

# Inside Integrative Medicine

September 2020

**Integrative  
Medicine Virtual  
Group Programs  
Coming Soon**

## Acupuncture and Cancer Care

### What is Acupuncture?

Acupuncture has been practiced in China and other Asian countries for thousands of years. Acupuncture is a safe, minimally invasive, evidence-based medical treatment. The use of acupuncture as an adjunctive therapy to treat side effects of cancer care has significantly increased in recent years and is now offered within many hospitals, including the MD Anderson Cancer Center.

### What are the Potential Benefits of Acupuncture?

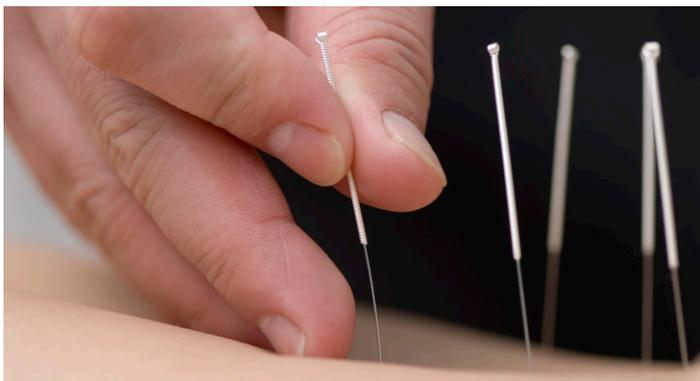
Acupuncture does not treat cancer, rather, it can be safely used as a complementary therapy alongside conventional care to help provide relief from cancer and cancer treatment related symptoms.

Acupuncture can help with:

- Cancer and cancer treatment related pain management
- Chemotherapy induced and post-operative nausea and vomiting
- Fatigue
- Constipation/Post-operative ileus
- Hot flashes
- Xerostomia (Dry mouth)
- Chemotherapy Induced Peripheral Neuropathy
- Other symptoms

### Who provides treatment?

Acupuncture treatments should only be provided by a qualified, state licensed acupuncturist. In most states, acupuncturists are required to sit for national board exams given by the National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM). The NCCAOM requires that each acupuncturist complete a minimum three and a half-year graduate level program from an accredited acupuncture school



The NCCAOM requires that all acupuncturists complete continuing education in the subjects listed above to recertify.

### What to expect during an acupuncture treatment?

During an acupuncture treatment, very thin stainless-steel needles are inserted into specific acupuncture points on the body and left in place for 20-30 minutes. The needle's effects may be modified as needed with manual or electrical stimulation and/or heat. The length and frequency of acupuncture treatments may vary according to the condition being treated, with chronic conditions requiring a longer treatment plan. Typically, two treatments weekly for 3-4 weeks are initially recommended, but treatment plans can vary according to the issue being addressed. Treatments may then decrease in frequency as the treatment plan progresses and desired results are achieved. The initial acupuncture consultation and treatment takes approximately one hour. Follow up sessions take approximately 30-45 minutes. Consider wearing loose comfortable clothing and avoid having a large meal just before an appointment, a light healthy snack is best.

### Is Acupuncture safe during cancer treatment?

Acupuncture is a safe and effective treatment. Side effects may include bleeding, bruising, and pain, although most patients report very little discomfort. More commonly, patients report feeling a sensation of heaviness, warmth and /or tingling at the needle insertion site. Less common side effects may include fainting and temporary numbness at the acupuncture site. Patient's lab results are reviewed before each treatment to check for risk of bleeding or infection.

### Summary

Acupuncture is an effective adjunctive therapy to help manage symptoms related to cancer and treatment. Acupuncture can be safely and effectively used as a part of an integrative approach to cancer care.

For additional information regarding the efficacy and application of acupuncture visit the following websites:

National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine [www.nccaom.org](http://www.nccaom.org)

National Cancer Institute  
[www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/treatment/cam/hp/acupuncture-pdq](http://www.cancer.gov/about-cancer/treatment/cam/hp/acupuncture-pdq)

National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health  
[www.nccih.nih.gov/health/acupuncture](http://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/acupuncture)

## Integrative Oncology Consultation

Our physicians can give guidance on achieving a comprehensive and integrative approach to your cancer care virtually via MyChart/Epic Zoom.

## Exercise/Physical Activity Consultation

A senior physical therapist provides recommendations on achieving safe and optimal exercise during each consultation virtually via MyChart/Epic Zoom.

## Oncology Acupuncture Treatment

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. Treatments are \$55.

View audio and video resources online:  
[www.mdanderson.org/integrativemedcenter](http://www.mdanderson.org/integrativemedcenter)

## 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 virtually via MyChart/Epic Zoom.

## 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 food, plant-based diet for optimal health virtually via telephone visit.

## Yoga/Meditation Consultation

Yoga/meditation lowers stress, depression, and anxiety, improves sleep, memory, physical functioning, and overall quality of life, as well as increasing spiritual well-being. A yoga/meditation therapist would provide interventions virtually via MyChart/Epic Zoom. Cost: \$50 per session.

## Music Therapy

Individual music therapy is provided by a board-certified music therapist (MT-BC) and involves engaging in music interactively in a variety of ways, with outcomes including anxiety reduction, fostered well-being and exploring ways of reconnecting to music for daily quality of life. Cost: \$50 per session.

*Due to COVID-19 precautions, several integrative services are now available using a virtual format. Other services on hold. Please contact the Integrative Medicine Center for more details.*

## Chili Roasted Sweet Potatoes

By Karla Crawford

As fall approaches there is a special crop that appears in the harvest for this month. Sweet potatoes! Some may think pie or a side dish with cinnamon, butter and brown sugar. Sweet potatoes are a good source of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. In addition, they have both soluble and insoluble fiber which are good for heart health and gut health respectively. However, there is healthier way to enjoy this starchy vegetable. Sweet potatoes are a good source of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. In addition, they have both soluble and insoluble fiber which are good for heart health and gut health respectively.

Cooking time: about 20-25 minutes  
Serves: 4-6



### Ingredients:

- 2 sweet potatoes, cut into 1" cubes
- 1-2 Tbsp coconut oil, melted
- 2 Tbsp chili powder
- 1-2 pinches cayenne (optional but very good!)
- 1 tsp sea salt

### Instructions:

1. Set oven to 425 degrees F
2. Place cubed sweet potatoes in mixing bowl
3. In a separate small bowl, mix melted coconut oil with chili powder and cayenne
4. Pour liquid mixture over sweet potatoes and mix well until well coated
5. Layout onto cookie sheet and sprinkle with sea salt
6. Roast in oven for 20-25 minutes until crisp and cooked throughout

