

Complementary therapies

St Helena provides a wide range of complementary therapies to help patients, their families and carers who are facing stress and anxiety because of their illness and diagnosis. These non-invasive, holistic practices do not replace the medical, social, or spiritual care of the hospice teams. Rather, they add an extra dimension of support in line with St Helena's model of care. Complementary therapies work with the total care given, to promote comfort and support for both patients and their families. We also support those who are bereaved.

Complementary Therapy aims to:

- Promote relaxation
- Reduce anxiety, depression, stress and tension
- Reduce pain
- Alleviate symptoms such as muscle fatigue and tension
- Help with constipation
- Improve sleep patterns
- Reduce psychological distress and give emotional support
- Improve wellbeing and quality of life

- Stimulate circulation/stimulate memory
- Improve skin condition
- Reduce fears/phobias related to treatments

Complementary therapies are considered an integral part of our holistic care. All treatments and therapies are provided by a team of fully qualified professional volunteer therapists, who have met the strict prerequisites to provide therapies at St Helena - you can be reassured you are in safe hands.

All referrals are assessed by our qualified and experienced Complementary Therapy Team Lead, and the most appropriate treatments will be discussed and offered, and tailor-made for your individual needs. These are normally offered as a set of 4 treatments and then reviewed if continued support as needed.

Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy is the systematic and therapeutic use of plant-

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derived, aromatic essential oils in holistic treatments to promote physical and emotional wellbeing. It is used in combination with massage and other therapeutic techniques as part of a holistic treatment approach. Aromastick inhalers can be made up for individuals to help manage several conditions, such as nausea, anxiety, poor sleep, breathing problems and more. An aromatherapy diffuser is used in therapy rooms and at The Hospice. Aromatherapy is an especially effective treatment for stress-related problems and a variety of chronic conditions.

Massage

Massage is a therapy that uses a variety of techniques to provide relief from tension and tightness in muscles. It can ease specific areas of discomfort and pain. An adapted massage treatment for palliative care is effective for emotional and mental stresses, as well as giving a sense of peace and tranquillity.

Gentle Indian Head Massage (IHM)

IHM uses massage techniques on the area surrounding the scalp, neck, upper shoulders, upper arms and face. IHM gives relief from neck and shoulder stiffness, improving mobility; relieving mental stress and emotional stress; and providing overall feelings of wellbeing and relaxation. Oils may be used to enhance treatment outcomes.

The 'M' Technique®

The 'M' technique® was created by Dr Jane Buckle. It uses very light stroking movements with the hands, performed in a set sequence at a set pressure and set pace. It is different from conventional massage and may be suitable when the patient needs a very gentle touch. This therapy is profoundly relaxing and calming and proven to induce sleep and to help settle the patient.

You can watch the video at the following link:

<https://bit.ly/3RVG3vY>

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Reflexology

Reflexology is a therapy based on the principle that there are zones and reflex areas in the feet and hands which correspond to all organs and systems of the body. By applying pressure to these points in a systematic way, a practitioner can help in the management of stress; promote physiological changes in the body; and release tensions.

An adapted reflexology treatment for palliative care helps to alleviate physical and emotional symptoms by reducing stress and inducing relaxation, feelings of increased energy, and improving wellbeing. Reflexology techniques can also be used which may help reduce swelling in limbs.

Holistic Facial Therapy

Holistic facial therapy combines the benefits and techniques of the relaxing effects of aromatherapy, massage, or facial reflexology. Essential Oils and other natural aromatherapy products are blended and applied to help

improve the condition and texture of the skin. This relaxing treatment both stimulates and soothes the skins' nerve endings, which can help to tone facial muscles. This treatment will aim to ease away stress and increase a deep sense of well-being.

Reiki

Reiki means 'universal life energy' in Japanese. It is an energy balancing style of therapy that uses hands-on, no-touch, and visualisation techniques, by channelling Reiki energy to bring about deep relaxation on the physical, emotional, and within the mind and thought processes of a person. This therapy, for palliative care, can help if the recipient is receptive to energy balancing therapies.

Look Good Feel Better (LGFB) Masterclass

We work with the LGFB charity by hosting masterclass sessions. These are provided free of charge to our patients, and they receive

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skincare advice and makeup tips and application, boosting their confidence and self-esteem.

Currently, these are held via Zoom on the LGFB website and last around one and a half to two hours, depending upon which session you are attending.

<https://lookgoodfeelbetter.co.uk/workshops/>

Mindfulness and wellbeing

Mindfulness, meditation, and visualisation for patients/family member/carers and those who are bereaved, to use in their own time. This is a very helpful means to treat and manage anxiety, stress, worry and sleeplessness. There are many recommended apps and links we can give you to try, or you can access these via our website.

We have dedicated volunteers on IPU who provide social wellbeing support assisting staff and meeting patient needs. They host 'Coffe,Cake,Chat' sessions for families and carers of patients on the IPU.

Watch recommended guided relaxations:

- [Relaxation from the feet](#)
- [Relaxation from the eyes](#)
- [Body meditation](#)
- [Relaxation – the journey](#)
- [Relaxation – the special place](#)
- [Mindfulness and meditation videos](#)

Pets as Therapy

Pets as Therapy, or PAT, is a national charity which arranges for suitable pets and their owners to visit hospices, hospitals, care homes and other establishments to provide comfort and companionship.

To contact the complementary therapy team, please call **01206 848163**.

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