

Exploring the effects of integrative health in cancer

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A Special Focus Issue on Integrative Oncology takes a wide-ranging view of the possible approaches and potential therapeutic benefits of complementary and integrative medicine in multiple age groups, nations, and special populations. The Special Focus Issue is published in *JACM, The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine*.

A series of fascinating and thought-provoking articles from North America, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia—6 invited reviews, 13 original research articles, 7 commentaries, and 2 editorials—have been selected to appear in this Special Focus Issue by Guest Editors Moshe Frenkel, MD, University of Texas Medical Branch, Director of the Complementary and Integrative Medicine Unit at Meir Medical Center, Israel and Lynda Balneaves, Ph.D. RN, President of the Society for Integrative Oncology and Associate Professor, Rady Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Manitoba, Canada.

Among the invited reviews is "Integrative Medicine in Childhood Cancer" by Elena Ladas, Ph.D., RD, Columbia University, New York City, NY, which examines the increasing use of integrative health measures among pediatric cancer patients, most often as supportive care agents. Dr. Ladas takes a close look at the options and effectiveness of nutritional and dietary strategies, including specialized diets and nutritional supplements such as probiotics. She also evaluates complementary therapies in pediatric oncology, including acupuncture, aromatherapy, and massage.

Erika Stoerkel, MPH, Thought Leadership and Innovation Foundation, McLean, VA and colleagues from University of Texas Health San Antonio, TX, Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Sam Houston, TX, and Samueli Institute, Alexandria, VA, coauthored the article entitled "Effectiveness of a Self-Care Toolkit for Surgical Breast Cancer Patients in a Military Treatment Facility." The researchers compared two groups of women about to undergo surgery for breast cancer, one of which was

given a self-care toolkit. The toolkit contained an MP3 player with audio-files to guide the user in guided breathing techniques, progressive muscle relaxation, meditation, guided imagery, and self-hypnosis. Data collected at various timepoints before and after surgery included measurements of anxiety, pain, nausea, sleep, fatigue, global health, quality of life, and two inflammatory blood markers. The results showed significant differences between the two groups

In his commentary intriguingly titled "Exceptional Responders, Outliers, and Radical Remissions," cancer survivor Glenn Sabin, of FON Therapeutics, Silver Spring, MD, and author of *n of 1*, an account of his personal journey, focuses on [cancer patients](#) who spontaneously go into remission—also called outliers or exceptional responders. Should these patients be studied or ignored? Dr. Sabin argues that they should be studied and explains why and how, targeting the patient-physician relationship and the potential role of a supportive environment.

"Guest editors Frenkel and Balneaves clearly struck a chord when they chose to engage this project, drawing nearly 70 submissions," says JACM Editor-in-Chief John Weeks, johnweeks-integrator.com, Seattle, WA. "As part of our ongoing interest in [integrative oncology](#) research, JACM is excited to contribute this Special Issue in the global community process of building an evidence road to guide and establish the integrative oncology model."

More information: www.liebertpub.com/toc/acm/24/9-10

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

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