



Cancer

Client Information

Key Information – Cancer

Thank you for your enquiry about whether reflexology will help a particular condition. We have provided you with this information sheet because the condition that you have stated is medically considered to be within this group.

Firstly it is important to understand that reflexology does not claim to cure. Reflexologists may claim only to help relaxation and stress, however as stress is involved in many illnesses the prevention or reduction of stress may well help you. With a reduction in stress many other 'problems' may show an improvement.

The theory behind reflexology is that it returns the various systems of the body back to homeostasis, or back to working at their natural level and in doing so that it helps all systems work properly with each other.

Cancer is the most serious and life threatening illness of modern times. Not only is the illness terrible but the treatment is distressing as well. Cancer is an overgrowth of cells from a particular tissue that have lost their normal levels of control and can grow where they shouldn't. To stop this overgrowth, treatments such as radiotherapy or chemotherapy are used, these curtail the overgrowth of the cancerous cells but they also interrupt the growth cycle of any other normal growing and functioning cells by blocking certain mechanisms. This means that there are lots of dead or dying cells within the body releasing toxins, which in turn makes the patient feel extremely unwell and open to lots of other illnesses. The immune system in particular becomes very depleted and can result in serious infections on top of the treatment. All in all the body suffers greatly. There is

often a lot of emotional stress and pressure as well during treatment, and patients can feel a lack of control or ability to cope.

The theory behind reflexology, that systems are brought back to their normal level, may aid the body to heal while helping with some of the nastier side effects such as the stress, nausea, tiredness and constipation. Toxins from the treatment and from the body's reaction to the treatment might be released, allowing the patient to feel better. There has been some research that suggests that reflexology may also help with the ability to cope. It appears to be a useful addition alongside normal medical treatment. It is also a nice-feeling, non-threatening, non-medical, way of getting touch to a patient usually caught up in a very medical environment.

Like most other complementary therapies reflexology works on an individualised basis and the degree of effect is specific to the individual. The only way to know whether reflexology will help your particular symptoms or problems is to try it and see.

Should you have any concerns about receiving reflexology especially in conjunction with other medications or treatments then it is suggested that you seek medical advice before commencing treatment.

The Association of Reflexologists can help you to find a qualified reflexologist in your area, log on to www.aor.org.uk and do a postcode search and then choose a therapist or two and phone and ask if they are experienced in treating problems like yours. The most important thing about finding a therapist is that they are well qualified and that you like them.