

**No. 8** is a series providing the latest information for patients, caregivers and healthcare professionals

## Highlights

- Many cancer patients are using integrative medicine (IM) to help ease their cancer symptoms and reduce the side effects of cancer treatment.
- IM is a form of medical therapy that combines practices and treatments from complimentary medicine (yoga and massage) with conventional medicine (surgery, chemotherapy, radiation treatment, immunotherapy).
- Complementary therapies are non-drug treatments, often originated from other traditional medical systems, which have shown benefits to patients and are used to complement the main cancer treatment. Examples of complementary therapies include acupuncture, meditation, therapeutic massage and yoga.
- No complementary health treatment has been proven to cure cancer, but complementary treatments may help cancer patients manage their cancer symptoms or treatment side effects and enhance well-being. These treatments may help cancer patients suffering from anxiety, fatigue, nausea, pain or stress.
- Complementary therapies, especially natural health products such as herbs and supplements, may have their own side effects and can interfere with standard cancer treatments. It is important to discuss complementary therapies with your healthcare providers. This will allow each of your doctors to develop a comprehensive treatment plan that incorporates complementary therapies that are safe and effective.
- Unproven products or practices should never be used to replace or delay standard medical treatment for cancer.

## Introduction

Cancer patients may suffer from physical and emotional distress due to their disease or its treatment. Patients are turning to integrative medicine (IM) to reduce stress, prevent or minimize side effects and symptoms, and support health and healing. IM combines standard medicine (such as surgery, chemotherapy, cancer drugs and radiation treatments) with safe and effective complementary therapies. Standard treatments are based on scientific research and are accepted by medical experts as proper treatment for a disease. Less research has been done for most complementary therapies.

Complementary therapies include an array of healing philosophies, approaches and therapies that embrace a more holistic approach to care—treating the mind, body and spirit. Examples of complementary therapies are:

- Therapeutic massage
- Acupuncture
- Meditation
- Yoga
- Music therapy

By integrating complementary therapies into conventional treatment plans, healthcare providers are better able to address the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of their patients.

Researchers are currently exploring the potential benefits of Integrative Medicine (IM). The National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH) and the National Cancer Institute Office of Cancer Complementary and Alternative Medicine (OCCAM) support research that holds complementary therapies to the same rigorous scientific standards used to evaluate medical treatments. Researchers work to determine which complementary treatments are promising, which treatments are effective, and which treatments are safe.

Some complementary therapies studied have been determined to be both safe and beneficial for cancer patients. For example, certain complementary therapies help patients manage cancer treatment-related side effects such as nausea, fatigue and pain. However, for other complementary therapies, little or no scientific evidence about safety or effectiveness is available. For this reason, it is important for patients to learn as much as they can about any therapies they may be considering, and to consult with their healthcare provider before trying any of them.

A growing number of hospitals, cancer centers and individual healthcare providers offer complementary therapies as part of a patient's treatment plan. Several major cancer centers have established IM services to make complementary therapies, such as music therapy, therapeutic massage, acupuncture, meditation, and yoga easily accessible to patients and families. At such centers, cancer patients can receive their complementary therapy and their cancer treatment in the same setting.

### Understanding the Benefits and Risks of Complementary Therapies

A growing number of people are turning to complementary therapies to help manage symptoms, reduce side effects, and restore and promote a sense of control and well-being. Roughly two out of three cancer patients have tried at least one complementary therapy as part of their cancer care.

Existing scientific evidence has found that certain complementary therapies may alleviate cancer-related symptoms and treatment side effects such as nausea and fatigue. For example, acupuncture has been evaluated in numerous studies and is now recognized as a safe method for managing chemotherapy-associated nausea and vomiting. Many complementary therapies are gentle, relaxing, and minimally invasive, providing ways for patients to develop an appreciation of themselves and an awareness of their own inner strength. Some techniques are "passive," requiring limited participation (such as massage and aromatherapy), while others are "active" (such as yoga and tai chi).

Still, there are comparatively few studies about the safety and effectiveness of many complementary therapies. To date, there is no definitive clinical evidence that any complementary therapies can slow cancer progression. Unproven products or practices should not be used to replace or postpone standard medical treatment.

