

COMPLEMENTARY THERAPIES

What are Complementary Therapies?

Complementary therapies are non-drug symptom management tools. They may help relieve common discomforts, improve quality of life, and lessen suffering

Therapies are used together with standard medical care
They are not used in place of medical care

What are possible benefits of Complementary Therapies?

Therapies promote a sense of well-being; healing; help relieve stress and tension; aid in relaxation; and create a sense of balance of mind, body and spirit

Not all therapies work for everyone

What are some examples of Complementary Therapies?

- Aromatherapy uses essential oils from plants
- Art therapy uses drawings, art and craft activities
- Massage involves rubbing and gentle touching of skin and muscles
- Music therapy involves a person participating with the music by beating a rhythm, or singing a song, or listening intently, to the music of their choice
- Pet therapy is interaction with animals and their trainers or may include time with your own pet
- Reflexology provides gentle pressure to the feet or hands to restore a state of balance and relaxation
- Reiki (pronounced Ray-key) uses "laying on hands" providing a gentle touch for | ãenergy flowí
- Acupuncture involves the use of sharp, thin needles inserted in the body at very specific points to adjust and alter the body's energy flow
- Acupressure involves applying pressure on specific points of the body

Where do you find someone to provide Complementary Therapies?

Your hospice and palliative care team can help you find the right complementary therapies for you

Ask your team if you have questions about complementary therapies

Tell your hospice and palliative care team about any complementary therapies that you are already using.

Other HPNA Patient/Family Teaching Sheets are available at www.hpna.org.

Reference

Core Curriculum for the Generalist Hospice and Palliative Nurse. Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company; 2005.

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