

Therapeutic Massage and Palliative Cancer Therapy

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In recent years the role of [alternative therapies](#) in cancer care has transformed the way many patients cope with illness and related side effects. An older paradigm suggested that cancer could only be effectively treated with traditional treatments like surgical resection, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy. Many patients refused this notion and sought alternative therapies outside of their treatment regimen not were not only relaxing but eased side-effects associated with traditional treatment regimens, including those caused by chemotherapy drugs.

Today, not only patients but also the medical establishment recognizes the importance of alternative therapies, and particularly the importance of massage therapy in comprehensive cancer care. Massage, like most alternative cancer therapies, is most effective when used in conjunction with traditional treatments.

Massage is unique in alternative cancer therapy because it is able to remedy feelings of isolation that many patients battling a difficult disease encounter. The experience of human contact is particularly important when facing a difficult diagnosis and massage can provide that unique experience to cancer patients, who often succumb to feelings of being overwhelmed by the nature of their diagnosis, family implications, and other difficulties associated with cancer treatments.

Often, the most valuable treatments to patients battling a difficult diagnosis are those which can allow the patient to be as comfortable as possible. Patients battling aggressive cancers, such as [mesothelioma](#), often forgo traditional treatments which will put their body through a great deal of stress and discomfort in favor of those such as massage, which provide peace of mind and comfort. Patients undergoing chemotherapy often find that treatments which are able to relax their mind and body, will dramatically lessen side effects like nausea, restlessness, and fever.

As with any treatment, massage therapy may or may not benefit a particular patient's treatment regimen. However, given the positive experience many patients have benefited from, it is certainly worth exploring. Maximizing your cancer treatment with cooperation between patient, family, and physician will allow patients to live longer, healthier, and be more comfortable, which is the goal of all comprehensive therapies.