Patient information

Mount Vernon Cancer Centre

NHS
East and North Hertfordshire Teaching NHS Trust

Complementary therapies at Lynda Jackson Centre

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Consent

Before you start your complementary therapy, your therapist will complete a consultation form with you. You will be asked to consent to receiving complementary therapy by signing the form.

This is a legal requirement and will be discussed with you at your first treatment.

Eligibility

All LJC services are offered free of charge to NHS patients under the care of an oncologist based at Mount Vernon Cancer Centre.

Private patients having treatment at Mount Vernon may also be eligible to use our services. Please call the LJC Helpline for details on 020 3826 2555 or the Hal Gray unit on 020 3826 2341.

Cost of therapy service

The complementary therapy service is funded by charitable donations. We make no charge for the service and are therefore grateful for any donations you are able to make. Please see page 15 for further details.

This publication has been produced by the Lynda Jackson Centre.

Contributors include professionals, patients and carers from Mount Vernon Cancer Centre who have expertise and experience in the topics covered by this publication. All our publications are reviewed and updated regularly.

If you would like any details of the references used to write this information, please contact the LJC on 020 3826 2555.

Introduction

The Lynda Jackson Centre (LJC) aims to help people affected by cancer. The centre offers a range of complementary therapies mainly for the relief of stress or stress-related symptoms.

It is important to know that these therapies are intended to complement conventional treatment. They are not alternative treatments. They are not intended to replace the medical treatment of cancer.

The therapies offered are suitable for cancer patients before, during and after treatment. The therapists who work at the centre are fully qualified, professionally registered and have specific training in working with people with cancer.

While patients report that these therapies can be useful for helping them relax, not every therapy is suitable for every patient. We will try to offer you the therapy you would like but may suggest other therapies that may be more suitable.

Which therapies are currently offered in the Centre?

- Relaxation classes (usually held in a small group)
- One to one ‘touch’ therapies:
- Aromatherapy
- Massage
- Indian Head Massage
- Reflexology
- Reiki
- Ear acupuncture (please ask for further details)

At the beginning of your first session the therapist will discuss with you any health issues you may have.

Identification

It is a legal requirement for staff to check your name and details against your therapy record every time you attend.

Relaxation classes

Relaxation classes offer you the chance to learn ways in which you can help yourself to relax and feel calmer. A relaxation therapist will help you use various techniques such as breathing exercises, gentle muscle relaxation, meditation and visualisation in the relaxation room, sitting in comfortable chairs.

Learning these skills means you can use them wherever and whenever you want in the future. Please ask about our LJC Relaxation CD if you wish to practise.

The relaxation classes are offered four times a week. You don’t need an appointment, and you can come as often as you like (even after your treatment has finished or if you are having another therapy in the centre as well). You may bring someone with you to the classes if space allows.

The focus is on learning relaxation and stress management skills to relate to your individual needs. The therapist will meet you personally before the class starts.

You don't need to book a place, but we advise you to telephone the Centre on 020 3826 2555 on the day of the session to check that it is taking place.

Relaxation classes

Monday:	11.00am –11.30am
Tuesday:	11.00am –12.30pm
Wednesday:	2.00pm – 3.30pm
Thursday:	2.30pm – 4.00pm

Qigong - early evening class

Qigong consists of simple flowing movement, breathwork and self-help acupressure to support wellbeing and bring a sense of calm. This class is open to patients, staff and volunteers.

One to one 'touch' therapies

We may offer a series of up to four sessions of a touch therapy.

These therapies are only provided by pre-booked appointment. Each session lasts for up to an hour, allowing 30–40 minutes for the therapy itself. There is a high demand for these so unfortunately there is sometimes a waiting list. These therapies vary but they all aim to help you to relax.

Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy massage is a form of gentle massage using carefully selected essential oils. These oils are extracted from flowers, herbs, trees or other plants. Their therapeutic value has been known since ancient Egyptian times, and they have been used in many cultures.

The oils will be carefully chosen with you and used in a very diluted form. This choice will allow for any symptoms you may be experiencing, your conventional treatments and any side-effects you may have. This is important to prevent any skin sensitivity to the oils or any increase in existing symptoms such as, nausea, which is very rare.

Aromatherapy is a very gentle, calming treatment and most people find it very relaxing and helpful to both mind and body.

Aromatherapy inhaler or 'Aromastick'

Aromasticks are a portable inhaler device that places essentials onto an absorbent wick, which is then placed inside the inhaler case.

