

Healthy Cell Allies for Treatment

Hello, I'm Claire Casselman of the Complementary Therapies Program of the University of Michigan's Comprehensive Cancer Center. Welcome to this podcast of guided imagery designed to assist you with managing the often stressful aspects of cancer diagnosis, treatment or life after treatment.

Whether you are a person with cancer, have been treated for cancer, or a friend or loved one of someone with cancer – you are aware that this time requires constant attention to the details of appointments, schedules, healthy eating, and maintaining family and work routines. More and more, research has shown the benefits of practices such as guided imagery to support a person's ability to cope, manage and heal. The good news is that you may choose when and where to use this very simple yet powerful, non-invasive strategy.

For more information about the benefits of guided imagery, how it works and tips for optimal use, please see the webpage.....

This particular imagery is designed to help soothe worries about treatment for cancer. The imagery focuses on creating an alliance between healthy cells and treatments such as chemotherapy and radiation. Even if you are not receiving treatment, you may find it beneficial as a loved one who is concerned about someone who is receiving treatment.

With all guided imagery, the first step is to release physical and mental tension and be comfortable. For now, find a comfortable position. This may be seated in a chair or lying on a bed or on the floor. See if you can align your head, neck and shoulders in a fashion that feels supported and comfortable....

Begin to become aware of your breathing.....the rise and fall of your breath. No need to change anything or work at it, just inhale easily and exhale fully..... Inhale nourishing, refreshing breath and exhale any tension or discomfort. In with calm.....out with any worry.....the steady rise and fall of your breath....

If thoughts should arise and compete for your attention, there is no need to engage or interpret. Likewise, if feelings or emotions surface, simply let them pass through and be gone. Thoughts or feelings can be like bubbles in a glass, rising to the surface and released.....simply focus your awareness on your breathing and the increasing sense of peace and softness within yourself.....

See if you can inch your breath lower and lower into your body....your muscles soften, your joints soften.....creating easy comfortable space within yourself.

As you continue to watch the rise and fall of your breath, take note of any place within yourself where you might be holding pain or discomfort....if so, simply send your next breath to that spot. You may even want to place your hand over any spot of discomfort.....Watch as your breath arrives, surrounds, comforts and gently loosens any

pain or tension, releasing it to be carried away as you exhale. You may note that two or three breaths are beneficial. Watch as your breath arrives, surrounds, gently loosens and allows the release of discomfort, sending it away as you exhale.....

You know that each time you allow yourself to have this experience you become more calm, more centered, and your body's innate healing abilities become stronger. Each time you release worries or tension, your inner strength connects with each of your body's systems to provide what you need for wholeness.

Feel a sense of vitality throughout your body. Perhaps you see and feel the growing sense of vitality as a light, or a slight, gentle vibration.....Allow the sensation to take center stage...very calming, strong, yet gentle, wise....perhaps it's a color... perhaps it's a word or phrase...maybe it is in the form of a light.....or any another sensation....you know it is here to help and protect.....to welcome as an ally any infusion of medicine or beam of radiation to help destroy any cancer or rogue cells.....You're aware that this energetic vitality surrounds and protects your healthy cells, tissue and organs....it calms any reactions to the presence of foreign allies such as medicine or radiation...it knows exactly how to welcome the allies and make the most of the treatments....it is directing your lifeforce, your energy to exactly the right places....

These images and sensations of a strong and protected self are with you wherever you go...during infusion...or radiation....during any procedures.....while you sleep.....during your waking hours.....each time you allow yourself to have this awareness of vitality and its sensations, you become more connected to your body's wisdom and strong core that is working without ceasing to protect, preserve and heal.

You know that each time you allow yourself to have this experience you become more calm, more centered, and your body's innate healing abilities become stronger. Recalling the color, or the word, the phrase, or any other sensation you attach to this experience serves as the touchstone to your strength and vitality. Each time you release worries or tension, your inner strength connects with each of your body's systems to provide what you need for wholeness

You may invite and experience this awareness at any time of your choosing. Each time it strengthens your ability to release worry and reactivity, and receive calming reassurance....and so it is.

(Need to be sure to allow lots of music at the end)