

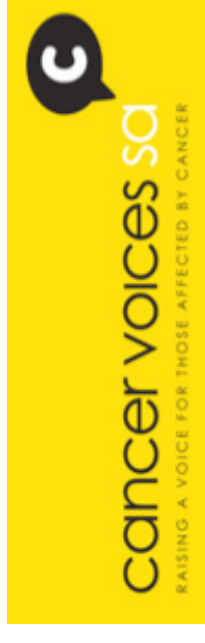
More information

Phone the **Cancer Council Helpline 131120**.

Copies of these Cancer Council publications can be posted to you:

- **'Understanding Complementary Therapies'** from the Cancer Council NSW (2008) has brief descriptions of a range of treatments, with 'what to expect' and 'evidence'. Download a copy at http://www.cancercouncil.com.au/html/patientsfamilyfriends/livingwithcancer/complementary_therapies/downloads/complementary_therapies.pdf
- **'Complementary and alternative cancer therapies – for people with cancer, their family and friends'** from the Cancer Council Victoria (2009) is available for download at: www.cancervic.org.au/downloads/brochures/CISS_brochures/Complimentary_Altern_therapies1.pdf

- **'About Herbs, Botanicals & Other Products'** from the Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center provides good information for oncologists, healthcare professionals, and consumers at www.mskcc.org/mskcc/html/11570.cfm. *Note: this is a USA website and not all of the products listed may be available in Australia.*
- 'Cancer and Complementary Therapies' provides an introduction at: <http://www.cancerbackup.org.uk/Treatments>
Note: this is a UK website, with different cost and availability of services.
- The National Cancer Institute (US) 'Complementary and Alternative Medicine' provide information summaries for health professionals and patients at <http://www.nci.nih.gov/cancertopics/treatment/cam>.
- Quackwatch has a list of therapies and services at <http://www.quackwatch.com/>. It is an international network of people who are concerned about health-related frauds, myths, fads, fallacies, and misconduct.



The information in this brochure provides a supplement to the booklet: ['Understanding Complementary Therapies'](#), produced by the Cancer Council NSW.

Contact details and freecall phone numbers for complementary therapy professional organisations have been updated to provide local access in South Australia where possible.

Complementary Therapies

Information for people with cancer, their family and friends

Cancer Voices SA www.cancervoicesa.org.au

Belle McCaleb www.mccalebhealth.com.au

September 2009

What are complementary therapies?

Complementary therapies are a range of approaches to care aimed at enhancing quality of life and improving wellbeing. They may be used **alongside** conventional cancer treatments such as surgery, radiotherapy, chemotherapy, hormonal therapies or targeted therapies.

Complementary therapies may include acupuncture, relaxation therapy and meditation, exercise, guided imagery, music or art therapy, massage, aromatherapy, dietary therapies including herbal supplements and special dietary regimes and some support group programs.

Alternative therapies are therapies that are used **instead** of conventional approaches to treatment. There is **no evidence** to support the use of alternative therapies in the treatment of cancer.

How can complementary therapies help?

Complementary therapies are, in general, intended to **support wellbeing and are not considered treatments for cancer**. Nonetheless, research indicates that complementary therapies such as exercise may assist during treatment, supporting recovery and reducing the risk of cancer recurrence.

It is important to note that a number of complementary therapies have not been tested in large clinical trials so information on their **effectiveness and safety** may be limited. Some therapies can **interact** with conventional treatments and make them less effective. Others may actually be harmful or cause **side effects** if taken with conventional treatments.

It is very important to talk to your doctor before starting any complementary therapies, to check that they will not interact with other treatments.

Tips on choosing a therapy or therapist

It is important to choose a qualified complementary therapy practitioner. Many therapies have professional organisations or regulatory bodies that will help you to find a qualified therapist.

Questions to ask a complementary therapist to help decide if this will suit your needs:

- Exactly what is the therapy you are proposing?
- What do you hope it will do?
- What is the evidence for the success of this therapy?
- What side effects could there be?
- How common are the side effects?
- Will this therapy affect other treatments I am receiving?
- How much will this therapy cost? (appointment and treatment costs; how often and how long will this treatment last?)
- What is your training/ qualification?
- Will you please communicate with my GP and cancer doctor(s)?

