



Zentrum für  
Integrative Onkologie

Hämatologie Onkologie Palliative Care

## MISTLETOE THERAPY

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*Improving quality of life – Strengthening  
the Immune System*





*«It is essential for me that I do something for myself»*

## Background

In Switzerland, two thirds of cancer patients use complementary medical therapies; these are predominantly plant-based remedies. In German-speaking middle Europe, mistletoe therapy is the most commonly used therapy.



## Effectiveness

In integrative oncology, mistletoe preparations are used as complementary therapy for cancer patients as part of a medical approach extended by anthroposophical tenets. The preparations have been used in a clinical setting for decades, are continuously developed further, and are applied with a great deal of experience.

The following results have been described:

- Several studies have shown that the simultaneous application of mistletoe preparations reduces the side effects of chemotherapy and radiation therapy and thus contributes to improvements in overall condition.
- Mistletoe preparations stimulate the immune system and improve the body's defense mechanisms. This may reduce the risk of infections.
- Psychological symptoms such as mood swings are often positively influenced/stabilized.
- Long-term studies and well-documented patient cases have shown that these preparations can stop cancer progression. In some cases, even tumor regressions were documented. Several studies indicate longer survival rates with mistletoe therapy.

## Research

To date, more than 130 clinical studies have been conducted to test the effectiveness of mistletoe therapy. Of those, 39 were conducted following high-level methodology (prospective randomized controlled trial»). How mistletoe extracts work in the body and as a medication has been extensively studied. This revealed multiple active ingredients (mistlelectines and viscotoxins).

Especially remarkable were the killing and growth-inhibiting effects the mistlelectines and viscotoxins had on a variety of cancer cells.

Additionally, mistletoe extracts are known for their stimulating effects on the immune system. Studies were able to show that they activate several types of defensive cells that are crucial for the body's defenses against cancer.

You can find an extensive compilation of research and study results at

[www.mistel-therapie.de](http://www.mistel-therapie.de).

## Therapeutic Application

Mistletoe extracts are won from the European white berried mistletoe (*viscum album*) and contain numerous ingredients.

Anthroposophical pharmacology uses extracts from the entire mistletoe plant and takes the varying properties of the plant throughout the course of the year into consideration. In the manufacturing process, watery extracts from summer and winter mistletoe are mixed in a specialized technical process.

The ingredients of a mistletoe plant are influenced by its respective host tree (e.g. oak, apple tree, pine, elm, spruce). Through separate processing of the various mistletoe plants, host-tree-specific mistletoe preparations are produced.

Mistletoe extracts are generally injected subcutaneously and/or administered



## Preparations

intravenously. In special situations, direct administration into the tumor or body cavities (chest cavity, abdominal cavity or urinary bladder) is also possible.

Mistletoe preparations are initially administered on a support basis in chemo or radiation therapy to improve quality of life during treatment. Subsequently, patients undergo mid to long-term mistletoe therapy to strengthen and stimulate their immune system. The dose of mistletoe preparations is individually adjusted to the patient. Generally, therapy begins with a low dose that is increased during the course of treatment.

If preparations are administered intravenously, higher dosages and therefore stronger stimulation of the immune system are possible.

Mistletoe therapy may result in a fever that subsequently subsides without complications. This fever is an intended effect of therapy and not an undesired side effect.

Various preparations are available for mistletoe therapy: Iscador® and Helixor® (both preparations are accepted by Swiss basic health insurance), Abnobaviscum®, Iscucin® as well as others.





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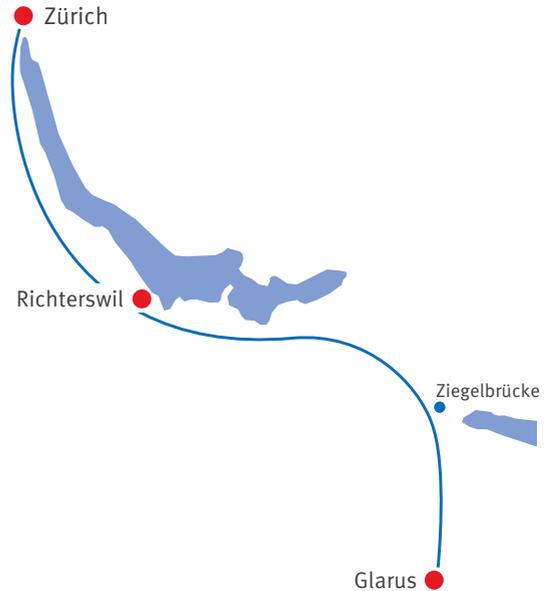
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