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Acupuncture for Integrative Oncology Support

There have been many advances in the early detection and treatment of cancer. While the standard medical care for cancer can be effective, the treatments are aggressive and cause numerous unwanted side effects in addition to a lowered immune system. Acupuncture has received much attention as an adjunctive therapy in cancer treatments addressing many of the symptoms and side effects that come up during and after chemotherapy, radiation, biological therapy and surgery.



How Does Acupuncture Help?

According to the National Cancer Institute, acupuncture may cause physical responses in nerve cells, the pituitary gland, and parts of the brain. These responses can cause the body to release proteins, hormones, and brain chemicals that govern a number of body functions. It is proposed that, by stimulating physical responses in these areas, acupuncture positively affects blood pressure and body temperature, boosts immune system activity, and causes the body's natural painkillers, such as endorphins, to be released.

Acupuncture takes a holistic approach to health care and is particularly useful in providing pain relief, reducing the impact of side effects, accelerating recovery and improving overall quality of life.

Areas where acupuncture has provided the most help include:

- Nausea and Vomiting
- Dry Mouth, Night Sweats and Hot Flashes
- Stress, Anxiety and Fatigue
- Pain Management
- Increasing White Blood Cell Count

Relieving Nausea and Vomiting

The strongest evidence of the beneficial effect of acupuncture has come from clinical trials on its use for relieving nausea and vomiting. Several types of clinical trials using different acupuncture methods showed acupuncture reduced nausea and vomiting caused by chemotherapy, surgery and morning sickness.

Boosting the Immune System

Human studies on the effect of acupuncture on the immune system of cancer patients showed that it improved immune system response, including increasing the number of white blood cells.

Improving Pain Management

In clinical studies, acupuncture reduced the pain levels for some cancer patients. In one study, most of the patients treated with acupuncture were able to stop taking drugs for pain relief or to reduce their doses.

To learn more about how acupuncture can safely and effectively be incorporated into an oncology treatment plan call for a consultation today.

Endorsement of Acupuncture for Cancer Treatment

Acupuncture continues to receive enthusiastic testimonials from patients and health care professionals alike. Prominent names in U.S. society and the medical community have attested to the efficacy of acupuncture as a supportive therapy for oncology treatment.

- Dr. Oz has said that acupuncture is helpful for reducing the side effects of cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy and/or radiation including pain, nausea, fatigue, hot flashes and dry mouth.
- When singer Sheryl Crow was diagnosed with breast cancer, she underwent a lumpectomy followed by radiation. During these treatments she also received acupuncture and drank herbal teas.
- Former First Lady of Chicago, Maggie Daley, gave generously to help open the Maggie Daley Center for Women's Cancer Care at Northwestern Memorial Hospital. The center includes acupuncture as an option for the patients.

Many people are finding out that, although the treatments necessary to defeat cancer can be traumatizing and debilitating, they can get some relief through acupuncture.

Clinical Trials Indicate Acupuncture Provides Relief

The American Cancer Society has reported that half of all men and a third of all women in the United States will develop cancer during their lifetimes. Although there are many forms of cancer, all forms of the disease begin with abnormal cells that grow out of control.

Unlike other illnesses that are eradicated by the body's natural defense system, cancer needs to be treated with powerful medical interventions. Unfortunately, most of the current cancer treatments available have some debilitating side effects. This is where acupuncture can provide real help, by decreasing many of the side effects associated with conventional cancer treatments.

Clinical trials have examined the effects of acupuncture on cancer and the symptoms caused by cancer treatment, including weight loss, cough, chest pain, fever, anxiety, depression, night sweats, hot flashes, dry mouth, speech problems and fluid retention in the arms or legs. Studies have shown that, for many patients, treatment with acupuncture either relieves symptoms or keeps them from getting worse.

Relieves Pain and Stiffness during Hormone Therapy

In 2010, The Journal of Clinical Oncology published the results of a small study that concluded that acupuncture helped relieve pain and stiffness in breast cancer patients who were simultaneously being treated with hormone therapies.

Minimizes Dry Mouth

In 2009, the medical journal Head and Neck reported the results of a pilot study done at the University of Texas M. D. Anderson Cancer Center. The subjects were people suffering from head and neck cancer. The authors concluded, "This pilot study demonstrates that acupuncture can improve the subjective symptoms of dry mouth in patients with radiation-induced xerostomia as early as two weeks after starting treatment, and the benefits can remain at least one month after treatment ends," Dr. Mark Chambers told Reuters Health.

Reduces Pain and Shoulder Dysfunction

In 2008, Dr. David Pfister, chief of the head and neck medical oncology service at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, presented at the American Society of Clinical Oncology annual meeting in Chicago. He reported that patients found significant reductions in both dry mouth and pain and shoulder dysfunction after neck dissection with the help of acupuncture. "Although further studies are needed, this does support the potential role of acupuncture," said Pfister.

Reduces Hot Flashes

In 2011 A Yale University/University of Pittsburgh study of women with hot flashes brought on by conventional breast cancer treatment found that women who received acupuncture had a 30 percent reduction in hot flashes.

Call today to learn how acupuncture can augment an oncology treatment plan!

Cancer Prevention in Every Aisle

Nearly everything in the produce aisle can help you prevent cancer, but there are items throughout the supermarket that can protect your health and the health of your family.

Produce Aisle Picks

Cantaloupe - A great source of carotenoids, plant chemicals that act as antioxidants shown to reduce the risk of lung cancer.

Kale and Cabbage - Cruciferous vegetables are widely considered to be one of the healthiest food choices you can make. Included in this family of vegetables are broccoli, cauliflower, radishes, brussels sprouts, kale, cabbage and bok choy. Cruciferous vegetables are high in vitamins, fiber, and potent anti-cancer phytochemicals.



According to the American Institute for Cancer, there is solid evidence that links cruciferous vegetables and protection against cancer. Studies have shown that this vegetable group has the ability to stop the growth of cancer cells for tumors in the breast, uterine lining, lung, colon, liver and cervix. Studies that track the diets of people over time have found that diets high in cruciferous vegetables are linked to lower rates of prostate cancer among men.

It is recommended that we eat 3-5 servings of cruciferous vegetables per week. It's best to eat these veggies raw or only lightly steamed so they retain their cancer fighting phytochemicals.

Freezer Aisle Pick

Edamame (soybeans) - These cancer-fighting beans contain phytoestrogens, that may help prevent estrogen-driven cancers by binding to estrogen receptors. They are also good for the men of the household since evidence suggests the isoflavones found in soy products may help fight prostate cancer.

Cereal Aisle Pick

Whole Grains - Oats have the highest proportion of soluble fiber of any grain. Fiber is rich in antioxidants, helps fight colon cancer, and the phenolic compounds in whole grains may help reduce the risk of certain gastrointestinal cancers. Pick cereals high in folate, fiber and/or flaxseed.

Beverage Aisle Picks

Orange Juice - This favorite breakfast beverage is a powerful source of folate which has been linked to lowered risk for gastrointestinal and pancreatic cancers.

Green Tea - Lower in caffeine than coffee, it is rich in antioxidants that can help prevent prostate cancer and possibly bladder cancer.

Pomegranate Juice - Extremely antioxidant-rich, this juice helps prevent colon and prostate cancer.

Soy Milk - Made from soy beans, soy milk works the same way as edamame to fight cancer.

Household Aisle Picks

Sunscreen - Lather on the SPF each and every time you go out in the sun to block exposure to ultraviolet rays.