Delaying conventional cancer treatment can be dangerous and decrease the likelihood of a remission or a cure. Any treatments that are presented as alternatives to standard cancer therapies should be considered only within the context of clinical trials (See *Clinical Trials for Blood Cancers* on page 6).

Despite some patients' views that complementary therapies are natural and safe, medical research indicates that not all these therapies are harmless. Cancer patients should consult with their healthcare providers before trying any complementary therapy for any purpose, whether it is cancer-related or not.

### Complementary Therapies for Side Effects

An integrative healthcare team evaluates the physical, emotional and spiritual needs of each patient and then recommends and incorporates specific therapies and lifestyle changes as part of a comprehensive treatment plan. Team members consider the scientific evidence, identify risks and benefits, and take into account individual preferences when they advise patients about various complementary therapies.

Complementary therapies do not work for everyone. While some patients find relief from complementary therapies, some have found them to be ineffective or have reported problems with one or another. Benefits may vary from individual to individual. The following is a partial list of complementary therapies:

**Acupuncture**—Acupuncture has been used in China for thousands of years as part of traditional Chinese medicine. Acupuncturists insert very thin needles through the skin at strategic places known as acupuncture points. Sometimes external heat and/or pressure is used, along with the needles. Substantial evidence shows that acupuncture can help relieve treatment-related nausea and vomiting in cancer patients. Other emerging evidence shows that acupuncture may relieve symptoms such as cancer pain, hot flashes, anxiety, sleep problems, dry mouth, digestive problems and neuropathy (nerve pain). Acupuncture can be considered if symptoms are severe and conventional therapies are ineffective. It is important for acupuncturists to follow strict clean needle procedures by using a new set of disposable needles for each patient. Ask your healthcare provider for a referral to an acupuncturist who has experience working with cancer patients.

**Aromatherapy**—Aromatherapy is the use of essential oils from plants. Essential oils may be diluted and then massaged into the body. Some evidence suggests that aromatherapy massage can help reduce stress, anxiety and fatigue in cancer patients. Essential oils may also be mixed with water into a diffuser and inhaled. Aromatherapy may work by sending chemical messages to the area of the brain that affects mood and emotions.

Keep in mind that one side effect of cancer treatment can be sensitivity to certain smells. Aromatherapy may even trigger nausea or vomiting for some patients. Additionally, skin changes such as rashes may be a side effect of cancer treatment, and lotions or massage oils, especially those with strong scents, may irritate sensitive skin.

**Art Therapy**—Art therapy involves creating art to help improve a person's health and well-being. It may include drawing, painting, working with clay, or engaging in other art forms. The participant does not have to be a skilled artist to benefit from art therapy. The process of creating and exploring feelings and emotions, not the finished product, is the key to art therapy. Art therapy led by a mental health professional may help reduce anxiety for cancer patients.

**Exercise**—A growing body of evidence suggests that physical exercise (walking, swimming, strength training) improves a cancer patient's fatigue and increases energy levels. Patients who exercise are less tired, less depressed and sleep better than patients who do not exercise. Exercise works by maintaining or building a person's stamina and strength. Before starting an exercise program, patients should consult with their healthcare team. Patients may be referred to a physical therapist, who will do a physical assessment and provide an exercise plan. An exercise plan should be individualized based on the patient's age, type of cancer, mobility and physical fitness level.

**Hypnosis**—Hypnosis is a trance-like state (like daydreaming) in which the body is relaxed but the mind is active. A specially trained therapist can direct the patient's attention to specific thoughts, feelings, images, sensations or behaviors. While under hypnosis, a person may feel calm, relaxed and more open to positive suggestions that may help reduce physical symptoms such as pain, anxiety, nausea and vomiting.

**Massage Therapy**—Research suggests that massage therapy may help relieve symptoms such as pain and anxiety in cancer patients. Massage therapy involves a professional practitioner applying pressure to muscle and connective tissue. In most states, people who practice

massage may obtain a license to practice, which should ensure quality and requires continuing education for practitioners. Massage can help reduce tension and pain, improve circulation and encourage relaxation. Patients should consult with their healthcare providers before starting massage therapy to learn if there are any special precautions needed. For example, a massage therapist should not use deep or intense pressure especially near enlarged lymph nodes or on skin that is sensitive following radiation therapy. Ask your healthcare provider for a referral to a professional massage therapist who has experience working with cancer patients.

