



A Pilot Study of the Impact of Massage Therapy During Chemotherapy Infusion

Christy DiCristofano, Elyssa Kim, Phi Tran, Aaron Fisher, Judith Rose, Sarah Ku, Jamie Fertal, Nicol Hedgpeth, Frank Munoz, Robert Jacobsen, Richard T. Lee

Cherng Family Center for Integrative Oncology at City of Hope Orange County, Irvine, CA USA

BACKGROUND

Massage therapy (MT) is a popular integrative therapy sought by patients with cancer but often limited by patient accessibility to the service. This pilot study assesses the therapeutic effects of massage therapy on patients during infusion.

METHODS

Patients receiving chemo-therapy infusion at comprehensive cancer center:

- 12/2023-11/2024
- Option of a hand and/or foot massage
- Pre and post modified ESAS using a numerical scale from 0-10

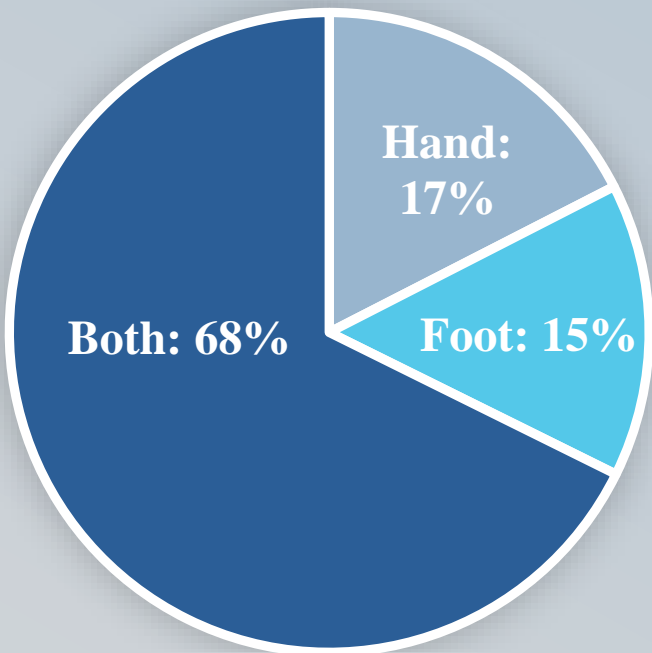
A questionnaire was provided to infusion nurses to assess their perspective on the feasibility of the massage intervention

DEMOGRAPHICS

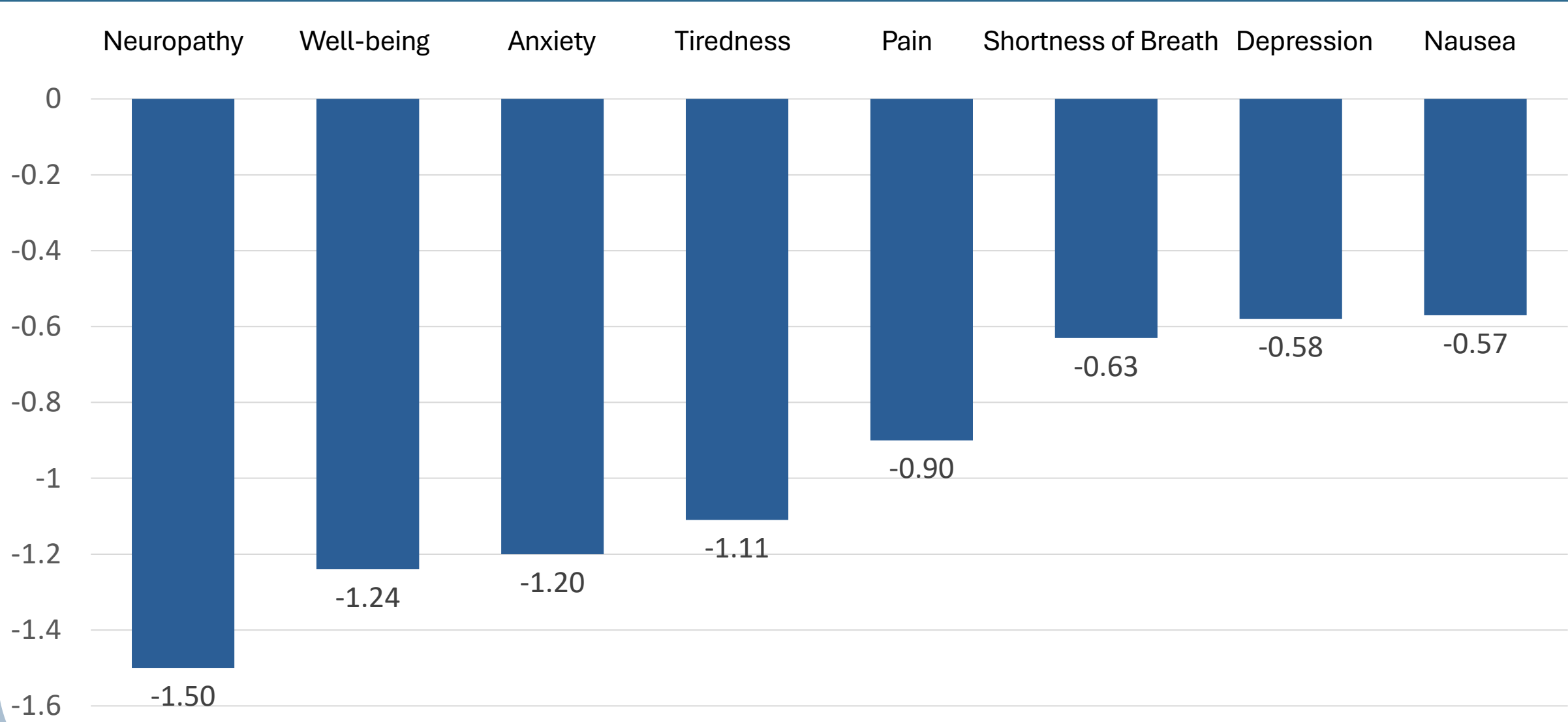
| | |
|---|---|
| Male 26% Female 74% | White 61% Asian 21% Hispanic/Latino 10% |
| Breast 21% Lymphoma 11% Multiple Myeloma 9% | 249 Patients 531 Massages |

