

effects on quality of life” (mood, adjustment, function, coping and patient satisfaction) (UK) and “There was a statistically significant decrease in anxiety and pain (for mastectomy patients receiving reflexology work)...” (Korea)

Hospice / palliative care

Research showed reflexology effected palliative care: “quality of life was improved through a reduction in physical and emotional symptoms.” (Scotland) Other studies showed reflexology helped by: “alleviating fatigue in terminally ill cancer patients;” (Japan); improving 18 measures of quality of life (UK); “reducing cancer pain and improving quality of sleep;” (Korea) “... it could be one way for them to feel this (family) support and to have a helping presence near them in their last days.” (Switzerland)

Who Practices Reflexology?

In multiple studies, nurses describe reflexology as an effective nursing intervention that provides a simple, non-invasive and comforting touch for cancer patients. Reflexology applied by family members is positively received by all: cancer patients feel supported and family members appreciate the opportunity to help a loved one.

- Reflexology is a complement to standard medical care. It should not be construed as medical advice or considered to be a replacement for medical help.
- Quoted items are drawn from studies noted at www.reflexology-research.com

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Benefits of a Reflexology Session

Research shows the benefits of a single reflexology session. Among results:

- Hospitalized cancer patients experienced a significant and immediate effect on perceptions of pain, nausea and relaxation following a ten-minute reflexology session.
- A 30-minute session partner-delivered reflexology session provided to metastatic cancer patients demonstrated a significant decrease in pain intensity (37%) and anxiety (62%).
- 100% of palliative cancer patients who received a 40-minute reflexology session reported improvements in quality of life (appearance; appetite; breathing; communication with doctors, family, and nurses; concentration; constipation; diarrhoea; fear of future; isolation; micturition; mobility; mood; nausea; pain; sleep and tiredness).

Research shows the benefits of a series of reflexology sessions. Among results:

- Breast cancer patients receiving chemotherapy experienced a statistically significant decrease in nausea, vomiting and fatigue following four 40-minute reflexology sessions.
- Patients with gastric and liver cancer who received 20-minute reflexology sessions post surgically over 3 days reported less pain and anxiety as well as less analgesia use.



Can Reflexology Help with My Cancer Care?



Research demonstrates that cancer patients who receive reflexology work show significant improvements in physical and emotional symptoms of the cancer experience. From a single 10-minute session to a series of sessions, reflexology helps:

- lessen pain
- reduce nausea and vomiting
- lower fatigue
- improve quality of life
- better mood
- lessen anxiety, depression, and stress
- improve quality of sleep
- cope better.

Why Reflexology?

It's effective.

Twenty-one studies in eight countries have demonstrated reflexology's impact on cancer patients' concerns. Research results describe the positive impact of reflexology work on symptoms experienced by cancer patients: pain (10 studies), anxiety (6), nausea (4), vomiting (2), fatigue (4), quality of life (3), mood (2), quality of sleep, stress, depression, foot fatigue, morale and vital signs (1 study each).

Anxiety

- “The degree of fatigue, anxiety, and mood state in the experimental (reflexology) group were significantly lower...” (Korea)
- “...patients with breast and lung cancer experienced a significant decrease in anxiety.” (US)
- “...immediate decrease in pain intensity and anxiety.” (US)
- “State-anxiety and discomfort of subjects receiving foot reflexzone massage were significantly lower (for ovarian cancer patients) ...” (Korea)

Fatigue

- “...statistically significant decrease in fatigue in the experimental group” (Korea)
- “...improve vital signs, general / foot fatigue, and mood status” (Korea)
- “Combined modality treatment consisting of aromatherapy, footsoak, and reflexology appears to be effective for alleviating fatigue in terminally ill cancer patient” (Japan)
- “...fatigue and depression were significantly lower...” (Korea)

Pain Reduction

- “...positive immediate effect for patients with metastatic cancer who report pain” (US)
- “...significant and immediate effect on the patients' perceptions of pain;” (Australia)
- “...immediate decrease in pain intensity and anxiety...” (US)
- “...effective for reducing cancer pain” (Korea)
- “... statistically significant decrease in anxiety and pain ...” (Korea)
- “... pleasantly relaxing and able to diminish painful sensations in the body (for patients with terminal cancer).” (Switzerland)
- “... statistically significant decrease in anxiety and pain (post-surgically for mastectomy patients)...” (Korea)
- “...effective for reducing cancer pain and improving quality of sleep in patients with terminal cancer.” (Korea)

Nausea / Vomiting

- “...statistically significant decrease in nausea, fatigue and vomiting...” (Korea)
- “...produced a significant and immediate effect on the patients' perceptions of pain, nausea and relaxation” (Australia)
- “...reported less pain, nausea, stress, anxiety, and depression...” (US)
- “...100% of the reflexology group who received a 40-minute session benefited from an improvement in quality of life: ... (including) nausea...” (UK)
- The traditional self-help technique of bamboo stepping had a significant effect on chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting. (China)

Helping throughout the cancer experience

Chemotherapy / radiotherapy

Symptoms are lessened for cancer patients receiving chemotherapy or radiotherapy when reflexology is applied. Results from 8 studies show patients experienced decreases in nausea, vomiting, fatigue, anxiety, and depression. (Korea, US, China, Italy) Improvements were seen with patients feeling better, coping better (Italy), as well as experiencing an improved mood state and physiological measures of anxiety and immune response. (Korea) Reflexology helped patients receiving radiotherapy with fatigue, anxiety, and mood state in addition to “lowered degrees of side effects.” (Korea)

Inpatient care

Results of 4 studies showed lessened pain and/or anxiety for hospitalized cancer patients who received reflexology (US). Additional studies found inpatients who received reflexology reported: lessened pain, anxiety, stress, nausea and depression with increased feelings of well-being and peacefulness (US) as well as decreased pain and nausea (Australia).

Post surgical care

Less pain and anxiety as well as significantly less use of analgesics was reported by patients with gastric and liver cancer who received reflexology. (Taiwan) Other studies found reflexology applied post-surgically to be “clinically worthwhile, (with)