

Infusion Center Massage

Patients with cancer commonly experience disease or treatment side effects including pain, fatigue, nausea and anxiety. Therapeutic massage (“TM”) can help manage such side effects including while a patient is receiving treatment at an infusion center.

In an academic outpatient comprehensive cancer center, participants in a recent study reported a statistically significant reduction in pain, fatigue, nausea and anxiety after receiving TM. The participants also reported a high level of satisfaction with the TM received as part of their care. Participants received TM from a licensed massage therapist (“LMT”) trained in oncology massage. The LMT provided TM concurrently with the patient’s oncology treatment. No negative effects of TM were reported during this study. (See attached Robison & Smith, 2016 article).

Similar metrics can be measured for TM provided at the Host Facility Infusion Center.

Greet The Day Program

Greet The Day (“GTD”) is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to “improve the quality of life for people affected by cancer through education and integrative oncology care.” GTD offers patient service programs, including infusion center massage, at no charge to the patients. GTD therapists provide comfort-oriented 20-minute hand and/or foot massages to patients while they are receiving treatment at their infusion center usually after IV insertion.

GTD therapists are professionally licensed therapists (massage therapists and estheticians). They have completed continuing education courses in Oncology Massage (24 CE Credits) and Infusion Center Massage (26 CE Credits). In addition, they must comply with all Host Facility (“HF”) on-boarding requirements including completion of all required immunizations, forms, and trainings, a background check, ten panel drug screen and an on-site orientation.

Greet The Day infusion center massage trained therapists provide programs at:

- UCI Chao Family Comprehensive Cancer Center, Irvine, CA (2008)
- Bon Secours St Francis, Greenville, South Carolina (2014)
- USC Keck Medical Center, Los Angeles, CA (2015)
- UCSD Moores Cancer Center, San Diego, CA (2016)
- Dignity Health, Sacramento, CA (2018)
- UCLA Ronald Reagan Medical Center, Los Angeles, CA (2019)
- Providence Alaska Medical Center, Anchorage, AK (2020)

Infusion Center Process - General Guidelines

1. Therapist providing massage must complete symptom check upon entry to the building.
2. Therapist providing massage must wear a hospital grade mask when providing care for patients.
3. If a patient is COVID-positive or COVID-rule out, the therapist providing massage must not provide care.
4. Hand washing is required before and after every patient contact.
5. Gloves must be worn for any patient massage and must be changed after each patient contact with hand hygiene performed in between glove change.
6. Only HF approved lotion may be used for the massage.
7. Therapist providing massage must check in with the Infusion Center staff upon arrival for identification of any patients interested in a massage.
8. HF approved disinfectant wipes must be used on the lotion container between patients.

Infusion Center Process - Individual Patients

1. Check in with charge nurse or nurse assigned to patient before approaching patient.
2. Ascertain whether patient is being treated for DVT or thrombocytopenia.
3. Specific adaptations must be made based on the patient's medical history and current status. (See GTD Oncology Massage Manual, p.1-10).
4. All Infusion Center TM starts with Still Touch (a stationary weightless touch application). This is the touch application used for patients with DVT. For patients with severe effects/side effects of disease or treatment including bone metastasis, bruising, edema, extreme fatigue, fever, fragile skin, nausea, neuropathy, PLT >20 <50 the Light Lotion touch application is used. This is a 1 on a 5-point scale and is non-circulatory. The maximum pressure used for Infusion Center TM is Gentle Massage. This is a 2 on a 5-point scale and is non-circulatory, and is used for patients experiencing moderate effects/side effects of disease or treatment including bone metastasis, bruising risk, edema, fatigue, lymphedema and lymphedema risk, nausea, neuropathy, neutropenia, osteoporosis, PLT >50 <100. (See attached HBMT Clinical Guidelines Massage Pressure).