

Session Title

Psychosocial impacts of Lymphedema: Mindfulness practices potential role in facilitating wellbeing

Plenary Session: Saturday, October 24 at 1:45pm

Learning Stream: 1, 2 and 3

Session Summary

Psychosocial impacts of lymphedema have been understudied but include: body image concerns, damaged self-esteem, relationship issues, feelings of loss of control, fear and depression (Moffatt et al, 2003; Persoon et al, 2004; Briggs and Fleming, 2007). Mindfulness meditation and associated practices have demonstrated meaningful benefits to sufferers of a wide range of medical conditions (see e.g. Khoury, B. et al Clinical Psychology Review. 33(6):763-71, 2013) but have not been studied specifically for effects in lymphedema patients. This presentation will provide a rationale for the use of mindfulness practices, outline promising applications to the challenges of lymphedema and provide direct introductory experience of these practices.



Dr. Michael Speca is Adjunct Associate Professor of Psychosocial Oncology at the University of Calgary. He counsels patients and families at the Tom Baker Cancer Centre and facilitates several group support programs including the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction program which he co-founded. His research examines the effectiveness of psychosocial interventions for reducing distress and improving quality of life.

Dr. Speca has written several book chapters on mindfulness in the context of illness. In 2011 with Linda Carlson he published: *Mindfulness-Based Cancer Recovery: A Step-by-Step MBSR Approach to Help You Cope with Treatment and Reclaim Your Life* published by New Harbinger.