**Medical Marijuana**—Marijuana has been used in herbal remedies for centuries. The biologically active components in marijuana are called "cannabinoids." The two most-studied components are the chemicals delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and cannabidiol (CBD). Under federal law, marijuana cannot legally be prescribed, possessed or sold. However, under most state laws, the use of marijuana to treat some medical conditions is legal. To get medical marijuana, you will need a recommendation or certification from a licensed provider, verifying that you have a qualifying condition. Each state has its own list of qualifying conditions. You may then need to enroll in your state's medical marijuana program, which may include obtaining a medical marijuana ID card. Once enrolled, you will be able to buy medical marijuana at an approved dispensary. (Some state laws also allow the legal use of recreational marijuana by adults ages 21 and older; no states allow it for children and teens.)

In cancer care, medical marijuana is sometimes used to manage side effects, such as nausea, appetite loss, pain or anxiety, if other medications or treatments are unsuccessful. More research is needed to better understand the benefits and risks of marijuana and its cannabinoids.

Do not use marijuana or products made with cannabinoids without first talking to your healthcare team. Marijuana or related products (for example, CBD oils) could interfere with other medications. Do not obtain any kind of marijuana anywhere that is not a licensed dispensary. Marijuana products that are not obtained from licensed dispensaries carry additional risks as they may contain unknown ingredients, including infectious agents or more potent (sometimes illegal) drugs. Talk honestly with members of the healthcare team about your use of marijuana or related products.

**Meditation**—Meditation is a mind-body self-practice that offers training in awareness and focused attention to get

a better sense of perspective. Meditation helps induce calmness and physical relaxation, improves psychological balance, and enhances overall health and well-being. The most extensively studied form of meditation in cancer patients is a multicomponent approach called mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), which includes meditation, yoga and group dynamics. MBSR may help cancer patients relieve anxiety, stress, fatigue and sleep disturbances.

**Music Therapy**—Music therapy uses music to help improve a person’s health and well-being. It may include listening to relaxing music, singing, playing or learning a musical instrument, composing music and/or moving to music. In recent years, the use of music therapy has become more common for cancer patients. Music therapy may reduce stress, pain, anxiety and nausea.

**Relaxation Techniques**—Relaxation techniques promote health by relaxing the body and quieting the mind. These therapies are used to relieve stress and muscle tension, lower blood pressure and reduce pain. Relaxation techniques include guided imagery (focusing the mind on positive thoughts), biofeedback (learning to control specific body functions such as heart rate, blood pressure and muscle tension with the help of a special machine), self-hypnosis and deep breathing exercises. For patients with cancer, regular relaxation training has decreased stress levels, increased immune system functioning, decreased pain, decreased the side effects of cancer treatment and improved mood.

**Tai Chi**—Tai chi is a system of sequences of very slow controlled movements that originated in China. It combines physical movement, breathing exercises and meditation to improve health and quality of life. In some patients, tai chi is effective in relieving pain, reducing fatigue and stress, and improving sleep quality. The practice may also help increase aerobic capacity, muscular strength, balance and flexibility in patients.

**Yoga**—Yoga is an ancient practice that originated in India, which uses both the mind and the body. The various types of yoga usually combine physical postures, breath control and meditation or relaxation. Yoga may help improve anxiety, depression and stress in cancer patients. It should be noted, however, that only a small number of yoga studies in cancer patients have been completed. Therefore, more research is necessary. Since yoga involves physical activity, it is important for patients to discuss yoga with their healthcare providers to find out whether yoga may be safe for them because for newcomers, it’s easy to over-do.

If you are suffering from:	Consider trying: (listed alphabetically)
Anxiety, depression, stress	Acupuncture, aromatherapy, art therapy, exercise, hypnosis, massage therapy, meditation, music therapy, yoga
Chemotherapy-induced nausea/vomiting	Acupuncture, aromatherapy, hypnosis
Fatigue	Aromatherapy, exercise, meditation, tai chi, yoga
Pain	Acupuncture, hypnosis, massage therapy, music therapy, relaxation techniques
Sleep problems	Acupuncture, meditation, relaxation techniques, yoga

### Dietary Supplements, Vitamins, Herbs and Natural Products

While approval is required by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) for drugs to be prescribed for a particular condition or illness, therapies such as vitamins or herbal supplements are not considered drugs, but “foods.” Unlike drugs, they do not have to be tested by the FDA before they are available to consumers, so their effectiveness and safety is often unknown.

