

Massage during Cancer Treatment, Recovery and Survivorship

Society for
Oncology
Massage



Oncology massage is the adaptation of massage techniques to safely nurture the body of someone affected by cancer or its treatments.

Massage can be safe and therapeutic during and after cancer treatment

An oncology trained therapist has completed comprehensive training in general massage therapy as well as additional specialized training that addresses the side effects of cancer or its various treatments.

Even after people are out of treatment, receiving bodywork from an oncology therapist is important due to the potential for late effects of treatment.

An oncology massage therapist will adapt massage techniques to safely meet the changing bodywork considerations during and after cancer treatment.

Massage adaptations are required for:

- ◆ Low blood cell counts
- ◆ Blood clots
- ◆ Bone metastases
- ◆ Radiation or surgery
- ◆ Fatigue
- ◆ Bone pain
- ◆ Removal of lymph nodes
- ◆ Lymphedema
- ◆ Peripheral neuropathy
- ◆ Medications
- ◆ Medical devices
- ◆ Late effects of treatment

Many cancer treatments require long-term massage modifications. If you are in or have a history of cancer treatment, request an oncology massage trained therapist.



Massage and Cancer

Clinical research shows massage can improve some cancer treatment side effects

Massage benefits can include:

- ◆ Reduced pain and fatigue
- ◆ Decreased anxiety
- ◆ Less nausea
- ◆ Improved sleep
- ◆ Eased isolation
- ◆ Enhanced body image
- ◆ Greater sense of well-being



"Being so far out of treatment I didn't anticipate being able to feel that much better, but after the massage I did." Recipient

"This is not about pampering. It's about keeping myself in one piece until I'm done with treatment." Recipient

"After my massage I felt energized and productive that evening and on into the next. This surprised me because in the past I have felt "wiped out" by the massage." Recipient

"It is true that cancer and cancer treatment limit the massage choices. But within those limits, there are many rich and creative possibilities for touch." Oncology Massage Therapist

"One of the unexpected aspects of cancer is how very much a simple touch results in constant unremitting pain. Imagine what a sweet and strong experience to feel the warmth of your hands and instead of pain I felt relaxed and hopeful." Recipient



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Visit the S4OM website for information about:

- ❖ Massage and cancer
- ❖ Finding an oncology massage therapist
- ❖ A list of questions your therapist should be comfortable answering for you



www.S4OM.org

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