

Natural Killer Cells and Lymphocytes Increase in Women with Breast Cancer Following Massage Therapy

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Women diagnosed with breast cancer received massage therapy or practiced progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) for 30-min sessions 3 times a week for 5 weeks or received standard treatment. The massage therapy and relaxation groups reported less depressed mood, anxiety, and pain immediately after their first and last sessions. By the end of the study, however, only the massage therapy group reported being less depressed and less angry and having more vigor. Dopamine levels, Natural Killer cells, and lymphocytes also increased from the first to the last day of the study for the massage therapy group. These findings highlight the benefit of these complementary therapies, most particularly massage therapy, for women with breast cancer.