

Meta-analysis confirms: Mistletoe therapy reduces cancer-related fatigue

Mistletoe therapy has been proven to relieve pain and counteract cancer-related fatigue (CRF) through its immunomodulating properties.



Pelzer et al. (2022): Cancer-related fatigue in patients treated with mistletoe extracts: a systematic review and meta-analysis. Support Care Cancer. doi: 10.1007/s00520-022-06921-x

Study design: Meta-analysis of 12 randomised controlled trials (RCT) and 7 non-randomised studies of interventions (NRSI) with cancer patients¹

Highlights: Extensive evaluation period (2003-2020), significant number of patients

Preparations: ISCADOR® and others

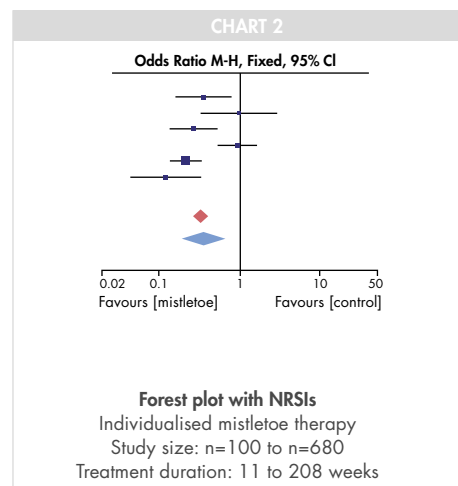
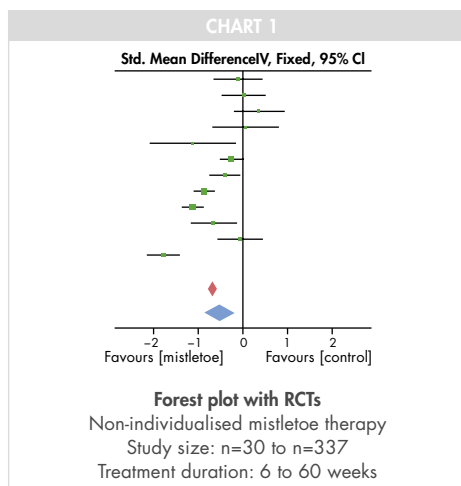
Number of patients: Total 4'162 (RCTs: n = 1'494, NRSIs: n = 2'668)

Tumour types: Lung, breast, ovary, stomach, pancreas, colon, bone, head and neck tumours

Research question: How effective is mistletoe therapy for cancer-related fatigue?

Results:

- 1 Mistletoe therapy causes a significant reduction in CRF
- 2 Mistletoe therapy shows an effect comparable to physical activity on CRF: SMD mistletoe therapy = -0.48 (see chart 1)
- 3 Larger studies have shown significantly greater efficacy (see charts 1 and 2)



Mustian et al (2017) analysed that physical activity can alleviate CRF with an SMD of -0.30²

Conclusion: Conclusion: The meta-analysis shows that mistletoe extracts can significantly reduce cancer-related fatigue. Mistletoe therapy can be the treatment of choice to support cancer patients for further regenerative measures, especially when other treatment options, such as physical activity, are limited or not possible.

1) Effect of mistletoe therapy vs. control group on the reduction of CRF: RCTs: effect size -0.48 [95 % CI; SMD -0.82 to -0.14; p = 0.006] | NRSIs: effect size 0.36 [95 % CI; OR 0.20 to 0.66; p = 0.0008]
2) Mustian KM et al. (2017): Comparison of pharmaceutical, psychological, and exercise treatments for cancer-related fatigue: a meta-analysis. JAMA Oncol 3:961-968. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamaoncol.2016.6914>

Our Services



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Drug information for Switzerland: ISCADOR® **active ingredient:** fermented aqueous extract from the fresh mistletoe plant (*Viscum album* L.) from various host trees; sometimes with an addition of metallic salt. **Indication:** Supplementary treatment for malignant and benign tumour diseases. **Application:** for subcutaneous injection (s.c.). **Contraindications:** Allergy to mistletoe preparations; Temperatures > 38°C; chronic granulomatous diseases, florid autoimmune diseases and those under immunosuppressive therapy; hyperthyroidism. **Undesirable side effects:** Allergic or allergoid reactions may occur; general allergic (anaphylactic) reactions with Quincke oedema, chills, shortness of breath, bronchospasm and shock are observed rarely, in this case emergency anti-allergy treatment should be carried out and the preparation should be discontinued. **Interactions:** No studies have been carried out on interactions. **Submission category:** B. **Further information:** see information for healthcare professionals at www.swissmedinfo.ch. **IsCADOR AG**, Kirschweg 9, 4144 Arlesheim

Drug information for Germany: ISCADOR® **solution for injections.** **Active ingredient:** fermented, aqueous mistletoe extract. **Composition:** fermented, aqueous extract from *Viscum album* from various host trees. **Other ingredients:** sodium chloride and water for injection. **Indications:** according to the anthroposophic understanding of human being and nature. This includes in adults: in malignant tumours, also with accompanying impairment of haematopoietic organs; in benign tumours; in defined precancerous disorders; for prevention of tumour recurrence after surgery. **Contraindications:** known allergy to preparations of European mistletoe (*Viscum album* L.). Disorders accompanied by acute inflammation or high fever. Chronic granulomatous diseases, florid autoimmune diseases, and diseases treated with immunosuppressive drugs. Hyperthyroidism with tachycardia. **Side effects:** locally restricted inflammatory reactions around the subcutaneous injection site, fever, flu-like symptoms, swellings of regional lymph nodes as well as activation of inflammations/allergic reactions. The occurrence of chronic granulomatous inflammation, autoimmune diseases and symptoms of an increase in brain pressure in brain tumors/metastases during mistletoe therapy have also been reported. **Pharmaceutical forms and packs:** solution for injection in series packs: 2 x 7 ampoules cont. 1 ml (bundle package), series 0 also 1 x 7 ampoules cont. 1 ml. Solution for injection in single strength packs: 1 x 7 ampoules cont. 1ml, Iscador special also 2 x 7 ampoules cont. 1ml (bundle package). **IsCADOR AG**, Spitalstr. 22, 79539 Lörrach.