**Patients undergoing cancer treatment should not take any dietary supplements, vitamins, or herbs unless a doctor approves them. Many oncologists advise their patients to avoid these products during chemotherapy and radiation therapy.**

The following are examples of how vitamins and herbal supplements can adversely affect patients:

- Few herbal products have been tested for quality or side effects. Product quality is highly variable with differing concentrations of active ingredients. In addition, some herbal supplements may be contaminated with microorganisms, pesticides or heavy metals that can harm patients, particularly seriously ill patients. There are also concerns that certain herbal supplements can cause allergic reactions, gastrointestinal problems, liver damage or nerve damage.
- Some herbal supplements can either increase or lessen the effects of other medications, or they may interfere with the metabolism of prescription drugs,

making them less effective. For example, the herb St. John's Wort, which is sometimes used to treat depression, can make some cancer treatments such as imatinib mesylate (Gleevec®) less effective. Conversely, some herbs can increase the potency of a drug, causing more side effects. Some herbs can affect blood thinners such as warfarin and make the blood too thin or too thick, increasing a patient's risk of bleeding or blood clots.

- Vitamins in high doses can also have similarly unwanted side effects. They can cause adverse effects and are prone to interact with other drugs and dietary supplements. For instance, some studies have shown that high doses of vitamin C may reduce the effectiveness of chemotherapy drugs in patients who have leukemia, lymphoma or multiple myeloma. Some chemotherapy treatments use free radicals to destroy cancer cells. Vitamin C may neutralize these free radicals and reduce the effectiveness of various chemotherapy drugs such as doxorubicin, methotrexate and cisplatin.

The FDA and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) have warned the public to be aware of fraudulent cancer treatments. The internet is full of “miracle cures,” “scientific breakthroughs,” and “secret ingredients” to treat or prevent cancer. Some of these fraudulent treatments may be dangerous and can cause physical harm. Other ineffective treatments may cause indirect harm by delaying or interfering with proven, effective treatments. Any patient considering using an anticancer product seen in advertisements or online, or even endorsed by well-meaning family and friends, should talk with their healthcare provider first.

### Complementary Therapies and Childhood Cancer

Integrative medicine and complementary therapies may also be used in pediatric (childhood) cancer care. According to studies, complementary therapies may help children with a cancer diagnosis in some of the following ways:

- Massage therapy may help decrease pain and anxiety.
- Art therapy and music therapy may improve mental health and communication skills and help manage pain and fatigue.
- Acupuncture may help with managing nausea and pain.

Not all complementary therapies are safe for children undergoing cancer treatment. Even therapies that have been studied in adults for safety and effectiveness may not have been studied in children. Dietary supplements, vitamins, herbs and natural products are typically not recommended for children during cancer treatment because of the risk of interference with the prescribed doctor's treatment. Talk to the healthcare team before giving your child any supplements or natural products.

If age-appropriate, include your child in discussions about complementary therapies with the healthcare team. There may be specific complementary therapies that your child finds more appealing. For example, is your child more interested in music or art therapy, or would they prefer to try yoga or massage?

Talk to your child's healthcare team about what complementary therapies (both activities and supplements) may help improve your child's well-being and ask for referrals to licensed and/or certified specialists who have experience working with children.

### Will My Insurance Pay for Complementary Therapies?

Some health insurance companies have started covering certain complementary therapies such as acupuncture. Check with your insurance provider to find out about your health plan coverage.

### Talking to Your Healthcare Provider

Make sure to speak openly with your healthcare providers about any complementary therapies that you are currently using or considering. According to some studies, many patients do not share the complementary therapies they use with their doctors, due to fear that their doctor will disapprove. However, it is very important to discuss all therapies openly with your doctor because:

- Many complementary therapies have not yet been extensively studied. For this reason, it is not widely known which are potentially helpful or harmful.
- Some therapies – herbal remedies and dietary supplements in particular – can interact with radiation therapy or chemotherapy.
- If you have been doing research on specific complementary therapies, your healthcare providers can help you to better understand the scientific studies. Together, you can determine which therapies will be the most effective and safest for you.

