



Complementary therapies checklist

There are several things to consider when weighing up your options about complementary therapies. The questions you should ask yourself can be organised into three key areas; cost, safety, and efficacy.

To help you answer some of these questions, Wellness practices and complementary therapies in multiple sclerosis, provides an overview of the evidence, or lack thereof, for a variety of therapies and their usage in MS.

Use the checklist below, alongside the booklet, to evaluate your options when considering the use of a complementary therapy.

How much does it cost?

Some complementary therapies may be very expensive, and most are not covered by health insurance.

- Do you know exactly how much the treatment will cost?

- Is it a singular payment or a repeating financial commitment?

- Is the total cost affordable for you?

- Are you comfortable making this payment, even if the therapy may potentially have no effect?

Your notes on cost

Is it safe?

Some complementary therapies should be avoided by people with MS as they may interfere with your standard MS therapies or in some cases cause harm. (See Wellness practices and complementary therapies in MS, Section C). Always consult your healthcare team before starting any new therapy.

- Has this therapy been evaluated for safety in people with MS?

- Are there known side effects or risks?

- Could this therapy interact with other medications you are taking?

- What is the source of the information you are relying on?

- What does your healthcare team say?

Your notes on safety

Is it effective?

Several complementary therapies may provide relief for some MS symptoms, but others provide no benefit at all - often the evidence is not conclusive about complementary therapies. Once you have confirmed that the therapy is not likely to cause you harm, you can consider its effectiveness and the benefits it may provide you.

- Has this therapy been evaluated for efficacy in people with MS?

- What are the expected benefits?

- Will the treatment make you feel better overall? Such as by making you feel more in control of your MS, reducing stress, or helping with relaxation.

Your notes on efficacy

With thanks to the MS Canada and the MS Society UK, who's content was adapted to develop this checklist.

Download Wellness practices and complementary therapies in MS here: <https://www.msif.org/resource/wellness-practices-and-complementary-therapies>

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