



## THE BENEFITS OF MASSAGE THERAPY FOR CANCER PATIENTS

Massage used as a complementary therapy for cancer patients has evolved over the years. Where it was once contraindicated and erroneously thought to hasten the spread of cancerous cells, we know now that massage therapy can provide myriad benefits to the cancer patient, from therapeutic relief for chronic pain, to stress reduction, to better self-awareness of the body that can enhance the healing process.

Massage involves the manipulation of soft tissues for the purpose of restoring a sense of revitalization and well-being, as well enhancing function, and can be performed safely for most cancer patients. Given the often overwhelming nature of a cancer diagnosis, as well as the side effects and discomfort from some treatments and surgeries, massage can provide relief in many ways. Here are some of the most common physical, emotional and psych-social benefits:

- Reduced stress and anxiety (helpful before and after surgery, or before and during chemotherapy)
- Improved sleep
- Deep relaxation
- Reduced pain
- Reduced nausea
- Reduced swelling and fluid retention
- Reduced fatigue
- Increased mental clarity and alertness (helpful for “chemo brain”)
- Improved flexibility and range of motion
- Improved scars and adhesions
- Improved appetite
- Decreased depression
- Improved sense of body self-image

And for the cancer patient, working with massage therapists like those on our staff who have training in oncology is important. From questions about general well-being (i.e. Are you feeling fatigued or nauseous?), to specific questions about blood counts or treatment ports, oncology massage therapists are trained to know what to ask in order to customize the treatment to the patient’s individual needs, as well as insure that the massage is gentle, effective and an overall positive experience.

Our massage therapists communicate closely with the physicians and the patient’s care team to provide the type of massage therapy that will benefit the patient at different stages throughout their cancer journey. If you’re a cancer patient interested in massage therapy, ask your doctor if this complementary therapy could be right for you.

## MASSAGE THERAPY



### Need an appointment for massage therapy?

Massage therapy at RMO is available Tuesdays/Wednesdays 1-5pm, Thursdays/Fridays 9am-1pm. To schedule an appointment with our massage therapists, Molly Guindon or Riley Vasquez, call our patient guide, Meaghan Hennings, at (307) 233-4783.

\* Patients will be charged based on their ability to pay.

### Wellness Services: Did you know that RMO offers Acupuncture and MBSR?

Like massage, acupuncture treatments have been shown to help patients with symptom management. Mindfulness Based Stressed Reduction (MBSR) is a structured program that uses mindfulness meditation focusing on alleviating pain and improving one’s physical and emotional well being. Both are wellness services offered at RMO for our patients. Call our Patient Guide, Meaghan Hennings, at (307) 233-4783 to learn more about the benefits of these complementary treatments or to sign up.

## RECIPE CORNER: CINNAMON PEACH SMOOTHIE



Enjoy some of summer's best flavors, as well as a quick nutrition boost with this easy-to-prepare smoothie recipe.

Note: If you're currently undergoing treatment for cancer and experiencing a flagging appetite as a result - and many cancer patients do- using a nutrition supplement drink (i.e. Ensure or Boost) instead of milk in this recipe will add extra calories you may want or need.

Preparation time: 10 minutes. Serves one.

### INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup diced peaches (fresh, frozen or canned)
- ½ cup low-fat plain yogurt
- ½ cup of any liquid, such as milk, soy milk, rice milk, Boost, Ensure, Boost Plus, or Ensure Plus, or a generic version of one of these products.
- 1 tablespoon honey
- Cinnamon to taste (1/8 teaspoon is a good place to start)

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Clean, peel, and prepare the fruit and place in the blender.
- Add liquid ingredients to blender.
- Blend all of the ingredients together to your desired consistency. (Add additional liquid to the blender if needed to thin out consistency for better blending. Depending on the strength of your blender, you may need more or less liquid to make the mixture blend.)

## ASK THE DOC:

**Q:** I'm in the middle of chemotherapy treatments for breast cancer. I know I need to eat a healthy diet, but food I used to enjoy now tastes strange and I don't have an appetite for salad. Truthfully, the only thing that tastes good right now is a vanilla milkshake. Is that okay? And what should I do to make sure I'm getting the right nutrients?

*-Casper resident and cancer survivor, Jim*

**A:** It is very common for patients to complain of food tasting strange or not having an appetite for particular foods during and after their treatment. This certainly can be discouraging. We encourage patients to focus on boosting their caloric intake in any way. If you find something you like to eat and can tolerate it, go with it. Vanilla milkshakes are a good source of calories. And here's a tip: add an Instant Breakfast-type drink mix to your shake. This will increase the level of calories, protein, fat, vitamins and minerals to your diet. Frozen fruits and vegetables are also a safe and nutritious addition to your smoothies and fruit juices.

**NUTRITION PER SERVING\*:** 390cal; 68g of carbohydrates; 15g of protein; 6.5g of fat; 2.5g of fiber; 215mg of sodium; 866mg of potassium

\*Note: These are the nutritional facts for this recipe when prepared using a nutrition supplement drink. Calories and protein will be somewhat lower if made with milk, soy milk, rice milk, or another liquid.

Recipe from [www.caring4cancer.com](http://www.caring4cancer.com)

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# AUGUST 2011

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2 MASSAGE THERAPY 1PM - 5PM GROUP ACUPUNCTURE 3PM - 4PM	3 SUPPORT GROUP 11AM - 1PM MASSAGE THERAPY 1PM - 5PM	4 MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM CARING FOR CAREGIVERS 4PM - 6PM	5 MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM MBSR 3PM - 4PM	6
7	8 ACS LOOK GOOD, FEEL BETTER 10AM	9 MASSAGE THERAPY 1PM - 5PM GROUP ACUPUNCTURE 3PM - 4PM	10 SUPPORT GROUP 11AM - 1PM MASSAGE THERAPY 1PM - 5PM	11 MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM CARING FOR CAREGIVERS 4PM - 6PM	12 MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM MBSR 3PM - 4PM	13
14	15	16 MASSAGE THERAPY 1PM - 5PM GROUP ACUPUNCTURE 3PM - 4PM	17 SUPPORT GROUP 11AM - 1PM MASSAGE THERAPY 1PM - 5PM	18 MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM CARING FOR CAREGIVERS 4PM - 6PM	19 MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM MBSR 3PM - 4PM	20
21	22	23 MASSAGE THERAPY 1PM - 5PM GROUP ACUPUNCTURE 3PM - 4PM	24 SUPPORT GROUP 11AM - 1PM MASSAGE THERAPY 1PM - 5PM	25 MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM CARING FOR CAREGIVERS 4PM - 6PM	26 MASSAGE THERAPY 9AM - 1PM MBSR 3PM - 4PM	27
28	29	30 MASSAGE THERAPY 1PM - 5PM GROUP ACUPUNCTURE 3PM - 4PM	31 SUPPORT GROUP 11AM - 1PM MASSAGE THERAPY 1PM - 5PM			

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