

SUPPORT FOR REFLEXOLOGY FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH



Sarah Preusker

REFLEXOLOGIST

NBCR

***MASTER CERTIFICATION,
MANZANARES METHOD***

***LEAD REFLEXOLOGIST, NATIONAL
INSTITUTES OF HEALTH CLINICAL
RESEARCH, REFLEXOLOGY AND
CANCER***

“SUPPORT FOR REFLEXOLOGY FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH”

Sarah Preusker received her reflexology certification from the New York Open Center in 2001 and the American Reflexology Certification Board (ARCB) shortly thereafter. In 2013 she achieved Proficiency in the Manzanares Method of Reflexology. In 2017, following training in the Manzanares Clinic in Barcelona she achieved Master certification and is the first reflexologist authorized to teach this method in the US. Sarah has had a long career as a full-time reflexologist in New York City and Chicago. Since 2008, she has been Lead Reflexologist for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) studies involving the Ingham Method of Reflexology. Prior to her reflexology career, Sarah was a professional classical ballet dancer.

SUPPORT FOR REFLEXOLOGY FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

This presentation covers three NIH clinical research studies involving reflexology-

***Study 1: “Reflexology: An intervention for Advanced Breast Cancer”
Completed 2010***

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3576031/>

Basic results-

- Reflexology is safe.
- Reflexology is a specialized therapy; it is not foot massage.
- Significant improvement in dyspnea (shortness of breath) and ability to function in everyday activities such as walking up a flight of stairs or carry a bag of groceries.

Study 2: “Home-Based Symptom Management via Reflexology for Breast Cancer patients”

It will be completed in April, 2018

Basic Results-

The total symptom scores showed significant improvement after reflexology. This total symptom improvement was led by the strength of improvements in fatigue and pain. The list of symptoms below were the ones showing improvement in the total symptom score.

- Pain
- Nausea/vomiting
- Disturbed sleep
- Distress or being upset
- Shortness of breath
- Difficulty remembering things
- Lack of appetite
- fatigue
- Dry mouth or sore mouth
- feeling sad
- Numbness and tingling
- Diarrhea/constipation

Study 3: “Using SMART Design to Improve Symptom Management Strategies Among Cancer Patients”

This study is currently underway. 2015-2020

200 dyads have enrolled thus far.

It will be 2020 before it is complete. Cancer Clinics in Michigan, Chicago and Arizona are working with this study.

SUPPORT FOR REFLEXOLOGY FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

All three multi-site research studies in this presentation are Longitudinal Randomized Controlled/Clinical Trials.

What is a Longitudinal Randomized Controlled Trial?

A longitudinal study is a research method in which data are gathered from the same subjects at specific times over a period of time. This longitudinal study extended over 12 weeks.

<https://www.techtarget.com/definition/longitudinal-study>

Randomized controlled trial: (RCT) A study in which participants are assigned at random (by chance alone) to receive one of several clinical interventions. One of these interventions is the standard of care or control. The control may be a standard of care, a placebo (similar to a "sugar pill"), or no intervention at all.

In sum, RCTs are quantitative, comparative, controlled experiments in which investigators study two or more groups of participants who are randomized to two or more different interventions or standard care and studied over time. The RCT is one of the most powerful tools in clinical research.

<https://www.medicinenet.com/script/main/art.asp?articlekey=39532>

What is a Clinical Trial?

A clinical trial is any research study that prospectively assigns human participants or groups of humans to one or more health-related interventions to evaluate the effects on health outcomes.

Interventions include but are not restricted to drugs, cells and other biological products, surgical procedures, radiological procedures, devices, behavioral treatments, process-of-care changes, preventive care, etc. Reflexology is considered a behavioral treatment.

www.who.int/topics/clinical_trials/en/

What is the Scientific Method?

Scientific method is a rigorous, systematic approach, designed to eliminate bias and other subjective influences in the search, identification, and measurement or validation of facts and cause-effect relationships, and from which scientific evidence is established.

