



***Information for cancer patients –
focus on mistletoe therapy***



One more chance in cancer therapy

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1st edition 2005

Publisher:

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Postfach 1320, D-73503 Schwäbisch Gmünd



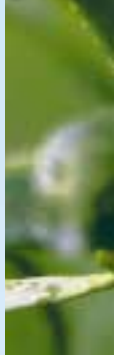


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Dear reader,

In our modern world of medical advancements, many forms of cancer can now be cured. Nevertheless, a cancer diagnosis comes as a great shock for the afflicted individual. Fear, along with fright, arise in its wake. Moreover, patients and their relatives have many practical questions that they struggle to find the answers to: What does this disease mean for me? What conventional therapeutic possibilities are available to me? What else can I do for myself? How shall I manage my life? Can I be cured?


Surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy are the standard therapies for treating cancer.

These conventional forms of therapy can be supported by complementary modalities that support the body's own defenses during anticancer treatment. They can make the tumor more receptive to treatment and/or alleviate the side effects of chemotherapy or radiotherapy. The earlier complementary treatment is initiated, the more successful it is.



This brochure is intended to help you better cope with your cancer, as well as to show you how the beneficial results of conventional therapies can be improved by means of complementary approaches.

Yours,
Weleda AG



Standard therapies in oncology

The principal aim of conventional cancer treatment is to remove the tumor and prevent it from spreading. **Surgery** removes the tumor. Since it is essential for the prognosis that the tumor be entirely resected, some surrounding healthy tissue is removed as well. Neighboring lymph nodes affected by the cancer are excised. In addition, secondary tumors that have arisen from primary one (metastases) must be eliminated. Life-sustaining organs, however, cannot be totally removed. As a result, surgery is followed by chemotherapy and/or radiotherapy.

Radiotherapy irradiates tumors by means of x-rays from an external or internal source. The irradiation must be precisely directed at the entire tumor to protect healthy tissue. Thus, radiotherapy is only effective on specific areas.

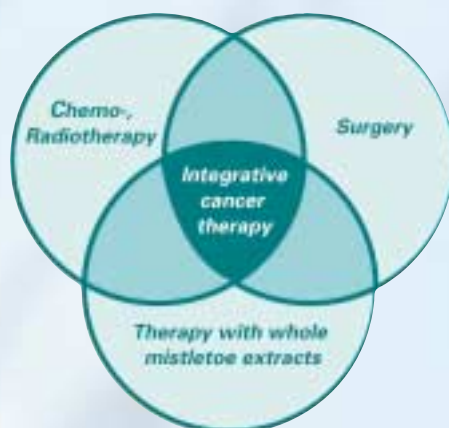
Chemotherapy aims at preventing the multiplication of cancer cells. Chemotherapeutic drugs, known as cytostatics, destroy various cancer cells by interfering with their metabolism and/or preventing or considerably slowing down their multiplication. A chemotherapeutic agent is distributed throughout the body.



Complementary Cancer Therapy with Mistletoe Preparations

Conventional therapy aims at removing or destroying an identified cancer. However, the side effects of this therapy can compromise the quality of life, which in turn can have an adverse effect on the outcome of treatment.

Mistletoe preparations have been used in the treatment of cancer since the beginning of the last century. In addition to fighting cancer, the use of mistletoe improves the patient's quality of life: the patient quickly experiences an increase in well-being, sleep, appetite and energy. Mistletoe can also relieve pain caused by the tumor, enhance the immune system and reduce the side effects of chemotherapy and radiotherapy. All mistletoe preparations are formulated from whole extracts of mistletoe branches, leaves, and berries. Furthermore, in anthroposophic preparations, summer and winter extracts are mixed together.



Practical Use of Mistletoe Preparations

The mistletoe extract is administered by injections. Performing a subcutaneous injection on oneself is easy to learn. The first injection should be done with your physician present. He or she will explain the procedure to you: where to inject and what to do. Always follow the treatment plan given to you by your physician. In general, two or three injections of the mistletoe preparation must be administered each week, preferably in the morning.

What are you supposed to heed?

Suitable injection sites are:

- Abdominal wall
- Upper thigh
- Middle of the upper arm

Rotate the injection site often in order to prevent tissue irritation.

Temporary redness around the injection site (3 to 5 cm in diameter) can occur but is no cause for alarm. On the contrary, such redness is a normal response against substances foreign to the body. If this occurs, however, we suggest that you change the injection site next time.

For each injection you need the following supplies:

- An ampoule of mistletoe extract
- A small syringe (1 or 2 ml)
- A short, fine-gauge needle (0.4 x 20 mm, No. 27 G1/2 preferably)
- Rubbing alcohol and a cotton pad
- Possibly a small adhesive plaster/band-aid (Pre-injection swab)



How to Inject

First, break the ampoule at the neck. With the coloured dot towards you, break the neck of the ampoule by pushing down slightly.

Then, draw the mistletoe preparation into the syringe through the needle (see Fig.). Next, remove the air still present in the syringe: hold the syringe vertically with the needle upwards; tap lightly on the cylinder to push the air bubbles trapped against the inner wall to the top and push the plunger up slowly in order to expel the air.

Your physician will indicate the best sites for injection.



Opening of the ampoule



Sucking up the injection liquid



Subcutaneous injection



General Reactions

It is possible, particularly during the beginning stages of mistletoe therapy, that the body temperature rises up to approximately 38° C (100.4 ° F). This typically does not last longer than 24 hours. It signals the stimulation of the body's own defense mechanisms, which also occurs in the blood and is a desired effect of complementary mistletoe therapy.



