

# Research Fast Facts: Complementary Medicine

## Research Saves Lives

Complementary medicine (CM) – sometimes called integrative medicine – encompasses many different therapies and is used together with conventional therapy to help prevent or treat breast cancer or lessen the side effects of treatment. CM refers to the use of **natural products** on the skin or in the diet, such as plant derived compounds, herbals, or special diets; **mind-body medicine** such as paced breathing or meditation; and **body-based practices** such as massage, acupuncture, and exercises like yoga or Tai Chi.

Laboratory and clinical research has provided both “positive” (it may work) and “negative” (it may not work or be safe) evidence on the use of CM. So, like any decision concerning your health, using CM should be discussed with your doctor. Komen has long supported scientifically sound research into the use of CM.

## What We’re Investigating

Komen-funded researchers are:

- Testing numerous dietary compounds, including vitamin D, green tea, and soy, which can be used to improve breast cancer outcomes or reduce the severity of treatment side effects
- Investigating mind-body techniques, such as meditation and yoga, to reduce fatigue, depression, and other symptoms
- Investigating whether treatments like acupuncture or massage can reduce treatment side effects such as lymphedema and muscle pain

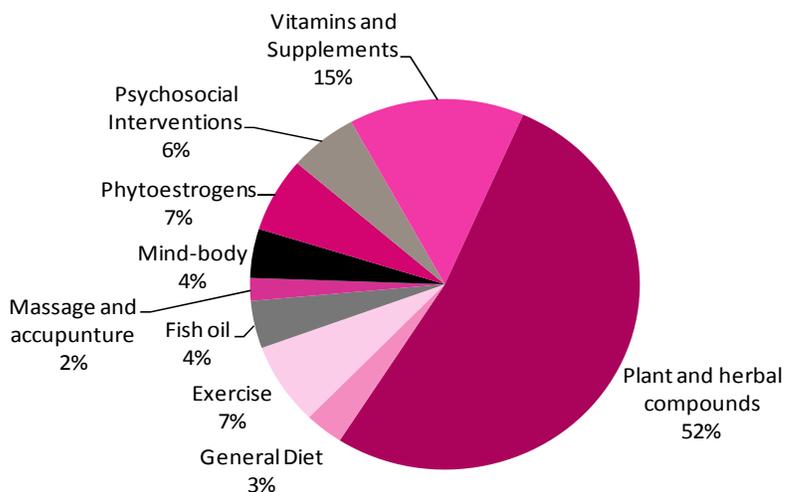


## What We’ve Learned

Komen-funded research has helped us to understand that:

- Mindful meditation helps to relieve both physical and psychological symptoms of breast cancer, such as fatigue, anxiety, and depression
- An 8-week Yoga of Awareness program may reduce the frequency and severity of hot flashes, joint pain, fatigue, and insomnia
- Biochanin A, a phytoestrogen present in plant-based foods and herbal products, may help prevent the development of breast cancer, as well as drug resistance

## Total Investment In Complementary Medicine Research



Susan G. Komen has invested nearly **\$23 million** in more than **70 grants** focused on the use of CM

## More Than Research

These research investments reflect only part of our commitment to CM. Komen provides additional information regarding CM through [educational materials](#) and Affiliate programs nationwide.



The Susan G. Komen for the Cure® promise is to save lives and end breast cancer forever.