From: businessdictionary.com

***Overview, ‘Reflexology: An Intervention for Advanced Breast Cancer’
Completed 2010***

The goal of this study was to test the Ingham Method of reflexology to assist in improving quality of life for women undergoing chemotherapy for late stage (III & IV) breast cancer within the context of conventional medical care. This was a single blind, longitudinal randomized clinical trial (RCT). Group A received reflexology and chemotherapy while group B received placebo (manual foot manipulation/foot massage) and chemotherapy. Group C received chemotherapy only.

The women in group A received the reflexology protocol that focused on organs that deal with elimination and was performed by certified reflexologists. The same protocol of 30 minutes total (15 minutes left foot, 15 minutes right foot) was given to each patient, once a week for four weeks.

The results revealed significant improvement in dyspnea (shortness of breath) with the reflexology group, compared to foot massage. In terms of safety, no adverse events were reported. Results show reflexology is safe and reflexology is a specialized therapy; **it is *not* foot massage.**

**Home-Based Symptom Management for
Advanced Breast Cancer Patients
2011-2018**

Study team

PI: Gwen Wyatt, RN, PhD

Co-I: Alla Sikorskii, PhD

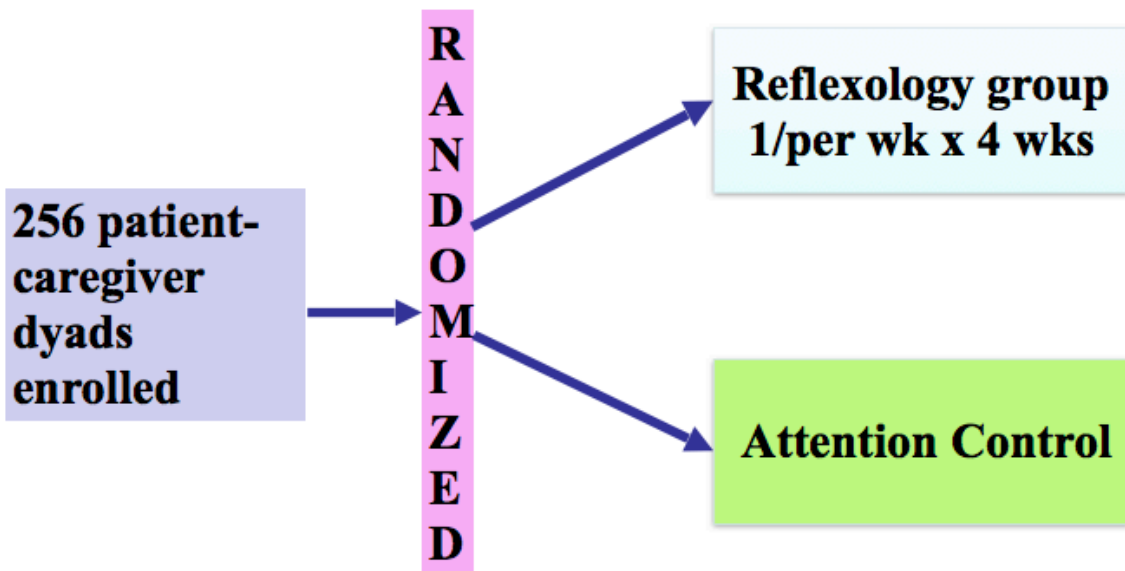
Amanda Holmstrom, PhD

Zhehui Luo, PhD

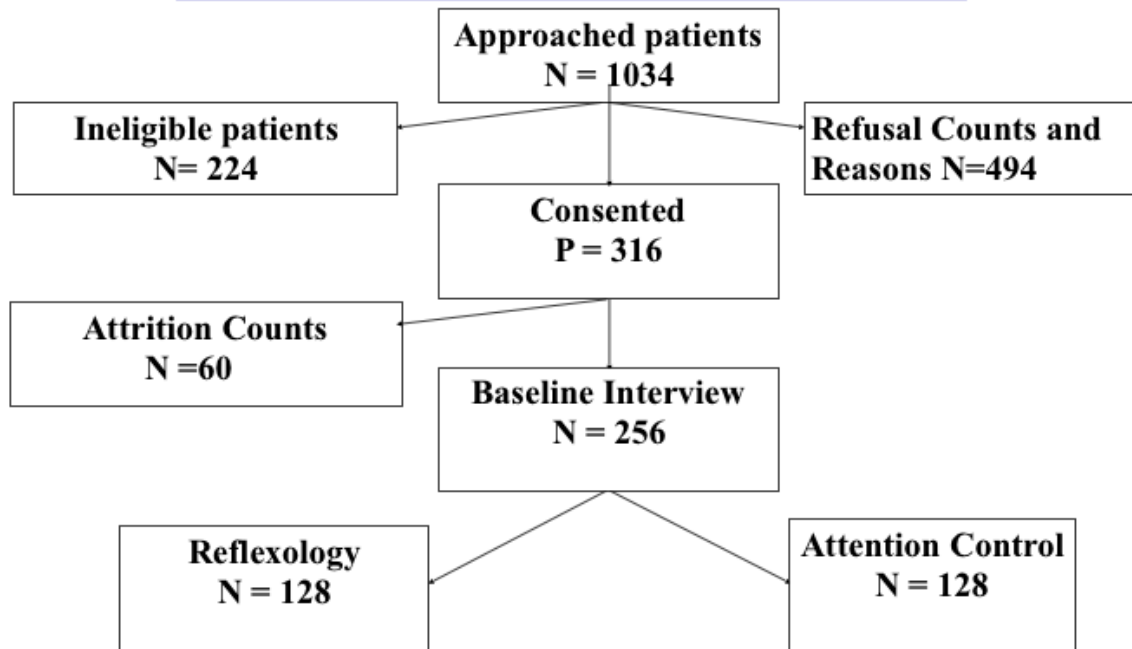
Funding resource: NCI # R01 CA157459

ClinicalTrials.gov Identifier: NCT01582971

Study Design



CONSORT Chart



Intervention

- **Reflexology training and delivery at home**
- **2 home visits by reflexologist**
- **9 reflexes**
- **Thumb-walking pressure**



Research Aim 1

- **To determine the effects of the reflexology intervention compared to the control group on symptom severity and interference of advanced breast cancer patients**



Results

Symptoms – MDASI

- 1) Decreased total symptom severity and interference with activities of daily living**
