yoga originated about 5,000 years ago; the term is from a Sanskrit word that means “to join or unite” (Baum, 2013). The practice combines physical postures, breathing exercises, meditation, and philosophy. Cancer and dealing with the side effects of cancer treatment can be extremely stressful physically, emotionally, and spiritually. The focus of yoga on the body, mind, and spirit makes it particularly helpful for individuals coping with cancer. An article published in Yoga Journal reported that many patients with cancer are turning to yoga because it helps them to realize how people with a serious illness, such as cancer, can connect to their body and begin to experience self-empowerment and well-being instead of “running away” from their threatened body (Boucher, 1999). With training, oncology nurses can learn to use yoga as an intervention to help patients decrease stress and alleviate side effects to improve quality of life and their sense of well-being.

The term stress was coined by Hans Selye in 1936, who defined it as “the non-specific response of the body to any demand for change” (American Institute of Stress, 2016, para. 1). Stress is neither positive nor negative; it is a subjective experience based on one’s perception of the degree of threat an event or experience poses. A cancer diagnosis is commonly perceived as a significant threat that can create severe stress and anxiety in patients and their families. In addition, the sequelae of cancer treatment with its accompanying discomfort and side effects can be extremely stressful for patients.

Literature Review

Yoga is one of the complementary health approaches that the National Institute of Health’s National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (2013) recognizes as an increasingly popular and important therapy for which it provides information, education, and research support.

Nurses have a repertoire of evidence-based interventions to use to assist patients in managing their symptoms, ease untoward effects of treatment, and relieve the stress and