MESSAGE NUMBER AND LOCATION

| Messages | Patients |
|----------|----------|
| 1 | 58% |
| 2 | 22% |
| 3 | 7% |
| 4≥ | 13% |

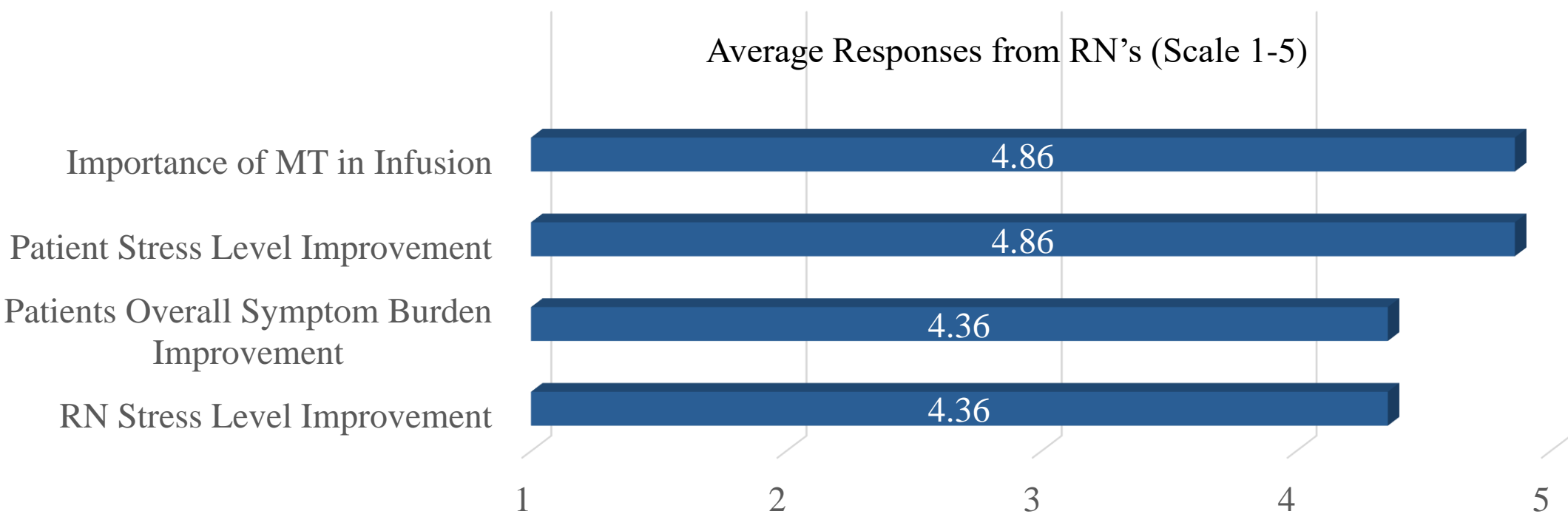


RESULTS: MASSAGE DURING INFUSION



A negative number indicates a decrease in symptoms.

RESULTS: IMPACT OF MASSAGE ON PATIENTS AND NURSES DURING INFUSION



**The chemotherapy infusion nurses surveyed (n=22) noted decreased patient stress and symptom burden. All 22 nurses reported that the massage intervention did not disrupt their tasks.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Cherng Family Center for Integrative Oncology
The Infusion Team at City of Hope Orange County

PATIENT FEEDBACK

“I was thinking about why I didn't feel so miserable after treatment last time and when I got home, I realized it was **because of the massage**. As I think about this being the end of my life., **I am grateful for the massage**“

"This was magic! I couldn't feel my feet except for numbness/tingling. **I can feel them now after the massage**. I was so scared I wouldn't be able to feel them ever again.“

“**Massage not only helped me physically but mentally and emotionally as well.**”

"Receiving a hand massage while getting chemotherapy was an absolute game changer. As a patient, sitting in the infusion chair for hours is exhausting so having someone come in and break up the monotony of treatment was great.”

NURSE FEEDBACK

“Patients love this program, ask for the therapist as soon as they sit down in the chair, and for their infusion appointments to be scheduled when the massage therapy is available. It really does help with their overall wellbeing and satisfaction with their infusion experience.”

“Their favorite part of their appointment is to have massage therapy. Neuropathy, fatigue, and stress level improved. Also helped lower blood pressure to treatable parameter in order to proceed with treatment.”

CONCLUSION

- MT is a beneficial adjunctive treatment for chemotherapy induced symptoms such as:
 - neuropathy
 - anxiety
 - tiredness
- MT can be implemented during chemotherapy without any disruption to treatment.
- Further research is needed to comprehensively evaluate the benefits of this intervention during infusion.

FUTURE DIRECTION

Explore sustainable and cost-effective approaches to integrating massage therapy during infusion treatments