

THE BENEFITS OF MASSAGE THERAPY FOR CANCER PATIENTS



Massage used as a complementary therapy for cancer patients has evolved over the years. Where it was once contraindicated and erroneously thought to hasten the spread of cancerous cells, we know now that massage therapy can provide myriad benefits to the cancer patient, from therapeutic relief for chronic pain, to stress reduction, to better self-awareness of the body that can enhance the healing process.

Massage involves the manipulation of soft tissues for the purpose of restoring a sense of revitalization and well-being, as well enhancing function, and can be performed safely for most cancer patients. Given the often overwhelming nature of a cancer diagnosis, as well as the side effects and discomfort from some treatments and surgeries, massage can provide relief in many ways. Here are some of the most common physical, emotional and psych-social benefits:

- Reduced stress and anxiety (helpful before and after surgery, or before and during chemotherapy)
- Improved sleep
- Deep relaxation
- Reduced pain
- Reduced nausea
- Reduced swelling and fluid retention
- Reduced fatigue
- Increased mental clarity and alertness (helpful for “chemo brain”)
- Improved flexibility and range of motion
- Improved scars and adhesions
- Improved appetite
- Decreased depression
- Improved sense of body self-image

And for the cancer patient, working with massage therapists like those on our staff who have training in oncology is important. From questions about general well-being (i.e. Are you feeling fatigued or nauseous?), to specific questions about blood counts or treatment ports, oncology massage therapists are trained to know what to ask in order to customize the treatment to the patient’s individual needs, as well as insure that the massage is gentle, effective and an overall positive experience.

Our massage therapists communicate closely with the physicians and the patient’s care team to provide the type of massage therapy that will benefit the patient at different stages throughout their cancer journey. If you’re a cancer patient interested in massage therapy, ask your doctor if this complementary therapy could be right for you.

**MASSAGE
THERAPY**



Need an appointment for massage therapy?

Massage therapy at SGCCC is available every other Wednesday from 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Please check our events calendar at www.sgcancer.com each month to see which Wednesdays of the month it is offered. To schedule an appointment with our massage therapist, Christy Loftin, call the front desk at (912) 764-3037.