

Traditional herbal medicine in supportive cancer care: From alternative to integrative - 2750218 - Syllabus

Course Description

Please join us for an exciting and innovative journey, examining one of the most important and often overlooked aspects of the oncology setting: Traditional Herbal Medicine in Supportive Cancer Care.

This course is presented with short lectures offering a wide range of issues related to the principles and practice of herbal medicine in cancer care.

The course includes interviews with leading world experts from the field of Integrative Oncology, from the U.S. and Canada, as well as Europe, the Middle East, China, and Japan.

By the end of the course, you will:

- Understand core concepts in Integrative Oncology, as they relate to the supportive/palliative cancer care setting.
 - Acquire effective communication skills which will foster a better understanding of patients' views on herbal medicine, while providing guidance on the safe and effective use of these products.
 - Be able to design, together with patients, caregivers and healthcare providers, a patient-tailored and cultural-sensitive integrative oncology treatment program, including the use of herbal medicine.
 - Be acquainted with leading "players" who can share their experience in creating and implementing an integrative oncology program
- The course has been specially designed to provide information and guidance at a level appropriate for patients and non-medical participants, as well as medical professionals interested in receiving evidence-based guidance on the safety and effectiveness of herbal medicine in cancer care.
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Course Format

The course is delivered asynchronously through the Moodle platform.

Each **session** includes:

- Recorded video lectures in Panopto platform.
- Questions embedded within the videos that students must answer while watching.
- A **graded Moodle assignment** at the end of the session
- Students are required to attend all three workshops/tours on the following dates:

1. **Tuesday, June 9, 2026**, between 08:00–12:00, at the Technion Faculty of Medicine, Orange Room (Mezzanine Floor Seminar Room).

2. **Tuesday, July 7, 2026**, Botany/Plant Tour between 08:00–12:00. Meeting point: Elijah's Cave (near the Kiryat Eliezer neighborhood).
3. **Tuesday, July 21, 2026**, meeting at the Lin Medical Center between 08:00–12:00, in the Oncology Institute.

Attendance at all workshops/tours is compulsory

Students are expected to watch the videos, answer the embedded questions, and complete the graded assignment for each session.

A grade of at least **80** is required to pass every assignment.

*Please notice - Session 10 is structured differently. Detailed instructions for how to approach it are provided at the end of the syllabus.

Course Assessment

Assessment is based on **graded assignments at the end of each session**, which evaluate students' understanding of the session material.

Course Sessions

Session	Topic	Videos	Learning Objectives
1	Introduction	1-3	• Become familiar with concepts in traditional herbal medicine • Become familiar with the widespread use of herbal medicine use. • Understand the dilemmas associated with the use of herbal medicine in cancer care • Be able to identify the cross-cultural perspective related to herbal medicine use in cancer care
2	Concepts Related to Supportive and Palliative Cancer Care	4-6	• Familiarize yourself with the term “palliative cancer care” • Learn to differentiate between palliative cancer care and supportive cancer care • Learn to recognize how the patient-centered approach is being integrated within the conventional oncology setting
3	Defining Non-Conventional Approaches to Medical Treatment	7-9	• Understand the differences between alternative, complementary, and integrative contexts of medical care • Identify the similarities and differences between traditional herbal medicine and other non-conventional treatment options • Gain an historical perspective of how integrative medicine has evolved • Learn about the core elements of integrative medicine, as they relate to the need for an open and accepting approach to patients' perspectives, while maintaining a scientific and evidence-based approach to treatment
4	Key Concepts in Traditional Herbal Medicine	10	• Learn about the diversity in herbal medicinal products, reflecting the varied geography and climate • Recognize the difference between self-administered use of herbal products from that which is guided by a trained herbal medicine practitioner • Understand the use of herbal medicine within a cross-cultural perspective, as it relates to traditional concepts of medical care

