

# Mayo Clinic Q & A- Dr. Stacy D'Andre™ Andre - Medical Oncology

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## SUMMARY KEYWORDS

cancer patients, patients, integrative medicine, mayo clinic, integrative oncology, integrative, stacy, practice, oncology, improving, care, type, exercise, symptom management, lifestyle, acupuncture, started, modalities, treatment, natural supplements

## SPEAKERS

Dr. Halena Gazelka, Narrator, Dr. Stacy D'Andre

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**N** Narrator 00:01  
Coming up on Mayo Clinic Q&A,

**D** Dr. Stacy D'Andre 00:03  
Integrative oncology is a practice where we are using lifestyle medicine, dietary modifications, stress reduction, exercise, acupuncture, acupressure, yoga, mindfulness. So, we combine all of these modalities to help our cancer patients not only with quality of life but also to hopefully improve outcomes as well.

**N** Narrator 00:29  
Rather than just focusing on the disease, integrative medicine includes wellness, vitality and healing, and these practices of improving your body and mind are not just for patients.

**D** Dr. Stacy D'Andre 00:39  
Integrated medicine, it's not only just for cancer patients, it's really, the fundamentals are for everyone. Working on improving our lifestyle, getting up and moving our bodies, exercising daily, getting good quality sleep, and stress reduction, I mean, these are things that not only help with cancer patients, but really with everyone.

**D** Dr. Halena Gazelka 00:59  
Welcome everyone to Mayo Clinic Q&A. I'm your host. Dr. Halena Gazelka. Integrative medicine

is an approach to health care that includes practices that are not traditionally part of conventional medicine. This can include things like herbs, acupuncture, massage, yoga, meditation, among others. Integrative oncology incorporates these therapies into conventional cancer care. Joining us to discuss this today is Dr. Stacy D'Andre, clinical and integrative oncologist here at Mayo Clinic. Welcome to the program, Stacy.

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Dr. Stacy D'Andre 01:34

Thank you. Thanks for having me.

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Dr. Halena Gazelka 01:36

Thanks for being here today. I think this is a really fascinating topic and not something that I know much about. I know of our integrative medicine and our oncology practices being separate but not combined. Tell me how do you describe integrative oncology to your patients?

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Dr. Stacy D'Andre 01:54

So, integrative oncology is a practice where we are using lifestyle medicine, so things such as dietary modifications, stress reduction, exercise. Also, we do use some supplements and other mind/body practices, acupuncture, acupressure, yoga, mindfulness. So, we combine all of these modalities to help our cancer patients not only with quality of life, but also to hopefully improve outcomes as well.

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Dr. Halena Gazelka 02:28

I love what you said about lifestyle. I've never thought of it that way before, but that's whole person care.

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Dr. Stacy D'Andre 02:33

Definitely. Lifestyle issues are really the foundation of what we work on. Because diet and exercise, and stress and sleep, all of these things are just the foundations to improving health in general.

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Dr. Halena Gazelka 02:48

Stacy, I'm curious how you personally became interested in integrative oncology.

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Dr. Stacy D'Andre 02:54

So, I practiced medical oncology for many years. I actually trained here at Mayo a long, long time ago and went to practice in California back home. And. oh probably maybe six or seven

years ago I started having some of my own health issues. And I went to see an integrative provider just to help me kind of get through some of those issues. And a whole new world opened up to me. I wasn't aware that all of these modalities really existed. I was really focused at that time on just traditional oncology care. And I started taking some courses and learning things and thinking, Oh, this could help my cancer patients. And every course I took, I learned more and more, and I decided to incorporate that into my oncology practice and really started to shift more towards integrative medicine as opposed to actual treatment of cancer, although I still do that as well. So, it was through personal experience and just finding a gap, I think, in cancer patient care.

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Dr. Halena Gazelka 04:03

What a wonderful story, Stacy. Experience is the best teacher they say. That's terrific. Thank you for sharing that. How does integrative oncology help your patients?

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Dr. Stacy D'Andre 04:14

So, we help our patients throughout their journey, and so there are different phases that cancer patients will go through. So, the first phase is when patients are starting their therapy. So, whether that's chemo, radiation, immunotherapy, so we help them with their side-effects. Many patients are taking supplements, and we want to ensure that they are safe. There are many interactions between herbal supplements or dietary supplements and our treatments, so we want to ensure that is safe. We help people with cannabis counseling, so we do a lot of that to help with symptom management, and if patients have indications we can certify them for that through the state. So, that's kind of the first part, and then when patients do move into survivorship, then we're really focusing in on lifestyle issues, weight loss, diet modification, all of these things, exercise, can really help improve outcomes. And then we also have a patient population who is not going for curative care, they're in the palliative setting. And so, in that patient population we can also help them with symptom management, cannabis counseling, dietary things that can help their quality of life.