The [Health and Community Services Complaints Commissioner](#) has an information sheet titled [what to do if you have concerns about an unregistered practitioner](#) Ph 08 8226 8666, SA Country toll free 1800 232 007 or 'What's New' [http://www.hcsc.sa.gov.au/documents/02_what_to_do_if_you_have_concerns_about_an_unregistered-practitioner-%20new/hcsc-2008.pdf](#)). Most complementary therapy practitioners in Australia are 'Unregistered practitioners,' including massage

therapists, acupuncturists, counsellors, naturopaths, herbalists. An Australian Register of Naturopaths and Herbalists is proposed.

From 1 July 09, Private Health Insurance funds can only pay benefits on treatment by a complementary health provider who is a member of a recognized professional organisation, and meet standards specified by the new [Private Health Insurance \(Accreditation\) Rules, 2008](#) (Rule 10). These standards include qualification criteria for membership, training, education and a code of conduct.

Complementary Therapists.

While not recommending these therapies for cancer support, the following list provides information and professional organisations representing qualified practitioners of complementary therapies:

[Australian College of Nutritional and Environmental Medicine](#) provides post graduate training for medical doctors and nurses. Find accredited practitioners at: http://www.acnem.org/modules/mastop_publish/?tac=23

[Australian Natural Therapists Association](#) describes itself as a peak body of 'recognised professional' traditional medicine and natural therapy practitioners who work in the areas of health care and preventative medicine. Find members listed at <http://www.anta.com.au> or Ph: 1800 817 577

[Australian Traditional Medicine Society](#) lists members qualified as: massage therapists, herbalists, acupuncturists, homeopaths, naturopaths and nutritionists at

<http://www.atms.com.au/> (more than 160 members in SA, but listing is organised by membership number. Suburb search doesn't work very well). Ph (02) 9809 6800

Acupuncture

Acupuncture involves the insertion of fine needles into specific sites in the body and may help a wide range of disorders. Find accredited practitioners in your local area at [Australian Acupuncture & Chinese Medicine Association](http://www.acupuncture.org.au/) <http://www.acupuncture.org.au/> or Ph: 1300 725 335.

Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy uses natural essential oils to affect a person's mood or health..

Find practitioners listed at [International Aromatherapy and Aromatic Medicine Association](http://www.iaama.org.au/).

<http://www.iaama.org.au/> or Ph:

(02) 9715 6622 (4 listed in SA)

Art Therapy

Art therapy is a creative process, suitable for all ages, and particularly for those who may be experiencing life changes, trauma, illness or disabilities causing distress for the individual and for their family. [Australian and New Zealand Art Therapy Association](http://www.nzta.org) accredits and registers Art Therapists/Art Psychotherapists. Find registered practitioners at <http://www.anzata.org> (3 listed in SA). No ANZATA phone contact number.

Bowen Therapy

Bowen Therapy is a holistic and multidimensional approach to pain relief and healing. Find accredited therapists at [Bowen Therapists Federation of Australia](http://www.bowen.asn.au/).

<http://www.bowen.asn.au/> or Ph: 1300 426 936

Chiropractics

Chiropractors work on spinal health.

The Chiropractors' Association of Australia

at <http://chiropractors.asn.au> lists practitioners in your local area, or Ph: 1800 075 003

Counselling

The [Psychotherapy and Counselling Federation of Australia](http://www.pacfa.org.au/) is a peak body for professional practitioners within the disciplines of Counselling and Psychotherapy. Find qualified practitioners at <http://www.pacfa.org.au/> or Ph: 1300 784 333

Dietitians

Dietitians provide food and nutrition information. Find accredited practising dietitians listed at the

[Dietitians Association of Australia](http://www.daa.asn.au/)

<http://www.daa.asn.au/> or Ph: 1800 812 942

Feldenkrais Method

The Feldenkrais Method® facilitates learning about movement, posture and breathing to ultimately increase the ease and range of movement, improve flexibility and coordination. Find classes or practitioners at [Australian Feldenkrais Guild](http://www.feldenkrais.org.au/)

<http://www.feldenkrais.org.au/>

or Ph: 1800 001 550.

Homeopathy

Homeopathic medicine claims to mimics or provokes the symptoms of a patient's disease to strengthen the body's ability to heal itself.

