

Massage Therapy

Massage therapy uses touch to help relax muscles. It can lower stress and help you feel calmer. Massage can be part of treating specific injuries and conditions. Many patients and their caregivers can benefit from massage therapy.

Oncology massage is safe and beneficial before treatment, during treatment, and after treatment. Massage should not replace traditional medical care. However, your cancer care team may recommend massage as part of your treatment plan. Please see your healthcare provider for any health issues.

Conditions Massage Can Help

- Anxiety
- Scars
- Headache
- Pain
- Muscle
- Injury
- Backache
- Stiffness
- Stress
- Lymphedema
- Relaxation
- Inflammation

Types of Massage

Massage therapists at Huntsman Cancer Institute (HCI) provide these types of massage:

- Oncology—individual massage plans for people going through cancer and cancer side effects
- Lymphatic—very light, rhythmic touches on the skin to help drain lymph fluid, help reduce inflammation, achiness and pain
- Swedish—long, slow, kneading strokes for relaxation, easier movement, and better circulation
- Craniosacral—light touch to skull, spine, and pelvis to release tension and improve movement
- Reflexology—pressure on specific areas of feet, hands, or ears to ease many kinds of symptoms
- Energy-based therapies, including Jin Shin Jyutsu® and Reiki—hand movements above the body to promote healing

Studies about these therapies that meet clinical trial standards are limited, but many patients report they can improve quality of life.

Before Your Massage

When you check in for your appointment at the Wellness Center, the staff will ask you to sign a consent form. You will also fill out a form to show where you would like the massage to focus and areas to avoid. You can also choose the type of massage and how much pressure you would like.

Be sure to mention these things:

- If you take blood-thinning medicines
- If you have blood clots in your legs
- If you have tumors
- If you have osteoporosis or disease in your spine
- If you have weak skin
- If you are taking hormone replacements (pills, injections or creams)
- If you have ports or other medical devices in or on your body

The Massage Session

The massage therapist will **take you to the massage room**. The therapist will talk with you about techniques he or she will use and what they should feel like. The therapist adjusts the massage to meet your needs.

For the massage, you may **undress to your level of comfort**. If you do not want to undress, please wear comfortable, loose clothing. You may choose to leave underwear on or remove all clothing. The therapist will leave the room while you undress and **lie on the massage table**. If you undress, you will be under a blanket during the massage. The therapist will uncover only the part of your body he or she is working on. You may lie on your back, front, or side when the massage starts. If you lie on your front, a headrest with a hole in the center lets you breathe without turning your head. Once you are on the table under the blanket, just relax. **The therapist will knock before returning** to start the session. During the massage, the therapist may ask you to turn over or switch sides.

During the massage, be sure to let your therapist know what you are feeling. If something he or she does feels wonderful, say so. You could feel something hurts in a good way as a tense muscle releases. But if you have any pain that does not feel good, let your therapist know right away.

Massage sessions last about 50 minutes. The lights are dim, and soft music plays to help you relax. When the session is over, the therapist will leave the room while you dress. Including check-in, the appointment takes about an hour.

To schedule an appointment, call the Wellness Center at 801-587-4585.

For more information, visit www.huntsmancancer.org/wellness