

Question checklist for complementary therapies

You may find these suggestions helpful when thinking about what to ask.

Questions to ask your doctor or treatment team

- Are you familiar with complementary therapies or medicines?
 - Does this hospital or treatment centre offer complementary therapies?
 - Would you have any concerns with me using complementary therapies? If so, why and what should I do if I decide to use them?
 - Do you know whether the complementary medicines I want to take will interfere with my conventional treatments?
 - Can you recommend a complementary therapist who practises safely?
 - Can you give me a letter for my therapist outlining my treatment?
 - Will using a complementary therapy mean I can't take part in a clinical trial for conventional treatment? Am I a likely candidate for one?
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General questions to ask potential complementary therapists

- What are your qualifications? Are you part of a professional association?
 - What training or experience do you have in treating people with cancer?
 - Have you treated anyone with my type of cancer?
 - Do you work in an integrative way with conventional health practitioners?
 - What exactly is the therapy? How does it work?
 - How can this therapy help me? How long will it take to work?
 - Are there any precautions I should take? Or any possible side effects?
 - Has the therapy been tested in clinical trials? Are the findings published and available to read?
 - Can this therapy be used safely with conventional treatment or medicines?
 - Are you willing to talk to my doctors or other health professionals I see?
 - How will I know that the therapy is working?
 - Do you do home visits if I am not well enough to attend your clinic?
 - What is the consultation cost? Will I get a Medicare or health fund rebate?
 - How long are your consultations? What can I expect during a session?
 - How many consultations do you recommend, and how often?
 - Do you dispense your own medicines and supplements?
 - How much can I expect to pay for medicines, supplements or aids?
 - Have the products or medicines you dispense been approved by the Therapeutic Goods Administration?
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Questions about specific therapies

Mind–body techniques

- What type of therapist would you recommend for my concerns?
- Can you refer me to a psychologist, psychiatrist or counsellor?

Body-based practices

- Are there forms of massage or bodywork that you think could help me?
- Which types of massage or bodywork, if any, should I avoid?

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