

Cancer: Choosing Appropriate Complementary Therapies

By Dr. Danny Jui, ND

Many people with cancer and their families, are actively seeking credible information on natural therapies to complement standard conventional treatments. This process can be overwhelming and frustrating. It is important to work with a naturopathic physician who is able to explore the most relevant options and provide information on the appropriateness of these therapies in your situation. There are two equally important approaches to this process:


An Evidence-Based Approach cautiously examines the safety, effectiveness and strength of evidence of a particular therapy being considered, in a non-biased way. This objective approach takes advantage of the best-available collective data to-date to help you and your physician extrapolate the most relevant options that have helped in situations similar to yours. In other words, the likelihood of these carefully selected options being useful in your healing is solidly founded upon the collective experience of many people who have gone through similar situations as you. However, while of very good value, collective evidence may sometimes be limited in addressing the specific needs of the unique person.

A Person-Centred Approach respectfully explores comparable alternatives, your personal preference and the ultimate informed decision made by you about your own care. This subjective approach honours the individual's autonomy, which has been documented as one of the most intriguing and powerful characteristics of recovery and healing in many cancer survivors. Working with a team of health care professionals who value and foster this kind of humanistic environment, is of the utmost importance.



No matter where you are on your healing journey, these two synergistic approaches can be effectively integrated into your existing care. It starts by formulating the ideal team of health care professionals that you feel confident and comfortable working with. Once these resources are set up, do not be afraid to utilize them; ask questions and contribute to each of the crucial areas that will ultimately inform your decision about a particular therapy being considered – safety, effectiveness, evidence, alternatives, preference and your intuitive gut feeling!

On your healing journey, I would like to share an insight from a patient going through cancer: “Listen to your own inner feelings along with professional advice and research. Look for a consensus of opinions. That’s how I make my decisions.

Medicine is not an exact science. I choose to work with health care professionals who will listen to the questions the patient has and, even better, who invite the patient to ask questions.” 

If you would like to learn more about how to best integrate appropriate complementary therapies into your current care, Dr. Jui will be facilitating an evening workshop on this topic in Vancouver on April 19. Please refer to the event calendar in this newsletter for registration details.

Dr. Danny Jui is a Naturopathic Physician with further training in Integrative Medicine and Naturopathic Oncology. To schedule a consultation with Dr. Jui please call Sage Clinic at 604-697-0397.