- 2) The symptoms of fatigue and pain were most responsive to the reflexology intervention**



Research Aim 2

- **To determine the quality of relationship between patient and caregiver following 4 weeks of reflexology**

Results

Quality of Relationship

- 1) Stronger quality of relationship was associated with lower symptom interference with activities of daily living such as walking, work and general activities.**
- 2) Delivery of Reflexology does not affect the quality of relationship between the patient and caregiver.**

Conclusion

- **Caregiver-delivered reflexology is efficacious in reducing overall symptoms, especially fatigue and pain, as well as reduced interference with ADLs.**
- **Reflexology delivery does not diminish the quality of the dyad relationship.**



Copyright 2017: Reflexology Association of America

Overview of the current study, “Using SMART Design to Improve Symptom Management Strategies Among Cancer Patients”

This study is similar to the second study in that a certified reflexologist trains a recruited caregiver in the basic protocol. The difference is that this study involves both men and women with cancer. It is a Sequential Multiple Assignment Randomized Trial (SMART) design. Some patients receive reflexology from their caregiver for eight weeks, and some receive reflexology from their caregiver for four weeks (and meditative practices for four weeks). Some patients receive conventional medical care only. Weekly assessments/questionnaires and longer interviews take place throughout. Hospitals in Michigan, Chicago and Arizona are working with this study.

In addition, this study explores patient and caregiver characteristics related to the different therapies and symptom outcomes. We are tailoring the intervention to patients based on their characteristics.

It will be 2020 before it is complete.

SUPPORT FOR REFLEXOLOGY FROM THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH