How I manage… the integrative approach to complex patient needs

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Setting the scene…

Classic ‘Adult’ Patient with ALL

- 15 – 25 years old (male)
- Tired
- Sore throats
- Fit
Common Side Effects of Induction Ct

- Anaemia (fatigue & breathlessness)
- Neutropenia (sepsis)
- Thrombocytopenia (bleeding)
- Nausea
- vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Constipation
- Mucositis
- Peripheral neuropathy
- Encephalopathy
- Infertility
- Menopausal symptoms (post TBI)
- Reduction in libido
- Fatigue
- Muscle weakness/wasting
- Diabetes
- Fluctuating energy levels
- Mood swings
- Psychosis
- Hair loss

➢ ...Altered body image, emotional distress, loss of control & confidence, depression...
Examples of Challenging Side Effects

- Nausea
- vomiting
- Mucositis
- Constipation
- Peripheral neuropathy
- Fatigue
- Muscle weakness /wasting / aches
- Plus: additional post transplant issues e.g. GvHD
Definition of Complementary Therapies

Complementary medicine is a group of diagnostic and therapeutic disciplines used alongside conventional medicine to provide supportive care e.g. touch therapies, visualisation, acupuncture.

(Alternative medicine is used in place of conventional medicine, e.g. eating a special diet to treat cancer instead of undergoing conventional treatment recommended by a physician).
Some additional reasons for integrating therapies into the care of haematology / transplant patients

- Anxiety
- Stress
- Claustrophobia
- Poor sleep patterns

...All these and more will impact on recovery and quality of life
The Lottery Project (n= 113)

St Ann's Hospice, The Christie & Beechwood Cancer Centre

- **Self-esteem** 31% expected CT could help. 92% experienced improvement
- **Pain control** 26% expected CT could help. 80% reported improvement
- **Skin problems** 10% expected CT could help. 61% experienced improvement
- **Headaches** 40% expected CT could help. 91% experienced improvement
- **Spiritual well being** 45% expected Ct to help. 96% experienced improvement
Nausea & Vomiting

- Antiemetics
- Small snacks and regular
- Advise about possible taste change
- Dietician
- ? Constipated
- Think of psychological aspect (especially with nausea)…
- Massage (distraction)
- Visualisation/hypnotherapy
- Aromasticks
Mucositis

Compounding Risk Factors

- Dehydration
- Poor nutritional intake
- Inability or lack of motivation to perform oral hygiene
- Pre-existing dental problems
- Alcohol / tobacco use
Prevention is better than cure!

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* For more information on Caphosol® and oral mucositis visit www.caphosol.co.uk

** For complications, 5 week symptoms
Constipation

- Ensure good fluid intake as much as possible. Check with your nurse or doctor the recommended amount.
- Continue to take prescribed medication.
- Maintain mobility if possible.
- Seek nutritional advice from dietician.
- Use the abdominal massage to help prevent and manage constipation.

**Abdominal Massage:**
- Use the massage before rather than immediately after a meal
- Ideally massage is carried out with the person lying down, if this is difficult it can be done with them sitting
- Only use gentle pressure, if any discomfort, stop and seek advice
- Always use clockwise movements
- Perform this massage twice a day - ideally
- Try to avoid interruptions.
- Take your time and be relaxed
Peripheral neuropathy

- **CIPN** is defined as the dysfunction of the sensory, motor &/or autonomic neurons of the PNS (Postma & Heimans, 2000)
- **Standard medication** (e.g. gabapentin, pregabalin, amitriptyline)
- Low platelets - **menthol cream** (3%) +/- massage
- **Qutenza** (Capsaicin) – painful only

**Acupuncture**
(plt > 30 & neut > 0.5):

- Donald et al, (2011) an evaluation study (n=18) - acupuncture had improved the CIPN in 82% of patients, including patients with ALL.
Fatigue
Muscle weakness / wasting / aches

• Try to maintain good sleep patterns / diurnal cycles

• Maintain an appropriate level of exercise (preferably with the support of a physiotherapist)

• Regular massage
Additional Psychological Support

- **Anxiety, sleep disorders and depression** e.g. counselling, massage, aromasticks, hypnotherapy

- **Claustrophobia** – e.g. massage, hypnotherapy, relaxation
Anxiety Management during procedures
Clinical Uses of Essential Oils in the Transplant Setting

• Mouthwashes / gels

• Lotions (an alternative to steroids?)

• Gels / creams (for infections & wounds)

• Management tool for symptoms of cGvHD
Essential Oils as Antimicrobial Agents

3 essential oils inhibiting the growth of bacteria
Example of oil antifungal activity

Control (Aspergillus fumigatus)  
Palmarosa 1:5120
Drug reaction...
Chronic GvHD (skin)

Case Study 1

- ALL
- Sibling Allograft 2006
- GvHD Dec 2008 + scleroderma Feb 2009
- Skin break down identified July 2009 –
- Patient referred
Case study 1
Case study 1 (contd)
Case Study (2)

- Obese male
- CLL post sibling allograft in July 2001
- Chronic GVHD with sclerodermatous skin changes of trunk & extremities worsening in 2002 with cellulitis & ulceration
- Treatments included PUVA, steroids, maggots…
- 6.11.07… Referral
Colonised with anaerobic bacteria
Signs of epithelialisation
Approximately 50% epithelialisation after 6 wks
vvGvHD / Vaginal Atrophy

- Chemical menopause – HRT, topical oestrogen, lubricants
- Infection – topical antimicrobials
- GvHD – systemic / topical immunosuppression

... What if nothing works?
My husband does so much caring for me, yet I don’t feel that I can give him anything in return. I didn’t feel that it was appropriate to mention it. I have accepted it and have used lubricants for months now.

My husband is scared to touch me because he’s worried that he will hurt me or give me an infection.

I thought that I shouldn’t be having sex anymore.

vvGvHD / Vaginal Atrophy
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