

About Integrative Medicine

A GUIDE TO SELF-CARE AND SUPPORT | SUMMER 2018



Jun J. Mao, MD, MSCE
Chief, Integrative Medicine Service

CHIEF'S NOTE

Welcome to the summer issue of our newsletter. We are excited to share the results of our recent study comparing acupuncture and cognitive behavioral therapy to treat insomnia. We also explore the controversial herb, kratom, and invite you to visit us for acupuncture at MSK Bergen, our newest regional site in Montvale, New Jersey. Four integrative medicine research interns have joined our service for the summer – get to know these rising stars. Finally, please join me in wishing Simon Yeung, the beloved manager of our award-winning About Herbs website, a happy retirement.

Enjoy your summer!

Jun

Study Finds Effective Integrative Treatments for Insomnia

By Christina Seluzicki

Promising results from the **Choosing Options for Insomnia in Cancer Effectively (CHOICE)** study led by Integrative Medicine Service chief, Jun J. Mao, MD, MSCE, found that both acupuncture and cognitive behavior therapy helped treat insomnia in cancer survivors. CHOICE was funded through a Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI) award. Dr. Mao reported the findings at the recent American Society for Clinical Oncology (ASCO) annual meeting in Chicago. His presentation was among those awarded the “Best of ASCO” and was highlighted in the ASCO press program.

Insomnia can be debilitating. It can also have a negative impact on quality of life. The study team compared acupuncture, a component of Traditional Chinese Medicine that involves stimulating

points on the body with needles, and cognitive behavior therapy for insomnia (CBT-I), a treatment that focuses on sleep restriction, stimulus control, cognitive restructuring, relaxation training, and education.

“The findings of the CHOICE study show us that giving people options for managing their insomnia is useful. Everyone is different. Thankfully, we have two viable treatments to help cancer survivors get a good night’s sleep,” says Dr. Mao.

If you are struggling with insomnia, acupuncture is available through the Integrative Medicine Service. Please call 646-888-0800 to make an appointment. CBT-I is available through MSK’s Counseling Center. To schedule an appointment, call 646-888-0100.



Farewell to Dr. K. Simon Yeung

We are sad to bid farewell to K. Simon Yeung,

PharmD, MBA, LAc, manager of our award-winning About Herbs website. Over the past 16 years, his comprehensive knowledge of traditional Chinese herbal medicine and western pharmacology, along with his commitment and dedication, have made the database recognizable worldwide. He has also been actively involved in clinical trials on acupuncture and botanicals. We will miss his unique perspective, guidance, and humor. Happy retirement, Simon!

RESEARCH UP CLOSE: THE CHOICE STUDY

WHICH TREATMENT IS MORE EFFECTIVE FOR REDUCING INSOMNIA: ACUPUNCTURE OR CBT-I?

We enrolled **160 cancer survivors** who have clinically diagnosed insomnia in the CHOICE study.

Up to **60% of cancer survivors have insomnia.**

People were randomly chosen to receive either **acupuncture or CBT-I** treatment for **8 weeks.**

All survivors in the study reported **improvement in their quality of life and mental health** at the 20 week follow-up.

At **20 weeks**, we followed up with these survivors to see if their insomnia improved.

CBT-I was more effective for people with mild insomnia.

Data from the study showed **acupuncture and CBT-I are both effective** and safe for cancer survivors **to reduce moderate to severe insomnia.**



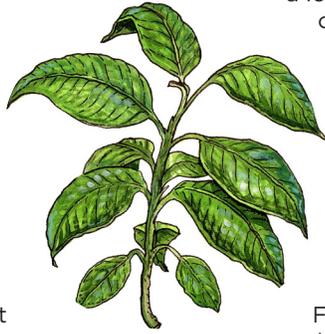
Memorial Sloan Kettering
Cancer Center

Kratom

By Jyothirmai Gubili

HERB OF THE MONTH: KRATOM (*Mitragyna speciosa*)

The leaves of kratom, a plant native to Southeast Asia, are used in traditional medicine to treat pain, fatigue, fever, diarrhea, and wounds. Kratom alters the mind, leading to temporary changes in perception, and has qualities that mimic opioid drugs. It has recently grown in popularity as a supplement to improve mood, and to reduce anxiety and pain. Kratom produces stimulant effects at lower doses, while acting as a sedative and pain reliever at higher doses.



Studies done in animal models indicate that kratom can relax muscles, reduce inflammation, relieve pain, and produce a loss of appetite. One of the active compounds, mitragynine, also acts as an antioxidant and can prevent the spread of cells in some cancer cell lines. But clinical data are limited.

Kratom has also generated controversy. Citing side effects, potentially related deaths, risk of addiction, and contaminated supplements, the FDA has issued many statements and recalls of kratom-containing products. Many countries and US states have banned these products because of the potential for abuse.



ACUPUNCTURE NOW AVAILABLE AT MSK BERGEN

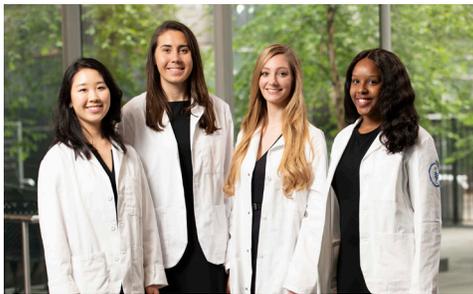
We are happy to announce that we now offer acupuncture at MSK Bergen in Montvale, New Jersey.

Acupuncture is a safe and effective form of traditional Chinese medicine that can help you tackle the side effects of surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation. Our team of licensed acupuncturists has specialized training for treating people with cancer.

We offer acupuncture at MSK locations throughout the tri-state area. To make your appointment at MSK Bergen or any of our other locations, or to schedule a free 15-minute phone consultation with one of our acupuncturists, call Integrative Medicine at 646-888-0800.

Rising Stars: Integrative Medicine Faculty Mentor Future Doctors

By Lauren DeMarzo



Left to right: Alice Kwon, Annika Dries, Melissa Leeolou, Brianna Michael

This summer, the MSK Integrative Medicine Service is excited to welcome three medical students and a pre-medical student for an eight-week research internship. As a part of MSK’s mission to educate people about the progression and control of cancer, these students will be mentored by our faculty, observe patient care, and gain first-hand clinical research experience.

Annika Dries is studying at the Stanford University School of Medicine. Prior to medical school, Annika competed for and won an Olympic Gold Medal in water polo at the 2012 Olympic Games. She says, “I am excited to dive into research this summer with the Integrative Medicine team investigating yoga, exercise, sleep, acupuncture, and the power of the mind-body relationship.”

Alice Kwon attends the Albert Einstein College of Medicine. Her interest in integrative medicine developed during her study abroad year in Denmark where she was a volunteer at a cafe providing integrative therapies to refugees with illnesses. She says, “Seeing first-hand the benefits supportive programs like these can have on trauma victims continues to inspire my medical career.”

Melissa Leeolou is a former professional ballet dancer who is currently applying to medical school. When she transitioned out of her ballet career, she was looking for a field that would satisfy her artistic creativity and intellectual curiosity. “Working in research allows for creative license through developing innovative treatments, and viewing science through an artistic lens enhances my appreciation for the natural world,” she says.

Brianna Michael attends Upstate Medical University and plans to specialize in primary care and work in an underserved area. “I appreciate supportive health programs that provide opportunities to disadvantaged communities,” she says. “My patients may have many extra psychosocial and economic burdens. Including integrative medicine will help me serve them effectively.”



MSK Regional Sites

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.