Clear redness around the injection site



Characteristic local reaction 4 hours after injection



Local reaction 10 hours after injection

Local Inflammatory Reactions

There may be some inflammation around the injection site, with unsharply delimited redness and possible itching.

After about 4 hours, the border of the local reaction will become smoother, but itching may reappear.

Ten hours after the injection, the border of the local reaction should become flatter, as it slowly vanishes. The redness, however, may still extend further.



Checklist for Self-Injections

- Before injecting, ensure that no air bubbles remain in the syringe.
- Disinfect the injection site with a cotton pad and rubbing alcohol (a swab).
- Hold a skin fold between two fingers and pull it away from the muscle below.
- Hold the syringe in an 45° -angle, and rapidly insert the needle into the skin and underlying adipose tissue.
- Pull the plunger back slightly to make sure the tip of the needle did not puncture a blood vessel (if it did, some blood will enter the syringe).
- If blood enters the syringe, choose another injection site.
- Inject the contents of the syringe slowly and evenly.
- Once the syringe is empty, press the cotton pad with alcohol (swab) onto the injection site and draw out the needle.
- Continue pressing the cotton pad (swab) onto the injection site for several seconds.
- Place the syringe into a puncture-proof container and dispose of properly.

Help for Self-Help: The Importance of Self-regulation in the Treatment of Cancer

In anthroposophically-extended medicine, the occurrence of cancer is considered to be a disease involving the whole human being, both physically and mentally, rather than an isolated manifestation in the organs or cells at the tumor site. Beyond the cells and organs, the whole individual undergoes changes, including in his/her thoughts and perceptions.

In the course of standard therapies – surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy – possible influences of psychic factors are not taken into consideration. However, through actively counteracting such a threatening condition, an initial and decisive step is taken on the path to recovery. This is called ‘self-regulation’.


In an extended study, about 10,000 patients with mostly advanced stages of cancer were investigated, and their self-regulation was tested and evaluated by means of a questionnaire. An interesting result was that patients receiving mistletoe therapy had a greater degree of self-regulation than other patients.

Anthroposophic medicine is based on a long tradition. It judiciously complements standard, modern therapies. Mistletoe therapy enhances the defense mechanisms, improves the quality of life and reduces the side effects of conventional treatments. For these reasons, it is recommended that mistletoe therapy be started as early as possible, even if you are still waiting for surgery, chemotherapy or radiotherapy.

Sources and Recommended Reading



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For further information please contact your local Weleda representative as listed below:

ARGENTINA	Weleda S.A., ☎ +54-11-4702-1166, gerencia@weleda.com.ar
AUSTRIA	Weleda Ges.m.b.H & Co. KG, ☎ +43-1-2566060, dialog@weleda.at
AUSTRALIA	Weleda Australia Pty Ltd, ☎ +61-3 9723 7278, customerservices@weleda.co.nz
BELGIUM	Weleda N.V., ☎ +32-16-406624, info@weleda.be
BRAZIL	Weleda do Brasil Ltda., ☎ +55-11-36748388, weleda@weleda.com.br
CANADA	Purity Professionals, ☎ +1-800 265 2615, info@purityprofessionals.com
CZECH REPUBLIC	Weleda spol s.r.o., ☎ +420-2-57315888, office@weleda.cz
DENMARK	A/S Tødin, ☎ +45-74-624488, toedin@maxjenne.dk
FINLAND	Circlum Farmasia OY, ☎ +358-9-77384214, sini.vahervuori@circlumfarmasia.fi
FRANCE	Weleda S.A., ☎ +33-389-696800, weleda@weleda.fr
GEORGIA	NaturaPharm Ltd., ☎ +995-32-322760, natpharm@ctc.org.ge
GERMANY	Weleda AG, ☎ +49-1805-935332, info@einechancemehrbeikrebs.de
HUNGARY	Göncöl TG KFT, Dr. Tibor Jakab, ☎ +36-1-3402379, weleda@axelero.hu
INDIA	Dr. Navneet Rastogi, ☎ +91-11-26446067, rastogi_n@vsnl.com
ISRAEL	Bar Ilan Pharmacy, ☎ +972-9-7443579, samuelov@internet-zahav.net
ITALY	Weleda Italia S.r.l., ☎ +39-2-48770521, info@weleda.it
NETHERLANDS	Weleda Nederland NV, ☎ +31-79-3631313, info@weleda.nl
NEW ZEALAND	Weleda New Zealand Ltd., ☎ +64-6-8777394, customerservices@weleda.co.nz
NORWAY	Norges Naturmedisin Sentral AS, ☎ +47-32-240550, torleiv@nn-s.no
POLAND	Dr. Szymon J. Borys, ☎ +48-76-8787979, s.borys@bionica.com.pl
ROMANIA	Farmacia de Medicina Integrata, Dr. Otniel-Corneliu Băbut, ☎ +40-257-212543
RUSSIA	Weleda Moskau, ☎ +7-095-3692301, weledarus@online.ru Weleda St. Petersburg, ☎ +7-812-1866620, denis_cat@yahoo.com
SOUTH AFRICA	Pharma Natura, ☎ +27-11 445 129, cynthia@pharma.co.za
SWEDEN	Weleda AB, ☎ +46-8-55151800, info@weleda.se
SWITZERLAND	Weleda AG, ☎ +41-61-7052121, info@weleda.ch
UNITED KINGDOM	Weleda U.K., Ltd., ☎ +44-115-9448200, info@weleda.co.uk
USA	Weleda, Inc., ☎ +1-800-241-1030, info@weleda.com

Should you have further questions on mistletoe therapy or on the use of mistletoe preparations, consult your physician, or contact your local Weleda (see list p. 15)

Presented by:

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