- Thanks to new integrative medicine programs, your cancer treatment center may even offer the complementary therapies you are interested in trying. By receiving the therapy at your treatment center, you will ensure that it's performed by a professional who has experience working with cancer patients.

### Questions to Ask Your Healthcare Team

Use the following questions as a guide to discuss complementary therapies with your healthcare team:

- Are there complementary therapies that you would recommend?
- What research is available about this therapy's safety and effectiveness?
- What are the benefits and risks of this therapy?
- How will I know if the therapy is working or not?
- Will this therapy interfere with standard cancer treatments?
- Are there potential side effects of this therapy? What should I look for?
- Do you offer this therapy as part of your practice? If not, can you refer me to a licensed practitioner in the area?
- Are there specific therapies that you would advise against?
- Do you know if this therapy is part of a clinical trial? How can I learn more about clinical trial eligibility and enrollment?

### Locating an IM Specialist or a Complementary Health Practitioner

If you are looking for a complementary health practitioner for treatment, it is important to conduct a careful and thorough search. Here are some suggestions to help in your search for a practitioner:

- Your oncologist or cancer center may be able to refer you to a complementary health practitioner. Local hospitals or medical schools, professional organizations, state regulatory agencies or licensing boards, or even your health insurance provider may also be able to give you a referral.
- Ask family and friends if they can recommend a practitioner for the type of therapy that you are seeking.

- Learn as much as you can about any prospective practitioner including education, training, licensing and certifications.

Be sure to find out whether the practitioner you are considering is licensed or certified and if they have worked with cancer patients. Before scheduling any appointments, ask how many years they have been in practice, where they received their training, as well as the estimated cost of treatment. The goal is to find practitioners who will work with your oncologist and other healthcare providers so that together, they can devise a treatment plan that meets your needs.

### Clinical Trials for Blood Cancers

Every new drug or treatment regimen goes through a series of studies called "clinical trials" before it becomes part of standard therapy. A clinical trial for new cancer drugs and treatments is a carefully controlled research study that aims to improve the care and treatment of cancer patients. In the United States, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) requires all new drugs and other treatments to be tested in clinical trials before they are made available to the public. At any given time, there are thousands of cancer clinical trials available, because doctors and researchers are always seeking new and better treatments for patients.

Many cancer clinical trials are searching for a cure. This means devising safer, more effective treatments that destroy cancer cells and keeps them from coming back. Other clinical trials look for new ways to improve existing treatments and to improve the quality of life for patients. There are trials for patients at every stage of treatment as well as for those whose disease is in remission. Researchers design cancer clinical trials to study new ways to:

- Treat cancer using
  - A new drug
  - An approved therapy for a different diagnosis
  - A new drug combination
  - A new way of delivering a drug (pill, intravenously [IV], etc.)
- Manage cancer symptoms and alleviate the side effects of treatment
- Find and diagnose cancer
- Prevent cancer from returning
- Manage long-term side effects

Conventional cancer treatments like chemotherapy, immunotherapy and radiation therapy have undergone years of rigorous study. Clinical trials to study various complementary therapies are also under way in many locations across the country to assess their safety, benefits, dosing and relative effectiveness.

Participation in a carefully conducted clinical trial may be the best available option to receive a complementary therapy. Patient participation in past clinical trials has resulted in the therapies we have today. Patients interested in participating in a clinical trial are encouraged to talk with their hematologist-oncologists about whether a clinical trial would be appropriate for them.

When you and your hematologist-oncologist discuss a clinical trial as a potential complementary therapy option, it may be helpful to:

- Have a list of questions to ask concerning the risks versus the benefits of such a trial (visit [www.LLS.org/WhatToAsk](http://www.LLS.org/WhatToAsk) for lists of suggested questions).
- Ask a family member, friend, or another advocate accompany you to your doctor visit—both for support and to take notes.

