

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO HOSPITAL
THE CENTER FOR INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE
CANCER

When coupled with conventional treatment options, integrative medicine can provide cancer patients with relief from the stress and symptoms caused by the disease and the treatment required to cure it.



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FOUR CONSIDERATIONS WHEN TREATING CANCER:

1.

While cancer affects your patients' physical well-being, the disease may also negatively affect aspects of their social and psychological health. Approaches to therapy that address not only the body, but also the mind and spirit, are becoming more widely used to reduce stress, increase health and well-being and improve quality of life.

2.

Conventional treatment is crucial when treating cancer. Chemotherapy, surgery and radiation are irreplaceable and often lifesaving treatment options. The side effects of these therapies can cause your patients physical, psychological and social stress. The integration of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) therapies with conventional treatment can alleviate treatment side effects, such as nausea, fatigue and anxiety.

3.

Nearly 80% of cancer patients have considered trying CAM therapies. Many use herbs, supplements, acupuncture or massage in an attempt to reduce the side effects of conventional treatment and restore normalcy to their lives. Because of the availability of CAM therapies in the community, some cancer patients seek treatment in clinics without thinking to inform their primary providers. Practitioners at these treatment centers vary in level of quality and experience. They often fail to communicate with the patient's other health care providers, resulting in unnecessary and potentially unsafe treatment. The Center for Integrative Medicine's practitioners are experienced in treating patients with cancer. They'll always communicate with you, and other health care providers, to ensure that effective and safe therapy is provided.

4.

CAM therapy should never replace the conventional treatment provided by you or another physician. Some practitioners in the community may urge patients to abandon chemotherapy or radiation treatment in favor of alternative medicine therapy. This is ineffective and dangerous. In contrast, The Center for Integrative Medicine offers a variety of CAM treatment options to complement conventional cancer treatment. All treatment is performed under physician supervision and in coordination with the patient's primary care physician and other health care providers.

HOW INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE CAN BENEFIT YOUR PATIENTS WITH CANCER:

TYPICAL TREATMENT PLAN

HEALTH AND WELLNESS VISIT

EXERCISE PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION OF CAM THERAPIES

NUTRITIONAL COUNSELING

HERB AND SUPPLEMENT CONSULT

LETTER TO PHYSICIANS

CAM THERAPIES* AND SELF-CARE STRATEGIES USED TO TREAT CANCER

EXERCISE

Studies have shown that daily exercise and healthy lifestyle changes not only help prevent many types of cancer, but can also be extremely helpful in preventing the recurrence of cancers such as breast cancer. Moreover, appropriate exercise is the best tool to manage the fatigue that often accompanies chemotherapy. Patients will be counseled on aerobic exercise or in some cases referred to a cancer exercise specialist.

NUTRITIONAL COUNSELING

Nausea, diarrhea, constipation and mouth sores from chemotherapy and radiation treatment can present nutritional challenges for cancer patients. By meeting with a registered dietitian, patients can learn healthy eating techniques to relieve side effects and promote healing. Our dietitians can also help patients sort fact from fiction about dietary approaches that prevent and treat cancer.

PSYCHOLOGICAL COUNSELING

Being diagnosed with cancer is often overwhelming. A visit with a psychologist experienced in working with patients who have cancer can help them manage the stress, anxiety, fear and identity issues that come with this diagnosis.

COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE (CAM) THERAPIES

Most cancer patients at The Center for Integrative Medicine are encouraged to consider some type of CAM therapy. A physician will create an individualized CAM treatment plan for your patients. Depending on their condition and symptoms, therapies such as acupuncture, massage, spiritual counseling or yoga may be recommended.



fig. 1 - Meeting with a psychologist or spiritual counselor can help patients and their families deal with the stress, anxiety and fear that come with being diagnosed with cancer.

*Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) therapies are alternative medicine treatments such as acupuncture or chiropractic that are used to complement traditional conventional care provided by physicians.

SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT

Your patients can schedule appointments at The Center for Integrative Medicine by calling 720.848.1090. Appointments can be made Monday through Friday, 8:30 am - 5:00 pm, with limited evening availability. If you would like to provide us with information prior to a patient's visit (encouraged), please fax a consult and/or relevant records to 720.848.1277.

CONTACT INFORMATION

THE CENTER FOR INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO HOSPITAL
ANSCHUTZ MEDICAL CAMPUS
ANSCHUTZ OUTPATIENT PAVILION

1635 Aurora Court, MS F743
Fifth Floor, Suite 5501
Aurora, Colorado 80045
P: 720.848.1090 | **F:** 720.848.1277
www.uch.edu/integrativemed

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