Using an aromatherapy inhaler is one way to experience the therapeutic effects of essential oils in a portable and pleasant manner. They can provide various effects, such as soothing, calming, uplifting, energising and can help to promote easier breathing and an increased sense of wellbeing.

The complementary therapy team based at the Lynda Jackson Centre offer a combination of oils in an inhaler that can help support and provide comfort when experiencing:

- Anxiety
- Fatigue
- Low energy
- Sleep issues
- Low mood/depression

Aromasticks can also be used in combination with relaxation, breathwork and visualisation techniques.

Is there a charge?
We do not charge, but suggest a minimum donation of £4 for each inhaler

How do I order one?
Each inhaler is made on request via an order form, from our Health Care Professional office at the Lynda Jackson Centre.

Massage



Massage has been practised in the Middle and Far East for many centuries and is probably the oldest known therapy. Over the centuries different techniques have developed including Swedish, Shiatsu and Thai.

A base oil, such as sunflower oil or sweet almond oil will be used. Massage therapy is soothing and relaxing to experience. Our therapists combine different types of massage techniques to relieve stress, anxiety and muscle tension, using a light to medium pressure. No deep pressure is used.

Sessions take place in a quiet therapy room, although you may choose to have soothing music. You may need to undress depending on the area of the body to be massaged. If you need to undress, areas not being massaged will be covered by a towel at all times. If you are not comfortable undressing we may be able to suggest a different therapy for you.
If certain positions are uncomfortable for you, please let the therapist know so they can adapt to ensure your comfort.

Reflexology



Reflexology (also known as Reflex Zone Therapy) has been practised since the times of the ancient Chinese and Egyptian civilisations.

It is based on the theory that specific areas of the feet are related to different areas of your body. By applying gentle pressure to these points, the different body systems can be gently re-balanced.

The main use of reflexology at the LJC is to improve relaxation and wellbeing. Sometimes people report that it can help specific symptoms such as pain, constipation, anxiety and fatigue.

It is useful as painful areas of your body can be treated through your feet rather than touching the actual painful site. Please note that reflexology is not suitable for anyone with phlebitis or deep vein thrombosis (DVT) of the arms and legs. Please contact the centre if you have any concerns about this.

Sessions take place in a quiet therapy room. You will not need to undress, but you will need to take off your footwear, socks or tights.

Indian head massage

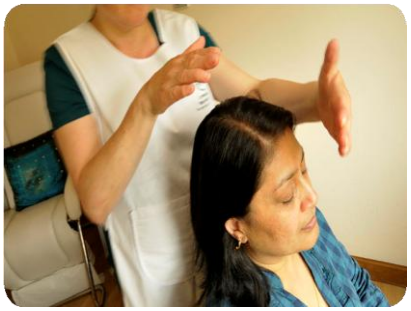


Indian head massage is a relaxing treatment focusing on massaging the scalp. It also includes the upper back, shoulders, neck and face. As the name suggests, this therapy originated in India.

The treatment involves massage and acupressure point techniques and helps to bring about a feeling of calmness, well-being and relaxation. It may help to alleviate stress, tension and insomnia. It may also help to relieve neck and shoulder stiffness.

Sessions take place in a therapy room. You will be seated in a chair and you do not have to remove your clothing.

Reiki



Reiki is believed to have originated in Tibet in the 1st century. However, in the 19th century it was rediscovered by Dr Mikao Usui, who took the methods back to his homeland in Japan. Later it was brought to the west by one of Dr Usui's patients and is now known across the world.

Reiki is a complementary therapy which can also be used alongside other therapies to help and support you. It is a very gentle therapy used to promote better health and a feeling of well-being.

Sessions take place in a therapy room. You will not need to undress.

As comfort is the main aim, it is sensible to wear something loose. You will be able to receive the treatment either lying down or sitting, depending on which is easiest for you. The therapist may cover you with a blanket so that you are warm and comfortable.
The therapist will place their hands either with a light touch or no touch at all (if you prefer) over your body.

People who have received Reiki say that it feels very relaxing and that they fall into a light sleep. They feel the quiet atmosphere enables them to have some 'peaceful space'. If you wish to talk through any thoughts or feelings that this therapy may release, the therapist will be able to listen and support you.

Ear acupuncture (NADA)

NADA is the National Acupuncture Detoxification Association.