Patients and caregivers can work with **Clinical Trial Nurse Navigators** who will help find clinical trials and personally assist them throughout the entire clinical trial process. Our Clinical Trial Nurse Navigators are registered nurses with expertise in blood cancers and clinical trials. Your Clinical Trial Nurse Navigator will:

- Speak with you to understand your goals and help you decide if a trial might be right for you
- Help you to understand the clinical-trial process, including your rights and obligations as a patient
- Ask you for details about your diagnosis (such as past treatments, treatment responses, and your cancer genetic profile), your current health and your medical history, because these might impact whether you can take part in certain clinical trials
- Help you to understand how your financial situation, insurance coverage, support network and ability and willingness to travel far distances might impact your choice of a clinical trial
- Guide and advocate for you in your efforts to enroll in a clinical trial, including connecting you with trial sites
- Help address and overcome obstacles to enrollment
- Be available for support throughout your experience in the clinical-trial process

**Please call an LLS Information Specialist at (800) 955-4572 or visit [www.LLS.org/CTSC](http://www.LLS.org/CTSC) for more information about clinical trials and the Clinical Trial Support Center at LLS.**

**Also, visit [www.LLS.org/booklets](http://www.LLS.org/booklets) to view *Understanding Clinical Trials for Blood Cancers*.**

### Acknowledgement

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society appreciates the review of this material by:

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### We're Here to Help

LLS is the world's largest voluntary health organization dedicated to funding blood cancer research, education and patient services. LLS has chapters throughout the United States and in Canada. To find the chapter nearest to you, visit our website at [www.LLS.org/ChapterFind](http://www.LLS.org/ChapterFind) or contact:

The Leukemia & Lymphoma Society  
3 International Drive, Suite 200  
Rye Brook, NY 10573

Contact an Information Specialist at (800) 955-4572

LLS offers free information and services for patients and families touched by blood cancers. The following entries list various resources available to you. Use this information to learn more, to ask questions, and to make the most of your healthcare team.

**Consult with an Information Specialist.** Information Specialists are highly trained oncology social workers, nurses and health educators. They offer up-to-date disease, treatment and support information. Language services (interpreting and translation) are available. Please contact our Information Specialists or visit our website for more information:

- Call: (800) 955-4572 (Monday through Friday, from 9 am to 9 pm ET)
- Email and Live chat:  
[www.LLS.org/InformationSpecialists](http://www.LLS.org/InformationSpecialists)

**Clinical Trials Support Center (CTSC).** Research is ongoing to develop new treatment options for patients. LLS offers help for patients and caregivers in understanding, identifying and accessing clinical trials. Patients and caregivers can work with Clinical Trial Nurse Navigators who will help find clinical trials and personally assist them throughout the entire clinical trial process. Visit [www.LLS.org/CTSC](http://www.LLS.org/CTSC) for more information.

**One-on-One Nutrition Consultations.** Access free one-on-one nutrition consultations provided by a registered dietitian who has experience in oncology nutrition. Dietitians assist callers with information about healthy eating strategies, side effect management and survivorship nutrition. They also provide additional nutrition resources. Please visit [www.LLS.org/nutrition](http://www.LLS.org/nutrition) to schedule a consultation or for more information.

**Free Information Booklets.** LLS offers free education and support booklets that can either be read online or ordered. Please visit [www.LLS.org/booklets](http://www.LLS.org/booklets) for more information.

### Free Mobile Apps.

- LLS Coloring For Kids™ – Allows children (and adults) to express their creativity and offers activities to help them learn about blood cancer and its treatment. Visit [www.LLS.org/ColoringApp](http://www.LLS.org/ColoringApp) to download for free.
- LLS Health Manager™ – Helps you track side effects, medication, food and hydration, questions for your doctor, and more. Visit [www.LLS.org/HealthManager](http://www.LLS.org/HealthManager) to download for free.

**Financial Assistance.** LLS offers financial support including insurance premium and medication co-pay assistance, as well as travel and other needs, to eligible individuals with blood cancer. For more information, please:

- Call: (877) 557-2672
- Visit: [www.LLS.org/finances](http://www.LLS.org/finances)

**Información en Español (LLS information in Spanish).** Please visit [www.LLS.org/espanol](http://www.LLS.org/espanol) for more information.

**Telephone/Web Education Programs.** LLS offers free telephone/Web and video education programs for patients, caregivers and healthcare professionals. Please visit [www.LLS.org/programs](http://www.LLS.org/programs) for more information.

**LLS Community.** The one-stop virtual meeting place for talking with other patients and receiving the latest blood cancer resources and information. Share your experiences with other patients and caregivers and get

personalized support from trained LLS staff. Visit [www.LLS.org/community](http://www.LLS.org/community) to join.

**Weekly Online Chats.** Moderated online chats can provide support and help cancer patients to reach out and share information. Please visit [www.LLS.org/chat](http://www.LLS.org/chat) for more information.

