Complementary and integrative Therapies (CIT) refers to the use of natural products on the skin or in the diet, such as plant-derived compounds, herbas, 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 CIT. 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 CIT.

Our Research Investment
More than $25 million in over 75 research grants and 35 clinical trials focused on Complementary Medicine

What We’re Investigating

- Testing whether a component of flaxseed can be used to reduce risk and prevent breast cancer, especially in women at high risk

- Investigating mind-body techniques, such as meditation and psychosocial support, to reduce stress and improve quality of life, particularly in young women and women with metastatic breast cancer

- Developing a mobile phone application designed to help low-income and minority women manage stress to reduce fatigue and distress during chemotherapy

What We’ve Learned from Komen-funded research

- 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.