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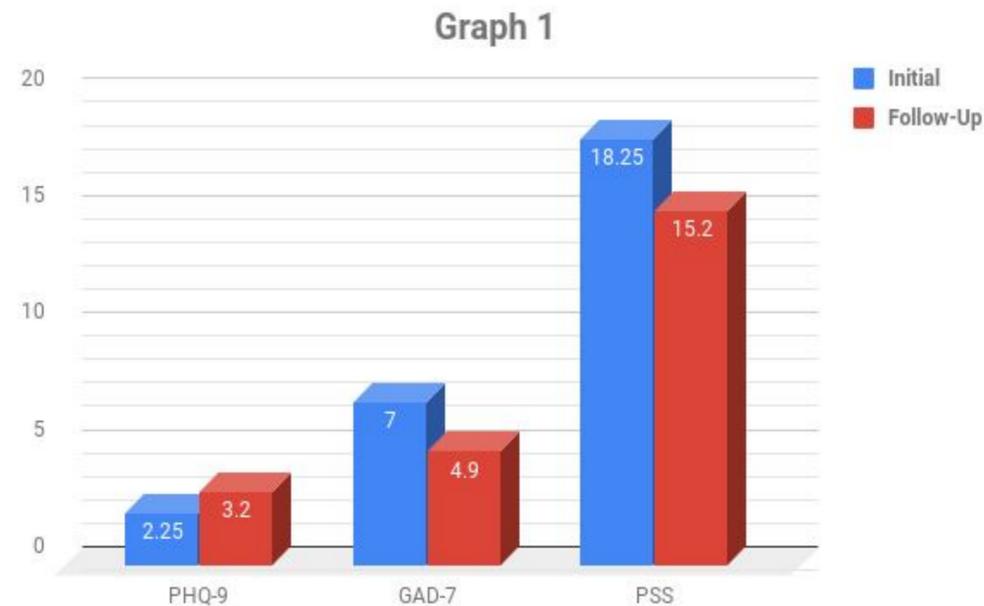
## INTRODUCTION

- For nearly four decades, we have seen a steady decline in the number of deaths in women related to heart disease, especially in those >65 years old. Recent data suggests there has been a stagnation in the improvements in incidence and mortality of cardiovascular disease (CVD), specifically among younger women (<55 years).
- Stress, anxiety and depression can play a negative role on CVD risk, and women have a tendency of higher incidence and prevalence of those non traditional risk factors.

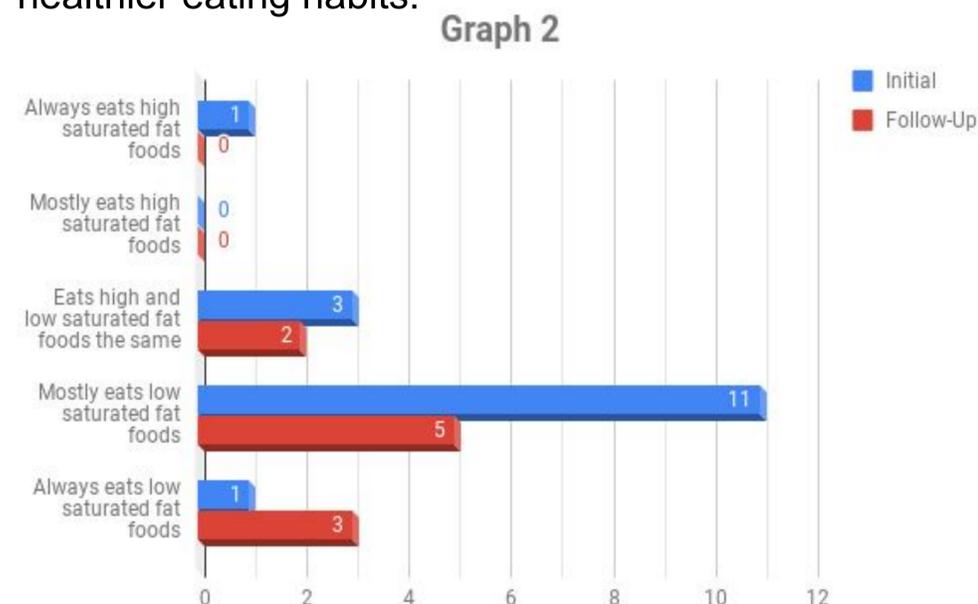
## METHODS

- After obtaining informed consent, an anonymous survey was provided to the participants of a complimentary chair yoga/meditation workshop supervised by a cardiac yoga therapist.
- The 45 minute sessions took place at an urban academic hospital in New York City as frequently as once per week, where the practice of yoga Nidra meditation, a guided relaxation method, was performed seated, in order to make it more accessible to all participants.
- The surveys were distributed on day 1 and on week 24 to assess any changes in their reported level of stress, depression, anxiety and lifestyle.
- These surveys consisted of a questionnaire of the patient's baseline characteristics, along with validated screening tools for depression, anxiety, and stress, with the Patient Health Questionnaire-9 (PHQ-9), Generalized Anxiety Disorder-7 (GAD-7), and Perceived Stress Scale (PSS).

## RESULTS



The PHQ-9 from the initial session to the follow up survey, was 2.25 vs 3.2 respectively ( $P = 0.199$ ). The mean GAD-7 went from 7 in the initial visit down to 4.9 ( $P = 0.138$ ) for the follow up survey. Lastly the PSS decreased from 18.25 to 15.2 ( $P = 0.106$ ). These findings, along with data from Graph 2, demonstrates a trend towards improved psychosocial factors and healthier eating habits.



Additionally, 37.5% endorsed a 3-9 lbs weight loss.

## DISCUSSION

- Despite limited understanding of the mechanism behind its benefit, complementary and alternative measures such as gentle chair yoga and meditation may decrease morbidity in patients with CVD.
- As such, the American Heart Association released a statement in 2017 which focused on sitting meditation, and concluded that meditation has possible CVD benefits making it reasonable to consider.

## CONCLUSION

- More research and larger studies are yet to be done to demonstrate a definitive benefit in meditation and gentle chair yoga in CVD risk reduction.
- Despite this, our pilot study demonstrated a trend towards overall improvement of novel risk factors for CVD, which predominantly affect women.
- Given the low harm and cost of these measures, their use should be considered as adjuvants to our standard of care to increase the patient's overall well being by improving the psychological aspect of their lives.

## References

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