

# Massage therapy for cancer palliation and supportive care

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Full Title: Massage therapy for cancer palliation and supportive care: a systematic review of randomised clinical trials

**INTRODUCTION:** Massage is a popular adjunct to cancer palliation. This systematic review is aimed at critically evaluating all available randomised clinical trials of massage in cancer palliation. **MATERIALS AND METHODS:** Six databases were searched to identify all trials of classical massage for cancer patients. Studies of other types of massage, e.g. reflexology, aromatherapy, were excluded. Fourteen trials met all inclusion criteria. **DISCUSSION:** Collectively, they suggest that massage can alleviate a wide range of symptoms: pain, nausea, anxiety, depression, anger, stress and fatigue. However, the methodological quality of the included studies was poor, a fact that prevents definitive conclusions. **CONCLUSION:** The evidence is, therefore, encouraging but not compelling. The subject seems to warrant further investigations which avoid the limitations of previous studies.

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