

Complementary Therapies

Tailoring the therapy to you

Complementary therapies are used alongside orthodox treatments to help with symptom control through psychological, emotional, physical and spiritual support. It is not a curative intervention.

All patients are assessed individually by a qualified therapist for the appropriateness of the therapies we offer.

Available therapies include aromatherapy, Indian head massage, reflexology, reiki, relaxation techniques and massage therapy.

Some of the benefits which may be experienced include an improved sense of well-being, sense of relaxation, reduced sense of anxiety, enhanced quality of life, time out, improved coping mechanism and feeling cared for.

From relieving stress and headaches to helping with pain control and insomnia, they add a holistic dimension to the programme of care we offer at the hospice for inpatients, out patients and the Woods centre patients.

We also offer this service to support those carers who may forget that their own sense of well-being is just as important when providing care for their loved ones.

Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy is a form of complementary therapy that uses volatile plant materials, known as essential oils, and other aromatic compounds, for the purpose of bringing about a beneficial change in a persons emotional, psychological, physical or spiritual health state.

Two basic methods are offered to explain the suggested effects. One is the influence of aroma on the brain, especially the limbic system through the olfactory system. The other is the direct pharmacological effects of the essential oils.

Essential oils can be introduced through massage, inhalation or direct application.

Indian Head Massage

Indian Head Massage, also known as Champissage, is a trademarked term for this complementary therapy. In champissage, the upper back, shoulders head, neck and face are massaged using a variety of techniques to manipulate and stimulate the soft tissue.

Reflexology

Reflexology is a complementary therapy which involves the physical act of applying acupressure to the feet, hands, or ears (although most commonly to the feet) with specific thumb, finger, and hand techniques. It is based on what reflexologists claim to be a system of zones and reflex areas which is believed to mirror an image of the body on the feet and hands. Applying pressure to these areas stimulates the organs and systems and brings about a holistic change to the body.



Reiki

Pronounce ray-key and meaning “universally guided energy” Reiki is a Japanese system of natural energy healing which promotes all aspects of well-being and aims to bring about a balance within the body, emotion, mind and spirit.

Reiki is administered by the therapist lightly touching the patient through a series of hand positions along their fully clothed body whilst seated, or lying down on a couch.

Relaxation Techniques

A relaxation technique is any method, process, procedure, or activity that helps a person to relax; to attain a state of increased calmness; or otherwise reduce levels of anxiety, stress or anger. Relaxation techniques are often employed as part of a wider self help program and can decrease muscle tension, lower the blood pressure and slow heart and breathing rates, among other health benefits.

Massage Therapy

Massage is the manipulation of superficial and deeper layers of muscle and connective tissue using various techniques, to enhance function, aid in the healing process, and promote relaxation and well-being. The word comes from the French *massage* "friction of kneading", or from the Arabic *massa* meaning "to touch, feel or handle".

I look forward to my complementary therapy session because I know I will feel special, safe and comforted. The sense of relaxation makes me forget my problems and all my troubles seem to 'flow away' leaving me feel calm, peaceful and at ease with life.

Jennie - patient