

Acupuncture in Cancer Treatment

There have been many advances in the early detection and treatment of cancer. While the standard medical care for cancer is effective, the treatments are aggressive and cause numerous unwanted side effects as well as a lowered immune system. Acupuncture has received much attention as an adjunctive therapy in cancer treatments for its use in pain relief, reducing side effects, accelerating recovery and improving quality of life.

What Acupuncture is used for during Cancer Treatment



Acupuncture provides a total approach to health care for people with cancer. It can be used to address many of the concerns that come up during and after chemotherapy, radiation, biological therapy and surgery.

According to the National Cancer Institute, acupuncture may cause physical responses in nerve cells, the pituitary gland, and parts of the brain. These responses can cause the body to release proteins, hormones, and brain chemicals that control a number of body functions. It is proposed that, by these actions, acupuncture affects blood pressure and body temperature, boosts immune system activity, and causes the body's natural painkillers, such as endorphins, to be released.

Areas that acupuncture has shown the most promise include:

- Nausea and Vomiting
- Dry Mouth, Night Sweats and Hot Flashes
- Stress, Anxiety and Fatigue
- Pain Management
- Increasing White Blood Cell Count

Nausea and Vomiting

The strongest evidence of the effect of acupuncture has come from clinical trials on the use of acupuncture to relieve nausea and vomiting. Several types of clinical trials using different acupuncture methods showed acupuncture reduced nausea and vomiting caused by chemotherapy, surgery, and morning sickness. It appears to be more effective in preventing vomiting than in reducing nausea.

Other symptoms caused by cancer treatment

Clinical trials are studying the effects of acupuncture on cancer and symptoms caused by cancer treatment, including weight loss, cough, chest pain, fever, anxiety, depression, night sweats, hot flashes, dry mouth, speech problems, and fluid in the arms or legs. Studies have shown that, for many patients, treatment with acupuncture either relieves symptoms or keeps them from getting worse.

Boosting the Immune System

Human studies on the effect of acupuncture on the immune system of cancer patients showed that it improved immune system response, including increasing the number of white blood cells.

Pain Management

In clinical studies, acupuncture reduced the amount of pain in some cancer patients. In one study, most of the patients treated with acupuncture were able to stop taking drugs for pain relief or to take smaller doses.

Acupuncture is also very useful for support if you are undergoing chemotherapy, radiation, or hormonal therapy. Because chemotherapy and radiation therapy weaken the body's immune system, a strict clean needle method must be used when acupuncture treatment is given to cancer patients.

Source: National Cancer Institute. www.cancer.com

New Lung Cancer Guidelines Includes Acupuncture

Acupuncture is now officially recommended for lung cancer patients experiencing fatigue, dyspnea, chemotherapy-induced neuropathy, pain, nausea and vomiting.

Evidence-based guidelines published by the *American College of Chest Physicians* recommend acupuncture for lung cancer patients experiencing fatigue, dyspnea, chemotherapy-induced neuropathy, or to soothe symptoms of pain or nausea and vomiting.

The new edition of these standard guidelines represents the first time complementary and integrative medicine has been addressed in the prevention and treatment of lung cancer. Lung cancer is the leading cause of cancer death in the United States, causing more fatalities than the next four most common types of cancer combined.

The new guidelines were developed and reviewed by 100 multidisciplinary panel members and have been endorsed by the American Association for Bronchology,

American Association for Thoracic Surgery, American College of Surgeons Oncology Group, American Society for Therapeutic Radiology and Oncology, Asian Pacific Society of Respiratory, Oncology Nurses Society, Society of Thoracic Surgeons, and the World Association of Bronchology.

Source: *Chest*, September 2007



Cancer Fighting Veggies

Widely considered to be one of the healthier food choices is the cruciferous vegetables. Included in this family of vegetables are broccoli, cauliflower, radishes, brussels sprouts, kale, cabbage, and bok choy. Cruciferous vegetables are high in vitamins, fiber, and potent anti-cancer phytochemicals.

According to the *American Institute for Cancer*, there is solid evidence that links cruciferous vegetables and protection against cancer.

Studies have shown that this vegetable group has the ability to stop the growth of cancer cells for tumors in the breast, uterine lining, lung, colon, liver, and cervix. And studies that track the diets of people over time have found that diets high in cruciferous vegetables are linked to lower rates of prostate cancer.

It is recommended that we eat 3-5 servings of cruciferous vegetables per week. It's best to eat these veggies raw or only lightly steamed so they retain their cancer fighting phytochemicals.

EAT SOME OF THESE EVERY DAY:

- Arugula
- Beet greens
- Bok choy
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Chinese cabbage
- Collard greens
- Daikon
- Horseradish
- Kale
- Kohlrabi



- Mustard greens
- Radishes
- Rutabaga
- Swiss chard
- Turnips
- Watercress

Source: acufinder.com