



**University
Hospitals Sussex**
NHS Foundation Trust

Complementary Therapies at St. Richard's Hospital

Cancer services

Patient information

What is this information about?

This information is about the complementary therapies available to people who have had a cancer diagnosis. It explains:

- What complementary therapies are.
- How complementary therapies may help you.
- Who can book to have the complementary therapies sessions.
- How many sessions you can have.
- How to book sessions.
- The different types of complementary therapy sessions that you can have.
- Some other things you need to know about the sessions.
- What further help is available from our Complementary Therapists and other sources.

Why have I been given this information?

You have been given this information because complementary therapies may improve your wellbeing if you have had a diagnosis of cancer.

It will help you to:

- Find out about the complementary therapies we offer and decide whether you would like to try them.
- Know what to expect from your complementary therapy sessions.

What is complementary therapy?

Complementary therapies are therapies you can have alongside your current medical care. They may 'complement' (add to the benefit of) your treatment and make you feel better by increasing your feeling of wellbeing.

Be aware

Complementary therapies are not to be used to replace your current medical care or instead of medical treatment.

The complementary therapies that we offer are gentle and can be adapted to suit your needs.

How might having complementary therapies help me?

Complementary therapies aim to:

- Help you to relax.
- Make you feel less anxious.
- Help you to sleep better.
- Reduce symptoms such pain and feeling sick (nausea).

What do I need to know about the sessions?

Anyone in the Sussex area who has had a diagnosis of cancer (and sometimes their carers or close family) can have complementary therapy sessions. This includes people who are having chemotherapy and radiotherapy.

We offer sessions to people who are staying in hospital for their care (inpatients), people who come to the day unit, and outpatients.

If you are unsure about whether complementary therapies are right for you, we are happy to talk about this with you.

Complementary therapy sessions:

- Are free of charge (we offer six sessions).
- Take place at The Fernhurst Centre, St Richards Hospital, Chichester.
- Usually last for around 30 to 45 minutes.
- Can be booked weekly, every two weeks or monthly depending on us having sessions available.
- To book sessions, ask in the Macmillan Centre or email the mailbox in the contact details at the end of this information. We will ask you to complete a form about you and how you are. Please bring it to your first session.

Be aware

You may need to:

- remove some of your clothes if you are having massage therapy.
- lie down on a couch or sit in a chair for some therapy sessions.

Your therapist will talk with you about this and adapt the sessions to meet your needs as far as possible.

If I cannot come to any of my therapy session appointments, what should I do?

Please phone the Macmillan Centre or email the site you are due to attend as soon as possible using the contact details at the end of this leaflet. This is so we can offer the appointment to someone else who needs our service.

If you have to cancel an appointment, we will be happy to book another one for you to replace it.

Which therapies do you offer?

Reflexology

Reflexology is a therapy which started in ancient Egypt. It is a gentle pressure technique which is applied to the feet or sometimes the hands. Reflexology is based on the principle that the feet or hands are a mini-map of the body, with each organ and structure in the body having a corresponding reflex point in the feet and hands. The therapy applies the principle that stimulating specific reflexes in these areas may facilitate wellbeing and encourage relaxation in the body.

Reiki

Reiki is a therapy which started in Japan. Reiki means 'universal energy' in English. It is based on the belief that there is a flow of energy within living things which may help to keep them 'in balance'.

In a Reiki session the therapist places their hands on or just above different parts of the body with the aim of directing and balancing energy to improve wellbeing.

Oncology Scar Massage Therapy

This type of massage is designed to treat scar tissue, fibrosis (which happens when scar tissue grows too much or hardens) and adhesions. An adhesion is a band of scar tissue that joins (sticks together) two surfaces of the body that should usually be separate.

If you have scars left by an operation or procedure scar massage can:

- Make changes to scars (on the surface of the skin and to adhesions or fibrosis in the tissue under the skin) that boost healing.

- Reduce symptoms such as pain or the scarred area feeling over-sensitive.
- Improve your body's movement and flexibility in the area which is scarred. This could include reducing the feeling of 'pulling' or tightness around the scar as you move.
- Make scars appear less severe. This might include a scar looking less puckered.
- Reduce the 'cording' that can happen if you have had an operation on your lymph nodes. Cording is when you develop a tight band of scar tissue that can feel like a 'string', often under the skin of your inner arm. This can make it uncomfortable to move your arm.

Scar massage is for anyone affected by cancer who has:

- Had an operation or procedure between at least six and twelve weeks ago.
- A wound or scar where the scab has healed and fallen off without any wound infection.
- Been affected by a scar even if the scar is not recent.

How else might you be able to help my wellbeing?

We may be able to:

- Give you a free Mindfulness Activity Booklet. This has creative colouring and breathing exercises you can try that may help you to relax and feel calmer. Ask for your copy in the Macmillan Information and Support Centre.
- Give you an 'Aroma Stick'. This contains a blend of essential oils which may help to reduce anxiety and nausea and help you to sleep.

Please contact the Complementary Therapy Coordinator for further information.

Contact information

Complementary therapy coordinator: jemima.neale@nhs.net

Macmillan information and support (Chichester): **01243 831727**

Fernhurst reception: **01243 788 122 Ext. 35156 or 35166**

Fernhurst reception: uhsussex.srhcomplementarytherapies@nhs.net

I would like to donate to the Complementary Therapies Service. How can I do this?

Complementary Therapies are provided free to anyone affected by a cancer diagnosis in the Sussex area.

All the sessions are funded by charitable donations and supported by My University Hospitals Sussex charity.

We gratefully accept all donations. If you would like to donate, please make cheques payable to 'Complementary Therapies'. If you prefer you can donate through the 'My UHS' Charity donations page.

<https://www.myuhsussex.org/make-a-donation/>



Please tell them you would like your donation to go to Complementary Therapies. You do not have to donate to the service in order use it.

Gift Aid.

The Gift Aid Scheme increases the value of your donation at no extra cost to you. For every £1 you give, the government will add 25p. If you would like to register for Gift Aid and are a taxpayer, please ask for a form which just needs your name, address and signature. Once completed, all future donations will also be covered by the scheme.

Thank you for any donations that you choose to make.

This information is intended for patients receiving care
in Chichester St.Richard's Hospital.

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