

## **A Summary of the Potential Benefits of Bodywork for Cancer Patients**

1. Moisturizes the skin and prevents problems such as bedsores.
2. Relieves muscle soreness due to prolonged bedrest.
3. Increases circulation. Lymphatic flow is stimulated, which helps in the elimination of waste products; vascular flow is also stimulated, bringing fresh nutrients to the area.
4. Increases range of motion.
5. Increases relaxation.
6. Decreases edema and lymphedema.
7. Sedates or stimulates nervous system, depending on the modality used.
8. Encourages deeper respiration.
9. Improves bowel activity.
10. Increases alertness and mental clarity.
11. Improves sleep.
12. Provides pain relief and reduces the need for pain medication.
13. Decreases symptoms related to chemo and radiation, such as fatigue, nausea, diarrhea, and loss of appetite.
14. Stimulates faster wound healing.
15. Provides faster recovery from anesthesia.
16. Shortens hospital stays.
17. Increases patients' awareness of stress signals.
18. Decreases anxiety and depression.
19. Provides distraction.
20. Provides relief from isolation.
21. Offers meaningful social interaction.
22. Provides a doorway to greater intimacy with family and friends.
23. Provides relief of touch deprivation.
24. Provides a forum for patients to express their feelings.
25. Re-establishes a positive body image.
26. Gives patient a sense of participation in the healing process.
27. Re-builds hope.

Source: *Medicine Hands: Massage Therapy for People With Cancer* by Gayle MacDonald

Courtesy of: Julia Morrow, CMT/CES/CLT...[www.massagebyjulia.com](http://www.massagebyjulia.com)