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The NIH National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine and the NCI Office of Cancer Complementary and Alternative Medicine have been in place for over 7 years. Throughout that time it has become increasingly necessary to define and separate the important differences between complementary and alternative approaches. The former encompass evidence-based, rational adjuncts to mainstream treatment. Alternative therapies, conversely, are unproven, often fanciful, and frequently harmful approaches promoted as viable alternatives to mainstream cancer treatment.

A small fraction of cancer patients seek alternative therapies. A substantial majority seek complementary therapies to deal with the stress and pain of cancer and its treatment. It is in this environment that leading cancer centers around the world now establish programs for

complementary cancer care, and do so increasingly under the rubric of Integrative Medicine. The Society for Integrative Oncology (SIO) was created to provide a forum for oncology professionals, a leadership base for the highest quality scientific investigation, and an opportunity for the dissemination of data.

Shortly after its founding, the SIO sponsored the first International Conference on Integrative Oncology in 2004. The Conference drew hundreds of oncology professionals from 24 countries to hear peer-reviewed, selected abstracts on the science of herbs, antioxidants, exercise, touch therapies, music and mind-body interventions, the application and mechanisms of acupuncture treatment, and more. SIO 2005 will be held in San Diego, California, on November 11-13, 2005. We hope you will join us (www.IntegrativeOnc.org).

This young subspecialty of oncology also includes development of a journal, the *JSIO*. Like the SIO conference, the journal will bring together prominent scientists and practitioners in a joint effort to disseminate data — negative as well as positive — that will further elevate complementary therapies and the discipline of integrative oncology.

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COMING UP in future issues of Cancer Control ...

Topics that will be reviewed in upcoming issues and supplements include:

- Melanoma
- Thromboembolism in cancer patients
- Liver metastasis
- The effects of culture and literacy on cancer patients