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# Society For Integrative Oncology

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In 2003 a number of health professionals formed the Society for Integrative Oncology (SIO), a nonprofit, multi-disciplinary organization for the study and application of complementary therapies and botanicals. SIO provides a forum for presentation, discussion and peer review of evidence-based research and treatment modalities, making a clear distinction between “alternative” (unproven) and “complementary” (tested) therapies in cancer care.

The organization educates oncology professionals, patients, caregivers and relevant others about state-of-the-art integrative therapies, including their scientific validity, clinical benefits, toxicities and limitations.

Founding president of the organization, Barrie Cassileth, PhD, chief of Integrative Medicine Service at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York City, says that the creation of the organization was prompted by the constantly growing number of cancer patients who are turning to both alternative and complementary therapies.

“It is essential that oncologists have ready access to information about research, existing treatment programs and both the benefits and dangers of the wide range of complementary therapies available today,” says Cassileth.

SIO held its first International Conference in November 2004, which included sessions on acupuncture for symptoms, botanicals, music therapy and medical massage in addition to sessions on understanding complementary therapies and developing integrative practices.

For more on the 2005 conference, go to [www.integrativeonc.org](http://www.integrativeonc.org).