Ear acupuncture is a wellbeing service that is offered to patients in a mixed group setting, to help relieve some of the side effects from their cancer treatment. Please note, Ear Acupuncture may not be appropriate for those with head and neck cancers.

The service is offered on a weekly basis for 6 consecutive weeks Please ask for further details.

How do I book for complementary therapy?

You can access the complementary therapy service in any of the following ways:

- someone in your medical team may refer you
- you may refer yourself by dropping into the LJC
- you may call the LJC Helpline on 020 3826 2555

Someone from the Centre will contact you to make an appointment. Please be aware, due to demand, there is often a waiting list. We will do our best to arrange an appointment to suit you.

Please try to arrive on time as your session will need to be reduced if you are late. The car parks can be very busy, so please allow time for delays in parking.

What happens when I come for my appointment?

At the beginning of your first session the therapist will discuss with you any health issues you may have.

It is important that you mention all your medications and the treatments you are having, as well as any symptoms and side effects that you are experiencing. This is so the therapist can take these into account when planning your complementary therapy session.

When you come for your following sessions, the therapist will ask about any changes in your symptoms and how you felt after your previous session.

Cancelling appointments

If you are unable to attend your appointment, we would like 24-hour's notice if possible.

This is so that we can give your appointment to somebody else.

Please telephone the helpline on 020 3826 2555 or the therapists on 020 3826 2553.

After your complementary therapy session please ensure you drink extra water after each session

Some people feel relaxed and want to go home and relax further.

Some people feel energised. This is fine but please don't overdo things.

Complementary therapies can put us more in touch with what our bodies need and sometimes people may experience signs of the body starting to re-adjust. This may occasionally show itself in the form of one or two of the following temporary side effects.

- general tiredness
- some general aching
- some increase in output from bladder or bowels
- increased fluids from nose, throat and chest, similar to symptoms of a cold
- an existing symptom can get slightly worse before it improves

If these do occur, we regard them as a positive sign that the body is beginning to balance itself.

Any side effects usually occur within a day of having had a complementary therapy session and should normally pass within 24 to 48 hours. If you are at all concerned, please contact the complementary therapy team.

Research and evaluation into complementary therapies

At the LJC we occasionally conduct research programmes looking into the experiences of people who have complementary therapies.

You may be asked if you are interested in this research. Taking part in any research is always optional and you can choose not to take part. The medical care you receive will not be affected in any way. Sometimes we are looking at specific therapies or symptoms, so not everyone will be eligible.

In a less formal way, we are always keen to know about peoples' experiences of complementary therapies and the potential benefits, so we may ask you to fill in a feedback form from time to time to help us with this.

Car parking at the hospital

A Pay & Display parking scheme operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Cancer patients have a £1 concessionary parking rate but must register for this. Registration forms are on the back of appointment letters.

On your first visit, from the Pay and Display machine, press the green button to get a free 10-minute ticket. On other machines, press Start, Visitor and then Next to get a free 10-minute ticket.

Display this on your dashboard whilst you take your registration form to one of the following offices (Mon–Fri), where you will be given a yellow Concessionary Parking Pass:

- **Car Parking Office** 8am–1pm and 2pm–4pm
- **Post Room**: 8.30am–12pm and 1pm–4pm

Then at the Pay and Display machine, buy a Concession ticket for £1 and display this and your yellow pass on the car dashboard. Your yellow pass can be used in any car.

You can also pay by the Pay by Phone app.

Blue Badge holders do not need to register or pay. Please display your Blue Badge on your dashboard and make sure you park in a parking bay.

Frequently asked questions

Can I get therapies elsewhere at Mount Vernon?

Some therapies are available for patients in the inpatient wards or the Cancer Treatment Suite. Please speak to your nursing team if you are interested in having any of these.

Where can I get therapies after I have finished treatments at the Centre?

Please ask for our Complementary Therapy Network list (HHC286), detailing independent therapists. These therapists are professionally qualified, insured and have training from the Lynda Jackson Centre (LJC) in using their therapy in cancer care. However, we are not in a position to endorse any independent therapists.

Therapies are offered independently by the therapists on the list and not through the LJC or Mount Vernon Cancer Centre. You will need to be sure the therapist you choose is suitable for your needs. Your therapist will be happy to show you their proof of professional body membership and insurance certificates, should you wish to see them.

You will then need to make your own private arrangements with them.

Do I have to discuss how I'm feeling during the therapy?

