

Cancer Therapies Need a Special Touch

To a great extent, our clients who are undergoing cancer treatment need the same things as anyone else visiting a spa or wellness centre -- clean and disinfected facilities, using products with healthy ingredients that are free of synthetic fragrances and preservatives.

That being said, side effects of some cancer therapies need a special touch from spa therapists to help with potential nausea, sensitivity, and pain. Meeting an individual's personal needs for health and privacy are paramount, and in our quest to nurture and support our clients, it's also helpful to look to the research around various healing modalities.

The Journal of Cancer Nursing (Cancer Nurs. 2005 Sep--Oct;28(5):390--8) looked at the value of spa therapies, including mud packs and baths, for their effects on quality of life and mood for breast cancer patients. The most lasting effects were found for physical complaints, especially fatigue. The reviewers concluded that these therapies offered a "promising approach for breast cancer rehabilitation".

Other simple suggestions to offer care include:

- Recommend soothing products for home care, especially for irritated or sensitive skin.
- Gentle massage with peppermint and magnesium based muscle balm, which is also helpful for nausea.
- Moor body wraps to flush out toxins and aid lymphatic drainage, if the client is comfortable.

Estheticians and wellness therapists are ideally suited to offer the type of care that those recovering from treatment need. Their passion to help people look and feel better enables them to offer individualized, high-touch services for the well-being of their more vulnerable clients.

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