

Inside Integrative Medicine

August 2022

**Integrative
Medicine
Virtual
Group Classes
Now Available**

Healing Through Writing: An Expressive Writing Support Group

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Many people who are diagnosed with cancer may experience emotional distress. Their loved ones and caregivers can also experience emotional distress. This distress can be impacted by physical symptoms of the disease, side effects from treatment, financial impact of cancer, and other life stressors. Additionally, distress can impact the way a person copes with their diagnosis, makes decisions about their medical care, and can affect their interpersonal relationships. There are many effective ways for someone to manage their distress including individual counseling, meditation, journaling, and joining a support group.

Why Join a Support Group?

Oncology support groups provide a unique opportunity for patients and caregivers to both provide and receive support from their peers. A common cause of distress is feeling isolated and alone due to their disease. Attending a cancer support group helps patients and caregivers identify with others in similar circumstances. They can share their experiences and learn from others. The comradery from a support group can be vital to emotional well-being.

What is Expressive Writing?

Expressive writing is different than journaling which is a common practice to improve coping in patients with cancer and their caregivers.

Typically, expressive writing is structured and focused. Participants write for 10-15 minutes a day for 4 days on their deepest thoughts, feelings and experiences. Research has shown that expressive writing provides long-term improvements in mood.

Overview of the Group

Participants in the group will receive a writing prompt and instructions after registration. You will be asked to spend 10-15 minutes a day for 4 days writing in response to the prompt. Participants will then attend a 60 minute virtual support group in which 20 minutes will be spent allowing participants to share excerpts from their writing and the remaining 40 minutes processing any emotional responses. By combining the elements of expressive writing and a support group, we hope you will experience a positive impact on your mood and coping skills. Healing Through Writing class does not require a referral. Please contact the Integrative Medicine Center at 713-794-4700 to register for the journaling class.



Integrative Oncology Consultation

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

Exercise/Physical Activity Consultation

A senior physical therapist provides recommendations on achieving safe and optimal exercise during each consultation 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.

Oncology Massage Treatment

Oncology massage may help patients address anxiety, relieve pain, decrease fatigue and improve sleep quality. Cost: \$55 per treatment.

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

Prices for IMC services may be subject to change depending on insurance coverage.

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 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 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 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.

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How to Register for our virtual classes:

1. Call Integrative Medicine Center at 713-794-4700
2. All classes are free
3. Complete e-update *liability waiver and telemedicine consent in MyChart at least 48 hours prior to scheduled class

Class Descriptions:

Yoga for Health- Features a gentle form of yoga including stretching, breathing, relaxation, and meditation techniques.

Connect & Reflect with Music- An interactive and supportive music group, led by a Board-Certified Music Therapist, using music engagement and conversation to enhance well-being and encourage connectedness. No music experience is required.

Healing Through Writing- Using expressive writing as a tool to identify and process difficult emotions in a supportive environment.

Cooking for Optimal Health - Learn new recipes and different tips for preparing whole food plant-based meals. Participate in the comfort of your own kitchen or observe and ask questions.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Yoga for Health 10:30-11:30	Cooking for Optimal Health Noon - 1:00 (2nd Tues)	Yoga for Health 10:30-11:30	Connect & Reflect with Music 1:30-2:30	Yoga for Health 10:30-11:30
Healing Through Writing 2:00-3:00 (August 8th last class)	Connect & Reflect with Music 3:30-4:30			

Black Bean Salad

Servings: 6

Total Time: 10 minutes



Ingredients:

- 1 can corn, rinsed and drained
- 1 large green pepper, cut into strips
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, cut in half
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1 jalapeño pepper, chopped (optional)
- Handful of cilantro, roughly chopped
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 tbsp rice wine vinegar
- 1/2 cup medium salsa
- 2 cans black beans, no salt added
- Pinch of salt and pepper to individual taste

Instructions:

1. Combine all ingredients except salt and pepper in a large bowl.
2. Mix well and season to taste with salt and pepper.
3. Cover and keep refrigerated for up to 4 days. Serve with tortilla chips or flat bread.



Recipe courtesy of <https://athtable.mdanderson.org/recipe?id=471>