

## Symphony of Healing: Exploring Music and Art Therapy's Impact on Chemotherapy Patients with Cancer

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**Abstract :** Cancer is a global health concern, causing a significant number of deaths, with chemotherapy being a standard treatment method. However, chemotherapy often induces side effects that profoundly impact the physical and emotional well-being of patients, lowering their overall quality of life (QoL). This research aims to investigate the potential of music and art therapy as holistic adjunctive therapy for cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy, offering non-pharmacological support. This is achieved through a comprehensive review of existing literature with a focus on the following themes, including stress and anxiety alleviation, emotional expression and coping skill development, transformative changes, and pain management with mood upliftment. A systematic search was conducted using Medline, Google Scholar, and St. Lawrence College Library, considering original, peer-reviewed research papers published from 2014 to 2023. The review solely incorporated studies focusing on the impact of music and art therapy on the health and overall well-being of cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy in North America. The findings from 16 studies involving pediatric oncology patients, females affected by breast cancer, and general oncology patients show that music and art therapies significantly reduce anxiety (standardized mean difference: -1.10) and improve perceived stress (median change: -4.0) and overall quality of life in cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy. Furthermore, music therapy has demonstrated the potential to decrease anxiety, depression, and pain during infusion treatments (average changes in resilience scale: 3.4 and 4.83 for instrumental and vocal music therapy, respectively). This data calls for consideration of the integration of music and art therapy into supportive care programs for cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy. Moreover, it provides guidance to healthcare professionals and policymakers, facilitating the development of patient-centered strategies for cancer care in Canada. Further research is needed in collaboration with qualified therapists to examine its applicability and explore and evaluate patients' perceptions and expectations in order to optimize the therapeutic benefits and overall patient experience. In conclusion, integrating music and art therapy in cancer care promises to substantially enhance the well-being and psychosocial state of patients undergoing chemotherapy. However, due to the small population size considered in existing studies, further research is needed to bridge the knowledge gap and ensure a comprehensive, patient-centered approach, ultimately enhancing the quality of life (QoL) for individuals facing the challenges of cancer treatment.

**Keywords :** anxiety, cancer, chemotherapy, depression, music and art therapy, pain management, quality of life

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