

About Integrative Medicine

A GUIDE TO SELF-CARE AND SUPPORT | WINTER 2018



Jun Mao, MD, MSCE
Chief, Integrative Medicine Service

Chief's Note

Welcome to 2018!

To increase the understanding of the role of integrative medicine in cancer care, I joined a team of experts to define the term “integrative oncology.” We published this explanation in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute Monographs*.

INTEGRATIVE ONCOLOGY

- Is a patient-centered, evidence informed field of cancer care that utilizes mind and body practices, natural products, and/or lifestyle modifications from different traditions alongside traditional cancer treatments.
- Aims to optimize health, quality of life, and clinical outcomes across the cancer care continuum and to empower people to prevent cancer and become active participants before, during, and beyond cancer treatment.¹

This is an exciting and essential step toward a better understanding of our emerging field. I hope that having a common language will lead to improved communication among patients, their families and caregivers, and healthcare providers as this area of cancer care advances.

Best wishes for a happy and healthy winter!

Jun

¹ Witt CM, Balneaves LG, Cardoso MJ, Cohen L, Greenlee H, Johnstone P, Küçük Ö, Mailman J, Mao JJ. A Comprehensive Definition for Integrative Oncology. *J Natl Cancer Inst Monogr*. 2017 November 1;2017(52). doi: 10.1093/jncimonographs/igx012.

Tune In to Our New Meditation Station

Our new Meditation Station has a collection of mindfulness practices written and recorded by our mind-body medicine team. Visit www.mskcc.org/meditation to listen on your computer, tablet, or smartphone.



You can enjoy these calming recordings throughout your day, whether you're preparing for a doctor's appointment or want help sleeping better at night. Check out these offerings and more:

RESTFUL NIGHT AHEAD

Get ready for bed by enjoying the relaxing sounds of acoustic guitar.

YOGA NIDRA

Experience a progressive full-body relaxation practice to help you sleep soundly.

BODY SCAN

Relax your body from head to toe before a big event or when you want to sleep.

MINDFUL WALKING

Purposefully pay attention to the feeling of your feet on the ground, the movement of your legs, and your surroundings.

Visit www.mskcc.org/meditation to get started today.

Staff Spotlight: Meet Our Creative Arts Therapy Interns

Each year we host and train graduate students in creative arts therapies. As we look toward National Creative Arts Therapy Week (March 11 to 17, 2018), we asked our three interns to share their experience studying music and dance therapy at MSK.

“In a medical setting there are times when people feel like they have lost a part of their identity. Music can transport people back to memorable times in their lives, enhance their mood, reduce feelings of anxiety, and help remind someone that they are more than their diagnoses.”

Hannah Hershman

Music Therapy, New York University



Alessandro Ricciarelli is a music therapist at MSK who mentors graduate student interns.

“I am continuing to learn the foundations of dance movement therapy and implementing the various elements in medical situations. When an individual is coping with an illness like cancer, supportive services such as dance movement therapy can truly provide comfort, and help with refocusing, normalization, and connectivity.”

Ashley Ervin

Dance/Movement Therapy, Pratt Institute



Memorial Sloan Kettering
Cancer Center

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Arts Therapy Interns

“It has been heart opening to meet so many people of different ages, backgrounds, and beliefs. This can be challenging at times, as I sometimes know that I have just one session to get it right. However, it is extremely gratifying when I am able to play a favorite song or help create a space where anxiety is reduced and relaxation can take place.”

Alexander Brickel

Music Therapy, Molloy College

Creative Arts Therapy programs are supported by philanthropy, including generous contributions from the Andrea Rizzo Foundation and Gabrielle’s Angels.

Upcoming Classes

Our classes are open to the MSK community — patients, survivors, and their caregivers.

Call 646-888-0800 to reserve your spot, and visit www.mskcc.org/integrativemedicine for details.

Meditation 101: Online

Sundays, March 4 to April 8
11:00 AM to 12:15 PM

Cost: \$150

Meditation 101: In Person

Mondays, March 19 to April 30
6:00 PM to 7:30 PM
Bendheim Integrative Medicine Center, 1429 First Avenue

Cost: \$180

Meditation 201: Softening the Heart

Wednesdays, March 14 to April 18
3:15 PM to 4:45 PM
Bendheim Integrative Medicine Center, 1429 First Avenue

Cost: \$180



ABOUT HERBS FEATURE OF THE MONTH

Ginkgo

By Jyothirmal Gubili

One of the oldest species of trees, dating back 250 million years, ginkgo is common in China, Korea, and Japan. Ginkgo seeds are used in traditional Chinese medicine to treat problems with the brain, lungs, and heart, along with sexual disorders, loss of hearing, and balance issues.



Ginkgo is one of the top-selling herbal supplements in the United States and

Europe. The leaf extract is used to enhance memory for people with mild memory loss and to treat reduced blood flow to the limbs (peripheral vascular disease), ringing in the ears, and sexual disorders.

There is evidence supporting the use of ginkgo for peripheral vascular disease. Research also suggests that ginkgo extracts may prevent infections, prevent cancer, and destroy cancer cells. However, more research is needed to see if ginkgo can help prevent dementia and Alzheimer’s disease or lower your risk of cancer. ■

30-50 %
of people diagnosed with cancer experience insomnia **and**

23-44 %
of patients have insomnia 2 to 5 years after treatment ends.

People with insomnia may:

- take **30 minutes** to fall asleep
- have difficulty staying asleep
- have difficulty returning to sleep

3 x 3
Chronic insomnia is when insomnia occurs at least **three nights a week for three months.**

16% Insomnia is underdiagnosed among people with cancer. In one published study, only **16%** of patients told their health care provider they have trouble sleeping.

Supportive Care Tips for Insomnia

1. Treating cancer-related **pain, anxiety, hot flashes, nausea, and depression** with integrative therapies may reduce insomnia symptoms.
2. Medications to improve sleep are for **short-term use** and may have unwanted side effects.
3. Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Insomnia is a well studied method for improving sleep in people with cancer and cancer survivors.

Sleep and Chemo Brain

By Jodi MacLeod

Cancer survivors often find that trouble sleeping goes hand in hand with cognitive dysfunction, or “chemo brain.” This late effect of treatment can result in difficulties with short-term memory and mental tasks like reading, as well as not being able to think or understand as quickly.¹ Chemo brain can appear up to six months after completing chemotherapy, a time when cancer survivors are hoping to return to a normal life. Insomnia can make these cognitive difficulties worse.

The good news is that for most cancer survivors, symptoms of chemo brain will diminish over time, and help is available for those whose daily lives are impacted. Some ways to improve how you deal with mental tasks include organization strategies like making lists and relaxation techniques like meditation. A special type of cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia is an option as well.

For help with insomnia and cognitive changes, call 646-888-0845 to make an appointment for an integrative medicine consultation with one of our doctors. ■

Jodi MacLeod is a writer, patient advocate, and 13-year breast cancer survivor living in the Philadelphia area.

¹Burtchell J. Healthline.com (2016, January 11). Fighting post-treatment fog: chemo brain explained

Bendheim Integrative Medicine Center
1429 First Avenue at East 74th Street
Appointments: 646-888-0800
www.mskcc.org/integrativemedicine

The Integrative Medicine Service offers classes and self-care videos on yoga, tai chi, qigong, and meditation to help you discover the practice that is right for you. For our current class schedule and links to our video library, go to our website.