

Caring, touch, comfort, healing - a specially trained therapist can safely integrate massage into your cancer treatment protocol.



Awareness, education, treatment and support are all pieces of the cancer puzzle. September was ovarian cancer awareness month; there were teal colored ribbons all around town. October is breast cancer awareness month so watch for pink ribbons. Throughout the year, nine months are designated for the purpose of raising awareness to a different type of cancer. Twenty-six distinctively colored ribbons assist in this objective.

Cancer is not a "one size fits all" diagnosis, nor is it age or gender discriminatory. According to the American Cancer Society, "Half of all men and one-third of all women in the US will develop cancer during their lifetimes. Today, about 11.7 million people alive in the United States have had some type of cancer. Some of these people are cancer-free; others still have the disease."

Integrative oncology care has proven to be an effective treatment protocol for cancer patients. Including guided imagery, acupuncture, acupressure, Qi gong, meditation, energy balancing, nutritional planning, scar therapy, chiropractic adjustments, lymphatic treatment, yoga and oncology massage can directly affect the body's physiological healing process.

Oncology massage therapy provides comfort and soothing care while reducing the pain that often accompanies cancer and cancer treatments. A qualified oncology massage therapist will design a massage protocol that will include techniques meant to grant respite and restore wellbeing. It is just as important for the therapist to know what techniques not to do, as it is what to perform. Oncology massage therapy is being introduced to cancer patients in many hospital systems and small therapy clinics throughout the US. This is thanks to the dedication and hard work of pioneers in this field: Gayle MacDonald, Tracy Walton, Cheryl Chapman, Isabel Adkins, and the late Cynthia Myers.

Finding a therapist specially trained in oncology massage is very important. From the moment of diagnosis, through treatment and beyond, the cancer patient will always need special care. Even long after a full recovery, caution must be used in your choice of a massage therapist.

Why? Where does one find a qualified therapist?

Oncology massage differs from a typical traditional massage. There are many common cancer related conditions that require substantial adjustments for the patient's comfort and safety. Wounds, scars, tissue integrity, chemotherapy, ports,

radiation, breast expanders, hair loss, immunosuppression, risk of lymphedema, low blood cell counts, and neuropathy are just a few examples. Foreknowledge of these conditions, changes in massage procedures/protocols, use of bolstering, incorporation of various massage techniques, appropriate pressure and gentle touch will provide a safe and comfortable experience for the patient.

To find a qualified oncology massage therapist please feel free to ask these questions when calling upon a therapist or spa. Are you a licensed massage therapist? How long have you been practicing massage? Are you specially trained in oncology massage? Where did you receive your training? Was it a one-day lecture or did the therapist train with respected authorities, receive extensive lectures and hands on training? What precautions will the therapist take with you as a cancer patient? For example, how will the therapist modify the treatment if lymph nodes were removed? Does the therapist know how to perform scar work and tissue mobilization? This may sound like unnecessary interrogation to just receive a massage. However, it is critical information. If you are presently receiving massages discuss these questions from your therapist and feel free to ask them for a referral to a therapist who is specifically trained in oncology massage.

Additional resources to find a qualified therapist include these websites:

- www.s4om.org (Society for Oncology Massage)
- www.amtamassage.org (American Massage Therapy Association)
- www.abmp.com (Associated Bodyworks and Massage Professionals)
- www.ncbtmb.org (National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage and Bodywork)
- www.nccam.nih.gov (National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine)

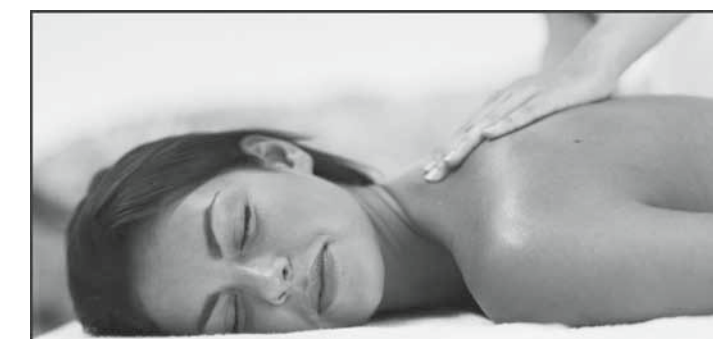
Harmony Falls, A Therapeutic Oasis specializes in oncology massage and lymphedema therapy. Stacy Barden, BS, LMT has been a licensed massage therapist since 1996. She started her oncology massage and manual lymphatic drainage education and training in 2002, because her patients' needs required special care.

At Harmony Falls, we believe each person has the right to optimal health and wellness. The licensed massage therapists specialize in the care of you, through ongoing education and training. Our goal is to build safe trusting relationships with our patients.

For more information please visit the following websites or call Stacy at Harmony Falls.

- www.cancer.org
- www.komen.org
- www.lymphnet.org
- www.chemotherapy.com
- www.chemocare.com
- www.medicinehands.com
- www.tracywalton.com
- www.harmonyfalls.net
- www.benchmarkaltantic.com

Written by: Stacy Barden, BS, LMT, NCTMB, S4OM, BFRP, MLD/CDP and owner. Harmony Falls, 728 E. Calhoun Street, Woodstock, IL 60098 815-334-0842. info@harmonyfalls.net www.harmonyfalls.net



Harmony Falls
A Therapeutic Oasis Since 1996

We specialize in the care of you.
Some of our signature services include:

- hot stone therapy
- aromatherapy massage
- pregnancy massage
- AL-DI-LA facelift massage
- Oncology & Lymphedema Therapy

Our staff is nationally certified in therapeutic massage and bodywork. Members of AMTA, Woodstock Chamber & State Licensed.

Monday-Friday 8am - 9pm - Saturday 9am - 3pm - hours by appointment only

728 East Calhoun Street · Woodstock
815.334.0842
www.harmonyfalls.net