Find registered practitioners in your local area at

[Australian Homeopathic Association](http://www.homeopathyoz.org/)

<http://www.homeopathyoz.org/> or Ph: 08 8276

5424

Hypnotherapy

The [Australian Hypnotherapists' Association](http://www.ahahypnotherapy.org.au/) is the National Registration Body for

hypnotherapists. Find accredited practitioners at <http://www.ahahypnotherapy.org.au/> or Ph: 1800

067 557

Massage

Therapeutic massage involves deep or light pressure being applied to the muscles and other soft tissues. Find accredited practitioners in your local area at [Australian Association of Massage Therapists](http://www.aamt.com.au/)

<http://www.aamt.com.au/> or Ph: 1300 138 872

Meditation

Meditation is a self-help tool for promoting good health and managing stress. There is no professional association representing meditation instructors. The Meditation Society of Australia has free online courses at

<http://meditation.org.au/> Meditation groups are held in a variety of locations in South Australia.

Music therapy

Music therapy uses music to stimulate changes in cognitive, physical, psychological, and social functioning. Find registered practitioners in your local area at [Australian Music Therapists Association](http://www.austmta.org.au/)

<http://www.austmta.org.au/> (5 are

listed in SA), or Ph: 08 8303 1329

Medical Herbalist

[National Herbalists Association of Australia](http://www.nhaa.org.au/) is

the national professional body of medical

herbalists. (NB Search facility at

<http://www.nhaa.org.au/> doesn't work) Ph (02)

8765 0071

Naturopathy

Naturopathy is a collection of healing systems including nutrition, herbal medicine and massage.

[Australian Naturopathic Practitioners Association](http://www.anpa.asn.au/) (NB website not functioning

www.anpa.asn.au) Ph (03) 9811 9990

[Osteopathy](#)

Osteopathy uses manipulation of the body to treat a wide range of symptoms and illnesses. [Australian Osteopathic Association](#) is the national professional body. Find practitioners listed at <http://www.osteopathic.com.au/> or Ph: 1800 467 836

[Reiki](#)

Reiki aims promote relaxation and wellbeing through gentle touch. [Reiki Australia](#) lists Reiki practitioners at www.reikiaustralia.com.au. Ph: 1300 66 47 80

[Reflexology](#)

Reflexology applies pressure on various points on the feet, hands and ears to help address stress, anxiety, and tension. Find practitioners listed at [The Reflexology Association of Australia](#) <http://www.reflexology.org.au/> or Ph: Reflexology Hotline: 1300 733 711

Shiatsu

Shiatsu translates literally from the Japanese as 'finger pressure', but in practice, the thumbs, palms, elbows, knees and feet are used to apply pressure to various parts of the body. The [Shiatsu Therapy Association of Australia](#) is the peak national body. Find accredited practitioners at <http://www.staa.org.au/> or Ph: 1300 138 250 (Tue & Fri only)

[Traditional Chinese Medicine](#)

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) includes acupuncture, massage, dietary advice and exercise. The [Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association](#) is the leading national professional association of acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) practitioners. Find practitioners listed at http://www.acupuncture.org.au/traditional_chinese_medicine.cfm or Ph: 1300 725 334

[Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine](#)

A qualified practitioner prescribes a Chinese herbal formula that specifically matches and treats your individual health problem. The [Australian Acupuncture and Chinese Medicine Association](#) is the leading national professional association for Chinese Herbal Medicine. Find practitioners listed at http://www.acupuncture.org.au/chinese_herbal_medicine.cfm or Ph: 1300 725 334.



[Yoga](#)

[International Yoga Teachers Association](#) lists teachers and classes at <http://www.iyta.org.au/> or Ph: 02 9489 9851.

[Yoga Teachers Association of Australia](#) at <http://www.yogateachers.asn.au/> or Ph: 1300 881 451 (but on-line 'find a teacher/class' listing does not work very well)

Note: this list of Professional Associations and therapies is adapted from the Cancer Council NSW publication "[Understanding Complementary Therapies](#)", p92-93, and updated to provide contact details for South Australians.

Disclaimer: *The list of Professional Associations is provided here for guidance only, and does not imply endorsement or recommendation of these services or therapies, nor is reimbursement of Health Insurance claims for treatment by members of these organizations assured.*

Qualified complementary therapy practitioners provide services at:
[Cancer Care Centre](#), 76 Edmund Avenue, Unley. Find more information at <http://www.cancericare.asn.au/> or Ph: (08) 8272 2411.

Adelaide Complementary Therapies Tennyson Centre, 506-520 South Road, Kurralta Park Ph: (08) 8297 3333

Introductory classes in therapies such as yoga, meditation, tai chi, reflexology etc are often available through the [WEA \(Workers' Educational Association of South Australia\)](#) at <http://www.wea-sa.com.au/> under the Health and Wellbeing category, Ph: 08 8223 1979 or 1800 638 749 (Freecall for SA country residents).