

Diagnosis and Treatment of Patients with early and advanced Breast Cancer



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Complementary Therapy

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Complementary Therapy – Hormonal Treatment and Alternatives in Breast Cancer Survivors – Survivorship



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- **Versions 2002–2024:**

**Albert / Bauerfeind / Blohmer / Dall / Fersis / Friedrich / Gerber /
Göhring / Hanf / Heil / Janni / Kümmel / Lück / von Minckwitz / Nitz
/ Oberhoff / Rhiem / Scharl / Schmidt / Schütz / Solomayer /
Thomssen**

- **Version 2025:**

Solomayer/ Würstlein

CAM

„Integrative Oncology“

CAM
Complementary + alternative medicine

Complementary
*In addition to
scientifically
based medicine*

Alternative
*Instead of
scientifically
based medicine*

„Unconventional methods“

UCT
Unconventional Tx

Unconventional
*Unproven outsider
methods*



Good Clinical Practice

All patients should be consulted as early as possible and in the course of the process repeatedly on the interest in information complementary medical measures and, if interested, reliable sources of information should be referred.

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S3 LL “Komplementärmedizin in der Behandlung von onkologischen PatientInnen“

Structured interview (S3 guideline) use of complementary medicine for patients

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<https://www.leitlinienprogramm-onkologie.de/leitlinien/komplementaermedizin>

General Considerations

Oxford

LoE	GR	AGO
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- **CAM instead of loco-regional interventions**

2b	B	--
----	---	----

- **CAM instead of systemic treatment**

2b	B	--
----	---	----

- **Diagnostic procedures in connection with complementary and alternative therapy concepts without evidence (e.g. iris diagnostics, bioresonance) should not be recommended.**

- ***During anti-cancer treatment:* Beware of drug interactions**

Complementary Therapy Pre- and Postoperative

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	Oxford		
	LoE	GR	AGO
<u>Preoperative:</u>			
▪ Hypnosis (reduces anxiety, pain, nausea)	1b	B	+
<u>Postoperative:</u>			
▪ Acupuncture (pain relief, anxiety)	1b	B	+
▪ Acupuncture (nausea, vomiting)	2b	B	+
▪ Massage therapy (pain relief)	2b	C	+/-
▪ Early postoperative exercise reduces upper-limb dysfunction (beware: increased wound drainage)	1a	A	+
▪ Physical exercise			
▪ to reduce breast cancer related secondary lymphedema	1a	A	+
▪ as a prophylaxis of lymphedema	1b	B	+/-
▪ Prophylactic lymphatic drainage	1b	B	--
▪ Yoga (arm and shoulder pain)	2b	C	+
▪ Music therapy (reduces pain after mastectomy)	2b	C	+/-

Complementary Treatment While on Cancer Treatment – Impact on Toxicity I

During anti-cancer treatment: Beware of drug interactions!

- **Mistletoe (*Viscum album*)** in order to reduce side effects
 - In EBC
 - In MBC

- With PARP Inhibitors
- With Checkpoint Inhibitors
- With CDK4/6 Inhibitors
- **Mistletoe (*Viscum album*) i.v.**

- **Mistletoe (*Viscum album*) i.v. high dose**

Oxford

LoE GR AGO

2a	B	+/-
3a	C	+/-
2b	B	-
4	C	+/-
4	C	+/-
4	C	+/-
2b	B	-
4	C	--

Complementary Treatment While on Cancer Treatment – Impact on Toxicity II

During anti-cancer treatment: Beware of drug interactions

Oxford

	LoE	GR	AGO
▪ Thymic peptides lower risk of severe infections	1a	B	+/-
▪ Ginseng reduces fatigue; note: interacts with cytochrome P enzymes e.g. CYP 3A4	2b	B	-
▪ Ganoderma Lucidum reduces fatigue, note: inhibits cytochrome P enzymes (e.g. CYP 3A4)	1a	B	-
▪ L-Carnitine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ peripheral neuropathy ▪ treatment of fatigue 	1b 1b	B B	-- -
▪ Melatonin (reduces fatigue, improve sleep, depressive symptoms, cognition)	2a	B	+/-
▪ Curcumin adjunct to reduce radiation-induced dermatitis	1b	B	+/-
▪ Ginger adjunct to guideline-oriented medication to treat chemotherapy induced nausea & vomiting – beware of drug interactions	1b	C	+/-

