

Oncology Massage Alliance
April 2013

Monthly Report

Oncology Massage Program

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Summary

The general highlights of the Program are as follows:

- We continue coverage at Texas Oncology Midtown, Texas Oncology Central, Texas Oncology North, and New Braunfels Cancer Care Center.
- The therapists in New Braunfels, Mary Liebermann and Tracy Link participated on the New Braunfels Cancer Care Center “Team Gump” for the ACS Relay for Life. They had OMA information available and wore the OMA smocks and provided chair massage for 26 adults and 6 kids. They raised \$219!

Infusion Room Stories

Each person we meet in the infusion room has such a special story and each one that we reach out to touches us deeply. By providing compassionate touch and a safe space for that person to simply relax, talk or just close their eyes and feel another's gentle touch is a great honor for us to connect with them and give them hope to just believe in their future. Here are some of their stories.

I gave a woman a hand massage. She has breast cancer. She remarked that she didn't like the what the chemo is doing to her hands and nails. After the massage, she noticed the difference in her hands. She said it was like having new hands.

I gave a woman in her 70s an elbow massage. She had fallen and shattered her elbow about three months ago. I used a light pressure - level 1-2, and she said the massage helped relieve the pain.

I gave a foot massage to an elderly woman who was receiving her first chemotherapy infusion. I used very gentle pressure during the session. She had never had a foot massage and was happy to receive one!

I gave a foot massage to an elderly man who was receiving chemotherapy infusion. He was not experiencing any neuropathy. As I massaged his feet, he slept. He was very relaxed! The pressure was gentle. He gave a big smile when it was finished.

I gave a hand massage to a middle-aged woman. She was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2007; it has since metastasized to the liver. She has some neuropathy in the hands and it seems to start in the late afternoon hours (around 5 pm, she notices... and especially with the warm weather that makes it worse). She is now taking medication for the neuropathy. I applied a gentle pressure level 2; the hand massage helped ease her neuropathy pain. She felt much better after the massage was over. She said that her hands felt much better. She was very appreciative.

Sandra was in for treatment after having recently been seen at MD Anderson. She said "all is good", but her face said otherwise. As we continued to talk she voiced her upset with the lack of coordination between her MDA and local physicians. I noticed and commented that the psoriatic arthritis in her hands was dramatically improved >> no redness, minimal swelling, and no tenderness. She recently started on Prednisone and it has helped her tremendously, to the point where she can walk without a wheelchair and make a fist with her hands. As I continued with her Level 2 hand and foot massage her mood definitely changed. Her spirits lifted, she was smiling and laughing. "Thank you so much for helping to change my mood. I feel so much better."

Karen was in from Austin for her every two month maintenance treatment. She has been having infections (URIs, otitis, etc) due to her compromised immune system.

She admitted she felt down, doesn't like staying home as she's used to being very active. She lives alone and doesn't cook much so she eats out, is overweight and doesn't eat healthy meals. We discussed the importance of building her immune system through improved nutrition and I suggested she see a Registered Dietician. I also referred her to Geri Ruane for regular massage therapy. She was very grateful for the referrals and once again mentioned that when she feels well again she wants to attend massage therapy school "and do what you do. You're an angel."

I gave the wife of a patient a hand massage. Her arthritis was acting up and her hands were hurting because of gardening, and she wanted to relax, which she did! Her husband was happy that she got a hand massage.

I gave a woman in her 70's a hand massage. She has arthritis in her fingers, and her skin was very delicate. I used a very gentle pressure, level 1 on her. She said that her fingers felt better after the massage - less painful.

I gave a woman in her 50's a foot massage. She said she couldn't believe that she could feel the massage all the way up to her neck. She enjoyed the massage very much, and said that it helped relax her and it felt so good.

I asked a gentleman if he wanted a massage. He declined, but I gave his wife a shoulder massage. He said, "If you massage her, believe me, you'll be helping me, too!" She was very stressed out, and her shoulders and neck were very tight. As I massaged her, I could feel her muscles relax, and she said that it felt so good.

Monthly Statistics

Since the program began in February, 2011, we have been able to touch many people in so many ways. Below is a table outlining the program statistics for April, 2013.

April Statistics

	Texas Oncology Midtown	Texas Oncology Central	New Braunfels Cancer Care Center	Texas Oncology North	TOTAL
Patients touched	32	13	22	18	85
Caregivers touched	5	0	5	4	14
Staff touched	0	0	0	0	0
Massage Therapists worked	2	2	2	1	7
Total days in Infusion Room	6	4	2	4	16
Volunteer hours	0	10.25	5.5	8	23.75
OMA paid hours	25	0	0	0	25
Donations	\$375.00			\$20.00	\$395.00