Health Psychology During and After Cancer Care

By Catherine Powers-James, PhD, Aimée Christie, PhD, and David Zuniga, PhD

Psychosocial Issues
Cancer is not just a physical disease, but a disease that affects many, if not all, aspects of a person’s life. Moreover, cancer treatment (e.g., chemotherapy and radiation therapy) can cause or increase psychological distress. Psychosocial issues often associated with a cancer diagnosis include:

- Lifestyle change: Weight gain, problems with nutrition, lack of physical activity, financial concerns, fatigue, and impaired sleep
- Emotional Distress: Depression/sadness/anxiety
- Fear of recurrence
- Communication and other problems with family members

Psychology/Mental Health Support
Psychology services can help patients manage anxiety, depression, and stress. The Institute of Medicine recognizes the importance of addressing psychosocial needs stating that it is “not possible to deliver good-quality cancer care without using existing approaches, tools, and resources to address patients’ psychosocial health needs.” Due to recognizing this importance, the Commission on Cancer of the American College of Surgeons now requires routine screenings for psychological distress. Talk therapy can lessen negative emotions, increase well-being, increase quality of life, improve sleep, facilitate positive growth, decrease feelings of helplessness, and decrease stress hormones and immune system dysregulation. Patients who undergo therapy may notice health benefits as well as perhaps increase survival.

Health Psychology
Health psychologists, also referred to as medical psychologists, are a type of psychologist that focus on how patient’s mental, emotional, and social factors affect their physical well-being. This field takes a biopsychosocial perspective looking at how the mind, body, and person’s environment are related. Often times, a patient can work to improve their mental health, thus improving their physical health by making lifestyle changes. Health psychologists help patients, survivors, and families understand and transform the unique challenges that a cancer illness can present through education and activities drawing upon the integration of current psychological research with biomedical information. Health psychology services may also benefit people wanting to address lifestyle changes, such as maintaining a healthy weight and improving diet and exercise.

Health Psychology Approaches
Some treatments a health psychologist can provide include:

- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT): Teaches patients to increase their activity and evaluate their thinking patterns to identify more accurate and helpful thinking.
- Motivational Interviewing: Acknowledges and discusses ambivalence regarding decisions and changes, with the aim to encourage patients towards healthy outcomes.
- Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT): Encourages patients to behave in ways that are consistent with their values, while using acceptance, distancing from thoughts, and mindfulness strategies to increase psychological flexibility.
- Interpersonal Therapy: Helps patients improve their relationships, in part by focusing on the here-and-now.
- Mindfulness-based treatment: Teaches patients to non-judgmentally focus their attention on their present experience, which can help with increasing qualities like acceptance, gratitude, and well-being.

For more information on scheduling a consultation, please refer to page 4 of this newsletter or call 713-794-4700.
## Outpatient Group Clinical Services

All Classes are free. Please call 713-794-4700 to sign up.

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<tr>
<th>Physical</th>
<th>Mind-Body</th>
<th>Social</th>
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<td><strong>Brief Relaxation Massage</strong>&lt;br&gt;Experience a brief upper body massage for relaxation. These chair massages are generously funded by Angie’s Spa.</td>
<td><strong>Qigong</strong>&lt;br&gt;Experience this ancient Chinese system of self-care using meditation, breath, and movement.</td>
<td><strong>Cooking for Optimal Health</strong>&lt;br&gt;The dietitian for the Integrative Medicine Center demonstrates how to prepare dishes meeting whole food, plant-based diet recommendations. Participants will also have the chance to enjoy some delicious samples. Recipes will emphasize a different theme each month.</td>
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<td><strong>Shape-Up Circuit</strong>&lt;br&gt;A fitness class designed to improve body composition by increasing muscle strength and burning calories. Led by the Integrative Medicine Physical Therapist, this class will follow a &quot;circuit&quot; format, with different exercises at each station. Suitable for any fitness level. Please bring a water bottle.</td>
<td><strong>Meditation for Health</strong>&lt;br&gt;Meditation is a practice that brings awareness to your mind and body and may help reduce stress. We explore meditation techniques to help bring calm and focus to the present moment. These practices can help you to connect more deeply to yourself and others on your journey to health. Class method rotates weekly (see calendar).</td>
<td><strong>Meditation and Daily Life</strong>&lt;br&gt;Learn meditation in an interactive class format. Each meditation experience includes an exploration of Tea, Art, Writing, or Nature. Themes rotate weekly. Goals include lowering stress and enhancing connectedness with self and surroundings.</td>
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<td><strong>Tai Chi</strong>&lt;br&gt;Find balance and strength through continuous flowing movements that link mind to body.</td>
<td><strong>Yoga for Health</strong>&lt;br&gt;Features a gentle form of yoga including stretching, breathing, relaxation, and meditation techniques.</td>
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<td><strong>Get Moving</strong>&lt;br&gt;Recharge and energize with uplifting music and a blend of yoga, dance, and martial arts.</td>
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### Activity Level:

- Gentle
- Active
- Very Active

*Program support provided by the Duncan Family Institute

View audio and video resources online: www.mdanderson.org/integrativemedcenter
### July 2018

#### How to schedule an appointment:
- Call Integrative Medicine Center at 713-794-4700 for more information.
- Arrive 15 minutes early to check in for group classes.

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<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
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All classes are for outpatients and their caregivers and are offered at the Mays Clinic location – ACB2.1005
Individual Outpatient Clinical Services

An MD Anderson physician’s order is required before scheduling any of the services listed below.

For additional details, please:
• Call 713-794-4700
• Visit our website
  http://www.mdanderson.org/integrativemedcenter
• Visit one of our 2 outpatient locations:
  - Main Clinic: R1.2000, a free standing facility east of the Main Building near valet
  - Mays Clinic, 2nd floor near elevator T

Integrative Oncology Consultation
Our physicians and advanced practice providers can give guidance on achieving a comprehensive and integrative approach to your cancer care.

Exercise/Physical Activity Consultation
Being more physically active may benefit patients during and after cancer treatment by decreasing fatigue and improving strength. A senior physical therapist provides recommendations on achieving safe and optimal exercise during each consultation.

Acupuncture
Acupuncture is a safe and often effective medical treatment that can be used to manage side effects from cancer and related treatments, including nausea and vomiting, pain, neuropathy, hot flashes, fatigue and dry mouth. Treatments range from $65 to $75. An additional $10 may apply.

Oncology Massage Treatment
Oncology massage may help patients address anxiety, relieve pain, decrease fatigue and improve sleep quality. The initial treatment is $70 and follow up treatments are $40.

Health Psychology Consultation
A licensed clinical psychologist will provide both evaluation and interventions to help with lifestyle change and address symptoms of stress, anxiety and depression.

Nutrition Consultation
A registered dietitian provides personalized nutrition counseling and education to help patients manage side effects and reach their goals during and after cancer treatment. Education emphasizes a whole foods, plant-based diet for optimal health.

Meditation Consultation
Meditation decreases anxiety and negative emotions, improves sleep and memory and increases spiritual awareness and a sense of well-being. Initial visit fee is $50. Follow-up visits range from $25 to $50.

Friends of Integrative Medicine
exists to raise awareness within MD Anderson and the larger Houston community of the important role complementary and integrative medicine can play in cancer prevention and in helping those with cancer live better and longer.

Become a Member Today
Contact Dr. Alejandro Chaoul at machaoul@mdanderson.org for membership information.

The Fountain of Joy, which stands in front of the Integrative Medicine Center, was donated by longtime Friend of Integrative Medicine member and patient Joyce Arrington Smith.