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5	Discussing the Use of Traditional Herbal Medicine During the Integrative Physician (IP) Consultation	11-14	- Learn techniques to ask patients about their expectations from the IP consultation and complementary medicine treatment program, as part of the patient's medical history - Access scientific literature (e.g., PubMed) regarding the evidence supporting the effectiveness and safety of herbal medicinal products, including during active cancer care - Recognize the potential risks associated with the use of herbal medicinal supplements, including herb-drug interactions - Understand the need to assess the quality of herbal supplements, especially regarding the bio-activity of their components and their safety
6	Traditional Herbal Medicine in the Middle East: Historical and Cultural Roots	15-17	- Understanding the key concepts associated with the practice of traditional herbal medicine in the Middle East - Learning to recognize the most popular Middle Eastern herbs which are being used in cancer care - Becoming familiar with the research supporting the role of Middle-Eastern herbs in improving patients' QOL.
7	Traditional Chinese Herbal Medicine	18-20	- Understand the key concepts associated with the practice of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) and its impact on oncology care - Learn about the integration of herbal TCM in the modern oncology palliative setting in China and Japan - Become familiar with the research supporting the role of TCM herbs in improving patients' QOL
8	Traditional Ayurvedic Herbal Medicine	21-22	- Understanding the key concepts associated with the practice of traditional Ayurvedic medicine and its impact on oncology care - Studying the multi-modal Ayurvedic approach to treatment, in which herbal medicine is combined with dietary changes, behavior modifications, yoga, and additional mind-body-spiritual and physical modalities. - Evaluating the research supporting the role of Ayurvedic herbs in improving patients' QOL.
9	European Herbal Medicine	23-24	- Learning about the roots of European herbal medicine, as they relate to the geographical-botanical and medical-cultural diversity of the continent - Become acquainted with the two systematic medical approaches which are in a certain extent related to herbal medicine: Homeopathy and Anthroposophic medicine - Examining the research supporting the role of Mistletoe (<i>Viscum album</i>) and other European herbs in cancer care.
10	Effective Practitioner–Patient Communication in the Integrative Oncology Setting	25-27	- Learn how to initiate a conversation with patients about the use of herbal medicine in the oncology setting. - Examine and reflect on ways to establish rapport with patients, encouraging active participation in co-defining treatment goals and designing a patient-tailored treatment program - Become acquainted with specific keywords which can stimulate a discussion on patients' use of herbal medicine - Identify and analyze 8 key questions to be raised at the initial consultation with patients in the integrative oncology setting - Learn how to raise these 8 key questions in the interaction with patients who report the use of herbal medicine during active cancer treatment - Identify potential barriers to effective communication with patients and medical colleagues on herbal medicine use, and explore ways to overcome these barriers
11	Herbal Medicine Treatments for Specific Quality-of-Life Concerns	28-31	Examining the evidence supporting the use of traditional herbal medicine for the relief of gastro-intestinal symptoms, cancer-related

Session	Topic	Videos	Learning Objectives
			fatigue, emotional and sleep-related concerns, and pain in the context of supportive and palliative care. - Learning how herbal medicine can be combined with other integrative oncology modalities to facilitate the above concerns and relief of symptoms - Acquiring and understanding that the use of herbal medicine in cancer care should be recommended, implemented, and monitored by integrative medicine-trained healthcare practitioners, as an integral part of supportive and palliative care and based on up-to-date research.
12	Tailoring a Patient-Centered Integrative Oncology Treatment Program	32-34	- Learning about how a patient-centered oncology treatment program can be implemented using a practical, 4-step approach which addresses patients' concerns and expectations - Examining how a patient-tailored treatment can be "weaved", addressing both general and specific concerns and symptoms of the patient, while at the same time taking into consideration the research on the safety and effectiveness of the integrative treatments - Learning how to integrate the seemingly opposing approaches of Western and traditional medicine to herbal medicine in a clinical integrative oncology setting. - Acquiring an understanding that the use of herbal medicine in cancer care should be recommended, implemented, and monitored by integrative medicine-trained healthcare practitioners, as an integral part of supportive and palliative care and based on up-to-date research
13	Establishing an Integrative Oncology Program in Your Medical Center	35	
Interviews	Professor Eran Ben-Arye is interviewing leading experts		

*Session 10 – Instructions

1. Watch S10V25

- Begin by watching **V25 Part 1 & 2**. These are standard lecture videos.

2. Role-Playing Assignment – General Overview

- In the course Moodle (Session 10) there are **2 instruction\information sheets** about this assignment:
 - Communicating with a patient on herbal use during oncology treatment: Points to consider at the initial consultation.
 - Role play instructions.
- Please read them before beginning the assignment.
- There are **two Role-Play exercises**, both in **video S26**:
 - Part 1** – Interview with Mariam (patient) and Dr. Jamal (IP, integrative physician)

- **Part 2** – Interview with Joe (patient) and Dr. Samuels (IP, integrative physician)
- Each Part has **two segments: A and B**.

How to complete the Role-Play assignment

- 1) First, **enter the assignment task in the course Moodle – Session 10**.
 - 2) Watch the **Part A video** for the Role-Play you are assigned:
 - **Part 1A** or **Part 2A**, depending on your assigned Role-Play.
 - 3) Complete the assignment in the Moodle (identify key elements from the interview/role-play).
 - 4) After submitting the assignment, watch the **Part B video**:
 - **Part 1B** or **Part 2B**, corresponding to the Part you just completed.
 - **Do not watch Part B before submitting the assignment.**
3. **Final Lecture Video**
 - Watch **S27**, which is a standard lecture video.
 4. **Quiz**
 - Complete the **session quiz** at the end as usual.