Many people prefer not to talk during the therapy, but if you want to talk you may. Sometimes in the relaxation classes some may like to talk a bit about how they are feeling, but the focus is on the relaxation itself.

Are the complementary therapists male or female?

Most of the therapists at the LJC are female. If this is a concern to you, please talk to someone at the centre.

Can I have any of these therapies at the same time as having radiotherapy or chemotherapy?

Yes. The therapists are experienced in working with patients undergoing treatment. They will adapt their therapies where needed.

You may have a short complementary therapy session before your chemotherapy. We advise patients not to have a full complementary therapy session after their chemotherapy on their treatment day.

How much does it cost?

The complementary therapy service is funded by charitable donations. We make no charge for the service and are therefore grateful for any donations you are able to make.

If you have found your therapy of benefit and would like to ensure the continuation of the service for others, you can donate in the following ways:

To donate, scan this QR code or visit **www.enhhcharity.org.uk/ljmc.**

You can also call 01438 285182 to donate by card.

If you would like to donate by cheque, please make it payable to:

'East and North Hertfordshire Hospitals' Charity', and hand it in to Mount Vernon Cancer Centre Cashiers Office (located in Patient Affairs) or post it to East and North Hertfordshire
Hospitals' Charity,Lister Hospital, Coreys Mill Lane, Stevenage,Herts,SG1 4AB.

Please note on the back of your cheque that it is for the Lynda Jackson Centre.

You can also donate at the Lynda Jackson Centre (LJC) please ask a member of the LJC team for assistance or further details.

If you would like to find out more about fundraising activities at the LJC, please speak to a member of the LJC team.

Who can I contact for more information?

If you would like more information, please drop in to the LJC or phone the helpline on 020 3826 2555.

LJC have also produced some information sheets. These include:

- Ear acupuncture (PI 18)
- Breathing Space (HHC 313)
- Coping with anxiety (HHC 213)
- Complementary Therapy Network (HHC 225)
- Counselling at MVCC (PI 46)

How do I give feedback on the Complementary Therapy Service?

We aim to provide the best possible service and welcome any suggestions or comments you may have.

We always welcome feedback and we would encourage you to fill in our form “How do you feel about your visit to LJC today”, which is always available in the Drop-in Centre.

Alternatively, please telephone or write to:

Tanya Moulding
Complementary Therapy Coordinator
Lynda Jackson Centre
Mount Vernon Cancer Centre
Northwood, Middx HA6 2RN
Telephone: 020 3826 2553

If you have any concerns or complaints you may ask to speak with the Complementary Therapy Co-ordinator, or the Health Care Professional (HCP) on duty so that we can discuss any issues with you on the same day.

Or you may prefer to telephone or write to Tanya Moulding, the Complementary Therapy Coordinator (see above).

You can also telephone or write to

PALS [Patient Advocacy & Liaison Service]
Lister Hospital, Coreys Mill Lane, Stevenage, Herts, SG1 4AB
Telephone: 01438 285811 or email: pals.enh-tr@nhs.net
Further information is also available in the East and North Hertfordshire Trust Patient Information leaflet “Comments Compliments Concerns Complaints”.

Notes:

Questions or concerns about cancer and treatment? Need some support? Need to talk?

Drop in to the Cancer Support and Information Services at the Lynda Jackson Centre or call the support and information helpline

We will listen to your concerns, answer your questions and guide you to further information and services to help you with:

- cancer treatment
- practical support
- side effects of treatment
- headwear workshops
- day-to-day living with cancer
- exercise finance and benefits
- diet and nutrition counselling
- health and wellbeing
- someone to talk to
- talking to family and friends emotional support
- Look Good Feel Better
- complementary therapy
- self-help courses relaxation services
- life after cancer

The Lynda Jackson Centre is situated between the Cancer Centre and Gate 3 (White Hill)

Opening hours: Monday–Friday 9.30am–4.30pm

- Telephone 020 3826 2555
- Website www.ljmc.org

Supporting people affected by cancer from diagnosis, through treatment and beyond

Further information

Lynda Jackson Centre

- Situated between the Cancer Centre and Gate 3 (White Hill)
- Opening hours: Monday–Friday 9.30am–4.30pm
- Telephone 020 3826 2555
- Website www.ljmc.org

Useful contact details

East and North Hertfordshire Teaching NHS Trust:

- Website www.enherts-tr.nhs.uk
- Telephone 01438 314333

Leaflet information

You can request this information in a different format or another language; please speak to your doctor or nurse.

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