



REVIEW OF BOOK

INTEGRATIVE ONCOLOGY IN NURSING
ONCOLOGIA INTEGRATIVA NA ENFERMAGEM
ONCOLOGÍA INTEGRATIVA EN ENFERMERÍA

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Integrative Oncology (IO) is a branch of Integrative Medicine which integrates the five following evidence-based complementary practices into conventional medicine¹ (chemotherapy, surgery, radiotherapy and molecular therapy):

- 1) Practices based on Biology: vitamins, herbs and dietary supplements.
- 2) Mind-body techniques: yoga, meditation, imagery, expressive arts (art and music therapy, dance).
- 3) Body manipulation: reflexology, massage, exercises.
- 4) Energy therapies: reiki, therapeutic touch, qigong.
- 5) Whole systems: traditional Chinese and ayurvedic medicine.

Among the books available on the theme²⁻⁵ the *Handbook of Integrative Oncology Nursing Evidence-based practice*⁶ was recently published, and is the first North-American book for the use of IO in Nursing. It contains 198 pages distributed in six sections and five appendices.

In the first section, the Introduction, the authors Decker and Lee establish the definition of IO, as well as its usage and guidelines, according to the *Evidence-Based Clinical Practice Guidelines for Integrative Oncology* illustrated in appendix II, and published by the *Society for Integrative Oncology* (SIO) and the *Guidelines for Using Complementary and Alternative Methods of the American Cancer Society* (ACS).

The registering and follow-up of oncological patients' information treated with IO is presented in section II and contains a

diagram to assist the communication of health professionals with their patients on the application of integrative and complementary practices (ICP). Another important tool is a form to collect patients' data, the *Full Integrative Assessment*, which uses the model of an anamnesis and includes questions on ICP. The abridged version is called the *Abbreviated Integrative Assessment*.

The most commonly used complementary therapeutics are described and exemplified in section III, where the reader will find information on a certification board and the educational training necessary for each practice, as well as the list of institutions responsible for them.

Section IV is dedicated to the use of herbs and plant extracts and identifies herb groups and natural products known for their blood clotting and sedation properties, or the ones with the potential to impede or enhance cancer proliferation. The herbal products are classified according to four safety levels. There is also a description of the most applied herbs, each one's properties, forms of usage, and potential side effects and contraindication. Furthermore, this section presents a list of potential interactions of herbs, medicines, vitamins and minerals. At the end of this section, in chart #6, there is a list of herbs which theoretically could interfere with nuclear medicine and diagnostics.

The longest chapter in the book, section V presents the symptom management of the treatment and the most used therapeutics according to each symptom. In this section, the authors describe the following cancer

symptoms: *anorexia-cachexia*; anxiety; cognitive dysfunction; constipation; depression; diarrhea; exhaustion; hormonal changes and hot flashes; insomnia; mucositis; *myelosuppression*; nausea and vomiting; dietary issues; pain; sexual changes; taste alterations and xerostomia. Each one of the symptoms is analyzed according to the following topics: introduction; evidence for practice; examples of on-going research and protocols; examples of clinical trials; special considerations for the usage in children and adults; summary and bibliographic references.

Section VI deals with the governmental boards and the laws that regulate the use of dietary supplements, the companies that produce electronic medical devices that emit radiation, and which inform on the safety of drugs, medical devices, supplements and cosmetics.

In the appendices there is a glossary, a declaration about what the Society for Oncological Nursing thinks about the application of ICP, ten rules about the use of herbs, a list of reliable electronic sources on ICP and, also, a subject index.

We consider that although the book was mainly written for the use of nurses who work mostly in private North-American health insurance companies in the cancer field, it is a useful reference for the health professionals who operate inside the *Sistema Único de Saúde* (Brazilian Public Health System) and can supplement the references in this field, like for instance the pioneering work *Enfermagem e as Práticas Complementares em Saúde*,⁷ (Nursing and Complementary Practices in Health) as well as support the Ministry of Health's National Policy for Integrative and Complementary Practices and the National Program for Assistance to Pain and Palliative Care.

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