

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) at Virginia Tech

# Information About our Meditation Study

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## Introduction

The Psychology Department at Virginia Tech is currently conducting a research study examining a program designed to improve health and well-being. The program is called **Mindfulness-Based-Stress-Reduction (MBSR)**, and it involves meditation and mindful movement techniques such as tai-chi and yoga. This study will test the impact of MBSR on stress, emotion and attention functions, and on the physical factors that affect these processes. The purpose of this study is to find out if MBSR classes will decrease negative emotions, increase attention, decrease stress levels and boost your immune system.

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## What is Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) ?

MBSR is a meditation training program that is conducted in a group format. The group will meet weekly for 2 hours. Classes will involve lecture, group discussion, and various hands-on exercises. Topics, experiences, and exercises will include, light stretching, meditation, yoga and tai-chi. Participants will also be asked to do 45 minutes of daily home meditation practice.

The schedule of classes is as follows:

**Class #1** - Tuesday, October 2<sup>nd</sup> 2018 (6pm-8pm)

**Class #2** - Tuesday, October 9<sup>th</sup> 2018 (6pm-8pm)

**Class #3** - Tuesday, October 16<sup>th</sup> 2018 (6pm-8pm)

**Class #4** - Tuesday, October 23<sup>th</sup> 2018 (6pm-8pm)

**Class #5** - Tuesday, October 30<sup>h</sup> 2018 (6pm-8pm)

**Class #6** - Tuesday, November 6<sup>th</sup> 2018 (6pm-8pm)

**Class #7** - Tuesday, November 13<sup>th</sup> 2018 (6pm-8pm)

**Class #8** - Tuesday, November 27<sup>th</sup> 2018 (6pm-8pm)

We will also have one day-long session on **Saturday, November 10th 9:30 am-4:30 pm.**

**Attendance at all classes is very important.** If you cannot commit to this schedule, then we ask that you either (1) delay enrollment in this study until a time when you will be able to attend all the sessions, or (2) consider not participating in the study.

## What does the study consist of ?

If you choose to participate in this study, your involvement would last for about 10 to 12 weeks. The total length of time of your participation will depend on when you complete the assessments. Participating in this study will involve either (1) an eight-week MBSR class designed to increase your health and well-being, or (2) a wait-list condition. If you choose to participate in this study, you will be randomly assigned one of these two conditions.

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The reason for the wait-list condition, is so that we can directly compare people who have completed mindfulness training to people who have not completed mindfulness training. If you are randomly assigned to the wait-list condition, at the conclusion of the study you will be invited to participate in the MBSR class should you be interested.

The 8-week MBSR class is conducted in a group format, with no more than 25 individuals in one group. The only people in the group will be people participating in this study.

Regardless of which condition you are assigned to, this study will involve answering questionnaires about your emotions and physical health, and providing a blood sample at the beginning and end of the study. You will also be asked to complete several tasks in the lab involving measurement of attention, and a procedure that involves shining a safe and controlled amount of ultraviolet (UV) light on your forearm to measure how your skin responds to the light. The amount of UV light that will be used in this study is about the same as one would get from 1 to 2 hours of natural sunlight.

### **If I choose to participate in this study, how much time will be required?**

Before enrolling in the study, we ask that all interested participants call our lab (see below in “How can I participate?”) for a 20-25 minute phone screening. During this phone call we will ask some basic questions and give you more information about the study. Then, if you are eligible and interested in participating, we ask that all interested persons attend an information session that will take approximately 2 hours.

Each MBSR class takes approximately 2 hours, and there are a total of 8 classes. In addition, there is one all-day session on a Saturday (November 10th from 9:30am-4:30pm). This means that the classes will require a total of 23 hours. In addition, there will be extensive meditation practice at home. We recommend about 45 minutes per day 6 days a week. This means that there will be about 36 hours of meditation practice at home.

This study also involves answering questionnaires and visiting our lab. We estimate that all the assessments (before, during and after the study) will take approximately 7 ½ hours. If you are randomly assigned to the MBSR condition, the total amount of time involved in this study will be approximately 69 hours. If you are assigned to the wait list condition (assessments only), the total amount of time will be approximately 10 hours.

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### **Where will the study take place ?**

This study will take place on the Virginia Tech campus in Blacksburg, Virginia.

### **Who is conducting this study ?**

This study is being conducted by Dr. John Richey, Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology at Virginia Tech.

### **Will I be paid for my participation?**

You will be paid for completing the assessments in this study. Your participation includes three visits at the beginning of the study, three visits at the end of the study and online questionnaires. We estimate that the total amount of time for all assessments will be 7.66 hours.

You will be paid \$20 for the assessments at the beginning of the study, and \$20 for the assessments at the end of the study. You may also be paid up to 18 dollars for completing a computerized task at the beginning, middle and end of the study. You will not be paid for attending the MBSR classes.

### **Am I eligible to participate?**

We are looking for people who:

- are 18-55 years old
- have no previous experience with meditation

### **Who should not participate?**

People with any of the following conditions should not participate

- Diabetes
- Psoriasis or other inflammatory skin condition
- Peripheral vascular disease, peripheral arterial disease, Raynaud's disease, or any other diagnosed circulatory disorders
- Any involuntary motor disorders
- A history of problems of any kind during blood draws (fainting)

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- Takes inhaled steroids for asthma (e.g., Fluticasone)
  - Takes any corticosteroids.
  - And/or 2 or more of the following:
    - o Diagnosed hypertension
    - o Hyperlipidemia
    - o High cholesterol
    - o Smoke cigarettes
    - o Family history of coronary or atherosclerotic disease (parents/siblings prior to age 55)

**OK, I meet those requirements... how can I participate?**

Please email our lab at [HokieMindfulness@gmail.com](mailto:HokieMindfulness@gmail.com) and let us know that you are interested in participating. We will schedule a 20-25 minute phone call to tell you more about the study, and ask you some basic questions such as your age, your physical health, and your availability to attend all the sessions. During that phone call, we will determine if you can participate.