**Podcast.** *The Bloodline with LLS* is here to remind you that after a diagnosis comes hope. Listen in as patients, caregivers, advocates, doctors and other healthcare professionals discuss diagnosis, treatment options, quality-of-life concerns, treatment side effects, doctor-patient communication and other important survivorship topics. Visit [www.LLS.org/TheBloodline](http://www.LLS.org/TheBloodline) for more information and to subscribe.

**LLS Chapters.** LLS offers support and services in the United States and Canada including the *Patti Robinson Kaufmann First Connection® Program* (a peer-to-peer support program), local support groups, and other great resources. For more information about these programs or to contact your chapter, please:

- Call: (800) 955-4572
- Visit: [www.LLS.org/ChapterFind](http://www.LLS.org/ChapterFind)

**Other Helpful Organizations.** LLS offers an extensive list of resources for patients and families. There are resources that provide help with financial assistance, counseling, transportation, patient care and other needs. Please visit [www.LLS.org/ResourceDirectory](http://www.LLS.org/ResourceDirectory) for more information.

**Advocacy.** The LLS Office of Public Policy (OPP) engages volunteers in advocating for policies and laws that encourage the development of new treatments and improve access to quality medical care. For more information, please:

- Call: (800) 955-4572
- Visit: [www.LLS.org/advocacy](http://www.LLS.org/advocacy)

**Information for Veterans.** Veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange while serving in Vietnam may be able to get help from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). For more information please:

- Call: the VA at (800) 749-8387
- Visit: [www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/AgentOrange](http://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/AgentOrange)

**Information for Firefighters.** Firefighters are at an increased risk of developing cancer. There are steps that firefighters can take to reduce the risk. Please visit [www.LLS.org/FireFighters](http://www.LLS.org/FireFighters) for resources and information.



**World Trade Center (WTC) Survivors.** People involved in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks and subsequently diagnosed with a blood cancer may be eligible for help from the World Trade Center (WTC) Health Program. People eligible for help include:

- Responders
- Workers and volunteers who helped with rescue, recovery and cleanup at the WTC-related sites in New York City (NYC)
- Survivors who were in the NYC disaster area, lived, worked or were in school in the area
- Responders to the Pentagon and the Shanksville, PA, crashes

For more information, please:

- Call: WTC Health Program at (888) 982-4748
- Visit: [www.cdc.gov/wtc/faq.html](http://www.cdc.gov/wtc/faq.html)

**People Suffering from Depression.** Treating depression has benefits for cancer patients. Seek medical advice if your mood does not improve over time—for example, if you feel depressed every day for a 2-week period. For more information, please:

- Call: The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) at (866) 615-6464
- Visit: NIMH at [www.nimh.nih.gov](http://www.nimh.nih.gov) and enter “depression” in the search box

## Other Resources

### Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

[www.mskcc.org](http://www.mskcc.org)  
(800) 525-2225

Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center’s “About Herbs” database can help patients as well as healthcare professionals figure out the value of using common herbs, dietary supplements and some complementary therapies. The “About Herbs” database can be found at <https://www.mskcc.org/cancer-care/diagnosis-treatment/symptom-management/integrative-medicine/herbs>.

### National Cancer Institute Office of Cancer Complementary and Alternative (OCCAM)

<http://cam.cancer.gov>  
(800) 4-CANCER or (800) 422-6237

OCCAM’s website contains information and research on complementary therapies.

### National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH), National Institutes of Health

[www.nccih.nih.gov](http://www.nccih.nih.gov)  
(888) 644-6226

NCCIH conducts and supports research and provides information about complementary health products and practices. Their website contains reliable, objective and evidence-based information on integrative healthcare.

### Society for Integrative Oncology

[www.integrativeonc.org](http://www.integrativeonc.org)  
(518) 694-5543

Develops practice guidelines on the use of integrative therapies during cancer treatment—for clinicians and patients.

### U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

[www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)  
(888) 463-6332

The FDA provides articles on dietary supplements and warnings concerning specific products with potentially serious side effects. The FDA’s web page dedicated to dietary supplements can be found at [www.fda.gov/Food/DietarySupplements/default.htm](http://www.fda.gov/Food/DietarySupplements/default.htm)

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