

Integrative News

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Staff Highlight: Discussions with Diane Rooney, MS, LAc, LMT, Dipl. OM

An integral member of The Integrative Therapies Program for Children with Cancer since 2005, Diane Rooney has practiced a vast assortment of complementary medicine modalities in New York and New Jersey for the past 20 years. Licensed in massage therapy and acupuncture and certified in reflexology, Reiki, and Chinese herbology, Diane has the agility to use the most appropriate complementary medicine modalities for each patient, addressing their unique concerns during and beyond cancer treatment. Diane is also currently the Dean of Studies and a faculty member at Tri-State College of Acupuncture in New York City, where she is pursuing her doctorate degree in acupuncture and teaches both foundational and refined aspects of acupuncture including myology, auricular theory, and trigger points.

When asked about what she appreciates the most about working in pediatric oncology, Diane enthusiastically replies: "Children are a joy to me. I love children. They constantly bring me healing. As for the oncology part, I am part of the good stuff the children get. It is heartwarming to me that I can bring them some relief from their cancer and their cancer treatment. I can help make them and their families feel better during the worst of times."

While discussing how she chooses which complementary medicine modality to use when working with patients, Diane concurs that it is most often reliant on the patient's age and symptoms. Describing various scenarios she encounters with patients, Diane remarks when working with small children, she usually starts with foot reflexology since it is non-invasive, allowing her to gain a child's trust. On the other hand, with an adolescent or teen, she assesses the situation and chooses the best complementary medicine treatment option for their current condition. For instance, if a teen is suffering from nausea, Diane would most likely choose to treat the condition with acupuncture, whereas if a teen is experiencing neuropathy, she would most likely start with massage therapy. If a patient is in palliative care, Diane often finds Reiki and visualization to be most suitable. Diane also effortlessly finds ways to use complementary medicine modalities in unison. She comments in one session with a patient, she can begin with 15 minutes of acupuncture, then massage the feet using essential oils and cream, and close with Reiki.

Diane explains that her experience working clinically and on research with The Integrative Therapies Program has helped solidify her belief of the integration of Chinese medicine and allopathy, conventional medicine. "Chinese medicine and allopathy is a team effort," she elucidates. "One system picks up where the other leaves off." In 2008, Diane will also be working with children with autism in Tenafly, New Jersey. To stay healthy during the winter months, Diane recommends keeping the neck covered with a scarf, so as to avoid what in Chinese medicine they describe as the wind carrying in external pernicious influences (EPIs).

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Stay Tuned....

2008 marks the 10th Anniversary of The Integrative Therapies Program for Children with Cancer

Program Highlight: Integrative Therapies Program Establishes International Presence

This past fall, The Integrative Therapies Program traveled to India. On November 1st, 2007, Dr. Kelly co-chaired the session “Complementary and alternative medical therapies for children with cancer: Bridging Eastern and Western medical traditions” to an audience of over 200 at the 39th Annual International Society of Pediatric Oncology conference in Mumbai, India. Speakers discussed the role of Ayurveda and the integration of CAM therapies in the care of children with cancer. Panelists, including Elena Ladas, reviewed the practicalities and concerns of integrating Eastern and Western medical traditions into clinical practice. The session was extremely well received, and as a result, many potential international collaborations emerged.

After the conference, the Integrative Therapies team traveled to Kolkata, India to visit the Prasanta Banerji Homeopathy Research Foundation and outpatient clinic. Pediatric oncology patients from all over the world contact the Banerji clinic for treatment guidance, and over 800 patients are seen daily in the outpatient clinic. In an effort to better understand Banerji homeopathic protocols specifically for pediatric oncology patients, The Integrative Therapies team spent a day and a half at the clinic, meeting over 30 pediatric oncology cases and reviewing patients’ diagnoses, treatment plans, and disease status. Collaborative research projects are underway. A press conference was also held, and more than ten different Indian newspapers reported on the visit.

This past September, Elena Ladas also held a consultant meeting on pediatric nutrition for the International Atomic Energy Agency of the United Nations in Vienna, Austria to improve the nutrition management of children with cancer in developing countries.