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Complementary Treatment While on Cancer Treatment – Impact on Toxicity III

Oxford

- **Antioxidant supplements**
 - **various antioxidative extracts** (to reduce anthracyclin-induced cardiotoxicity)
- **High dose vitamin C**
- **Vitamine E**
- **Selenium** (for alleviating therapy side effects)
- **Co-Enzyme Q 10** (fatigue, QoL)
- **Proteolytic enzymes** (for reduction of chemotherapy-induced toxicity)
- **Chinese herbal medicine improves wound healing ***
- **Oxygen and ozone therapy**
- **Short-term fasting** (under 3 week chemotherapy cycle - QoL, Fatigue)

	LoE	GR	AGO
	1b	B	-
	1b	B	-
	1b	C	-
	2b	B	-
	1b	B	-
	1b	B	-
	2b	B	-
	1b	B	--
	3	C	--
	2b	B	+/-**

* Application of substances or combinations not tested in Germany

** Treatment in clinical trials recommended

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Additional Complementary Therapy of Side Effects Related to Cancer Treatments

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- **Cannabis-based drugs (against pain, emesis/nausea)**
- **Chinese medicinal herbs** (to treat the side effects of chemotherapy and endocrine therapy)
- **Homoeopathic medicine** (against therapy-related side effects / placebo effect)
- **Topical Silymarin** (to prevent acute dermatitis during radiotherapy)
- **Massage** (to improve on fatigue, pain, anxiety, nausea)
- **Transcutaneous Electrical Nerve stimulation (TENS)** (against cancer pain)
- **Hydrotherapy** (for supportive skin care)
- **Local therapies (CIPN)**
- **Whole Body Hyperthermia**

	Oxford		
	LoE	GR	AGO
	1b	A	+/-
	1b	B	-
	1b	B	+/-
	2b	B	+/-
	1b	B	+/-
	1a	B	+/-
	2b	B	+/-
	2b	B	+
	4	C	-

Additional Complementary Therapy of Side Effects Related to Cancer Treatments

Acupuncture** in order to improve

	Oxford		
	LoE	GR	AGO
▪ Chemotherapy-induced nausea and vomiting			
▪ (Electro/Ear)-Acupuncture as adjunct to antiemetic treatment	1b	B	+
▪ (Ear-)Acupressure as adjunct to antiemetic treatment	1b	B	+
▪ Pain			
▪ Cancer pain	1b	B	+
▪ Aromatase-inhibitor – induced arthralgia	1a	B	+
▪ Fatigue			
▪ Acupressure	1b	B	+
▪ Cognitive Dysfunction	2b	C	+/-
▪ Sleep Problems	2b	C	+/-
▪ Menopause syndrome (under treatment)			
▪ to improve on frequency and severity of hot flashes	1b	B	+*
▪ Leucopenia (Moxibustion)	2b	B	-
▪ Treatment of chemotherapy induced polyneuropathy			
▪ prophylactically	1b	B	-
▪ therapeutically	2b	B	+/-
▪ Chronic lymph edema after breast cancer treatment	2b	B	+/-

* data only post treatment

** Cave! Overviews or meta-analyses with purely Chinese-language original works cannot be verified by the Mamma Commission

Complementary Treatment Mind-Body Medicine I

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MBSR (Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction)

Program improves quality of life, coping strategies, attentiveness, and lowers stress, anxiety (incl. fear of recurrence), depression, fatigue, and sleep disturbances

Physical exercise / sport

min. 3x/week moderate endurance training in combination with workout exercises (2x per week) improve quality of life, cardio-respiratory fitness, physical performance, sleep, pain, depression, lymphedema, fatigue, cognition, weight-control