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Dr. Halena Gazelka 05:40

That's wonderful. What are some specifics of what you're offering here at Mayo Clinic?

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Dr. Stacy D'Andre 05:46

So, my colleagues in medical oncology and really anyone who's taking care of cancer patients, they're referring to our clinic. And one of the things we are starting this month is a chemotherapy wellness class. And that's going to be a class run by my nurse, Maggie Hofmann. And so, we are hoping we get all new patients to run through this class where we can teach them about healthy diet and lifestyle issues. And then also teach them about all the integrative modalities such as acupuncture, massage, stress reduction, improving sleep, and get them to the resources that they need while they're undergoing their initial therapy. And then we also see people for survivorship type of issues, lingering symptoms, lifestyle modification, so really helping our patients through the whole continuum with their care.

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Dr. Halena Gazelka 06:46

Stacy, I think this is just wonderful. I've been very open in discussing my own diagnosis with breast cancer last year and treatment. And I think that you spend so much time focused on the diagnosis, and what's the next step in the treatment in there, but there's so much peripheral. There's so much else that affects you. It's good seeing you and to hear you kind of encompassing all of that in your care, I think is fantastic.

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Dr. Stacy D'Andre 07:14

And the great thing about this type of practice, also that it really empowers the patient, and patients become very active in their care. And because they're the ones doing the work, they're working on their diet, they're doing the exercise, we're just guiding them, but they're, you know, these are things that they can do and they can control to improve their health and outcomes.

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Dr. Halena Gazelka 07:38

Stacy, how widely do you see integrative medicine being accepted in the United States and internationally as well?

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Dr. Stacy D'Andre 07:46

I think it's becoming definitely more accepted in the last few years. And there's a huge patient demand for this. There are integrative medicine practices now at most major academic centers, and even in the community which is different, I think, than it has been in the past. In the past it's really been, you know, kind of standalone, private practice type of things that were cash pay, but the integrative oncology piece is definitely new. And there aren't very many of us who are actually trained in oncology and then also in integrative medicine. So, that's definitely a more rare entity. There are a few institutions across the country that have that, but it's not common.

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Dr. Halena Gazelka 08:35

What should patients ask their physicians about integrative oncology?

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Dr. Stacy D'Andre 08:42

So, I think if there is someone that is at their institution that can help them in that arena, it can definitely be a great adjunct. So, but also it doesn't necessarily need to be an oncologist. I mean, I think that many integrative providers have worked for, you know, years and years with cancer patients and have a lot of experience. So, even just being referred to an integrative program can help them also with symptoms and issues that come up for cancer patients.

**D** Dr. Halena Gazelka 09:12

Is there research that's ongoing in this field such as at Mayo Clinic?

**D** Dr. Stacy D'Andre 09:16

There is more and more actually research is being published, which is great, because integrative medicine in the past, you know, it's been sort of case studies or small type of studies because it is hard, you know, to get funding for some of these things. So, but we are seeing more and more publications coming out about natural supplements and other, you know, type of integrative modalities such as acupuncture and yoga, and the benefits of mindfulness. At Mayo, we have a study that we will be opening shortly using a topical cannabis cream for chemotherapy induced neuropathy. So, yeah that should be great. I think that patients will be real interested in that. Lots of interest in that field. So, and then also we are working on other trials using other natural supplements for symptom management. So, the trials are coming.

**D** Dr. Halena Gazelka 10:16

That's very exciting. Love to hear that. Any last thoughts for our listeners, Stacy?

**D** Dr. Stacy D'Andre 10:23

Well, I think that integrative medicine, you know, it's not only just for cancer patients. It's really, the fundamentals are for everyone, and you know, working on improving our lifestyle, getting away from processed foods, and, you know, excess sugar and getting up and moving our bodies, exercising daily, getting good quality sleep, and stress reduction. I mean, these are things that not only help with cancer patients, but really with everyone. So, I think everyone could probably benefit from integrative medicine.

**D** Dr. Halena Gazelka 10:56

That's wonderful. Thank you for being here today, Stacy.

**D** Dr. Stacy D'Andre 10:59

Thank you for having me.

**D** Dr. Halena Gazelka 11:01

Our thanks to Dr. Stacy D'Andre, clinical and integrative oncologist here at Mayo Clinic for being with us today. I hope that you learned something, I know that I did. And we wish each of you a wonderful day.

you a wonderful day.

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**Narrator 11:14**

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