

Complementary Therapies

Caring for yourself when you have an MPD

Many people with myeloproliferative disorders (MPDs) are interested in complementary and alternative therapies. Basic steps to take to protect your health include:

- **Eating a healthy and balanced diet and follow your doctor's advice on diet**
- **Exercising (gentle or more active, depending on your individual condition)**
- **Reducing stress**
- **Stopping smoking**

These are some of the best ways to care for yourself when you have an MPD.

Always consult your GP, primary care doctor and haematologist or oncologist before making any changes in your diet, exercise plan or before choosing complementary or alternative therapies.

These **stress reduction techniques** have been proven in recent scientific studies to offer benefits to people with heart disease and cancer, and may offer benefits to people with myeloproliferative disorders as well:

- **Massage**
- **Yoga**
- **Meditation**

Please visit our website at www.mpdvoice.org.uk for more details, or email info@mpdvoice.org.uk

Please note that nothing contained in this document is intended to constitute professional advice for medical diagnosis or treatment. You should always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider prior to starting any new treatment or consult them on any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.

Patient suggestions: Types of complementary therapies

Acupressure

Acupressure is an ancient Chinese massage therapy involving the stimulation of acupuncture points using the fingers. It is thought that by stimulating specific points on the body, the body's own energies are activated to help fight illness and restore harmony.

Acupuncture

Acupuncture is an ancient Chinese therapy that involves the insertion of very thin needles into the skin at specific points in order to stimulate the body into fighting illness and restoring harmony.

Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy treats illness using highly concentrated aromatic oils that are massaged into the body. These oils are known as essential oils, and are extracted from plants.

Chinese Herbalism

Chinese herbalism has become established as one of the most powerful and diverse medicinal therapies in the world over the last 5,000 years, treating all illnesses. These herbs consist of medicinal plants, as well as animal parts and minerals. The herbs do not always taste pleasant, but their effects are usually powerful.

Cranial Osteopathy or Craniosacral Therapy

The cranium or skull is the collection of bone housing the brain. This therapy works on the whole body, by gently manipulating and balancing the cranial bones, meningeal membranes, cerebrospinal fluid, intracranial vascular system and the whole body's connective tissues.

Homeopathy

Homeopathy tries to understand the patient's disease as a whole, learning about all the symptoms the patient has, whether they seem to be connected to the disease or not. Homeopathic remedies are made from substances (plant, mineral and animal products) that have been highly diluted (potentized).

Nutritional Therapy or Common-Sense Nutrition

Whether you choose to see a professional (listed below) or whether you take matters into your own hands, eating right involves eating healthily, choosing organic produce whenever possible, going low-fat and eating moderate amounts. As we know, being overweight is not healthy for anyone. There is an increasing number of health food shops opening all over the United Kingdom, as well as a huge body of literature available.

Reflexology

Reflexology works on the principle that all organs and systems of the body are reflected on the soles and backs of the feet. When specific reflex points are stimulated, these reflexes increase circulation in the different parts of the body, healing and energizing the corresponding organs.

Reiki

Reiki (translated from Japanese, means 'universal energy or life-force'), is a healing system based on unconditional love. Practitioners learn how to tap into the healing energies of the higher spiritual planes and channel them into the patient. It has been shown to reduce stress levels, improve circulation and speed up healing, and seems to work best as a support to other therapies, conventional or alternative.

Patient suggestions: Books on complementary therapies

If you would like to learn more about alternative medicine, there are many good publications. Here are a few suggested titles, available in most bookstores:

Nine Ways to Body Wisdom by Jennifer Harper N.D. Ph.D
Dr. Ali's Nutrition Bible by Dr. Mosaraf Ali

The Integrated Health Bible by Dr. Mosaraf Ali

Prescription for Nutritional Healing by Phyllis A. Balch, cnc & James F. Balch, M.D.

Chinese Herbal Medicine - Materia Medica compiled and translated by Dan Bensky and Andrew Gamble

The Encyclopedia of Energy Healing by Andy Baggott

The Journey by Brandon Bays

The Mozart Effect: tapping the power of music to heal body, strengthen the mind, and unlock the creative spirit by Don Campbell

Journey Into Healing by Deepak Chopra

Quantum Healing: Exploring The Frontiers of Mind/Body Medicine by Deepak Chopra

What Really Works in Natural Health by Susan Clark

The Sunday Times Vitality Cookbook by Susan Clark

Bodypower: The secret of self-healing by Vernon Coleman

Traditional Acupuncture: The law of the five elements, Traditional Acupuncture Institute by Dianne M. Connelly

Second Opinions: Stories of intuition and choice in the changing world of medicine by Jerome Groopman, M.D.

Principles of Chinese Medicine by Angela Hicks

100% Health: The drug-free guide to feeling better, living longer and staying free from disease by Patrick Holford

The Family Guide to Homeopathy by Dr. Andrew Lockie

What the Doctors Don't Tell You by Lynne McTaggart

The Complete Guide to Modern Herbalism by Simon Mills

Nature's Medicine: Plants That Heal by Joel L. Swerdlow, National Geographic

The Okinawa Way: How To Improve Your Health And Longevity Dramatically by Bradley Willcox, MD, Craig Willcox, PhD and Makoto Suzuki, MD

Chinese Medicine: Acupuncture, Herbal Remedies, Nutrition, Qigong and Health Essentials Element Books by Tom Williams PhD

The Fragrant Pharmacy: A complete guide to aromatherapy and essential oils by Valerie Ann Worwood