Oxford

LoE	GR	AGO
-----	----	-----

1a	A	+
----	---	---

1a	A	++
----	---	----

Complementary Treatment Mind-Body Medicine II

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	Oxford		
	LoE	GR	AGO
Relaxation techniques Reduction of anxiety, depressivity and nausea, improvement of quality of life, sleep, reduction of psychological stress	2b	C	+/-
Yoga Improves quality of life, sleep, anxiety, depression, CIPN, lymphedema and especially fatigue	1b	A	+
Qi Gong May improve quality of life, fatigue, and mood	2a	B	+/-
Tai Chi Improves quality of life, muscular strength, sleep	2a	B	+/-
Hypnosis Improves fatigue and muscle weakness under radiotherapy; also reduces distress	1b	A	+

Prevention of Recurrence / Improvement of Overall Survival I

Modifiable Lifestyle Factors

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- **Physical exercise**

(equivalent to 3–5 hrs moderate walking per week)
improves DFS and OS, cardio-respiratory fitness,
physical functioning

- **Reduce smoking**

- **Reduce alcohol consumption (< 6 g/day)**

Oxford

LoE	GR	AGO
-----	----	-----

2a	A	++
----	---	----

2b	A	+
----	---	---

2b	A	+
----	---	---

Modifiable Lifestyle Factors

Nutrition after Breast Cancer Diagnosis

Prevention of Recurrence / Improvement of Overall Survival II

Oxford

LoE	GR	AGO
-----	----	-----

- | | | | |
|--|----|---|-----|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adherence to normal BMI / weight loss if overweight, irrespective of HR-status | 1a | A | ++ |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low fat diet
dietary counseling recommended | 1a | B | + |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased fiber intake (e.g. Flaxseed) | 2a | B | + |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adherence to general nutrition guidelines
(e.g. DGE, WCRF) similar to a Mediterranean Diet | 2a | B | ++ |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nightly Fasting | 2b | C | +/- |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dietary extremes | 2a | B | -- |

Complementary Treatment

Prevention of Recurrence / Improvement of Overall Survival III.1

Dietary Supplements – Herbal Therapies

During anti-cancer treatment: Beware of drug interactions

Oxford

LoE GR AGO

Post treatment vitamine / antioxidant supplements does not appear to be associated with increased risk of recurrence (beware of drug / treatment interactions)

2b

B

Smokers on antioxidant supplements are at higher risk for lung cancer

1b

A

For Prevention of BC Recurrence:

- **Antioxidants** 2a B +/-
- **Vitamine supplementation in patients on a balanced diet** (esp. Vitamine C, E) 2a B +/-
- **Vitamine D (after Vit D level)** 2b B +/-
- **Soy-food** (natural source of phytoestrogenes) 2a B +/-
 - **food or concentrates containing ≥ 100 mg isoflavones per day** 2a B -
- **Black Cohosh** (Cimicifuga racemosa) 3b C +/-
- **Antioxidant supplements** (after completion of radiotherapy) 2b B +/-
- **Green tea** 3a C +/-
- **Selenium** 2b B +/-

2a

B

+/-

2a

B

+/-

2b

B

+/-

2a

B

+/-

2a

B

-

3b

C

+/-

2b

B

+/-

3a

C

+/-

2b

B

+/-

Complementary Treatment

Prevention of Recurrence / Improvement of Overall Survival III.2

Dietary Supplements – Herbal Therapies and others

During anti-cancer treatment: Beware of drug interactions

- **Trace elements and minerals**
- **Artificial carotenoids**
- **Proteolytic enzymes** (Papain, Trypsin, Chymotrypsin)
- **Mistletoe** (*Viscum album*) (early and metastatic BC)
- **Thymic peptides** (impact on OS)
- **Oxygen- and ozone therapy**
- **Laetrile** (Amygdalin, „Vitamine B17“)
- **Methadone**
- **TCM-Herbs ***
- **Cancer bush** (*Sutherlandia frutescens*), **Devil's claw** (*Harpagophytum procumbens*), **Rooibos tea** (*Aspalathus linearis*), **Bambara groundnut** (*Vigna subterranean*)
- **Incense**
- **Curcuma, curcumine**
- **Whole Body Hyperthermia**

Oxford

LoE GR AGO

LoE	GR	AGO
2b	B	-
2b	B	-
3b	B	-
1b	C	-
2a	B	-
5	D	--
1c	D	--
5	D	--
2b	C	--
4	C	-
5	D	-
2b	C	-
4	C	--

* Cave! Reviews with original Chinese studies and herbal mixtures without knowledge of interactions