



Believe Big
Helping Families Navigate the Cancer Journey

Frequently Asked Questions About Mistletoe

What is mistletoe or Iscador?

The liquid extract of the mistletoe plant has been used as an alternative method to treat cancer for close to a century. Mistletoe is one of the most widely used complementary and alternative medicine therapies for cancer treatment in Europe. The most common commercial preparations are sold under the trade names Iscar and Helixor. Only the European species of the mistletoe plant is used for cancer treatment.

How can mistletoe be used and will it be effective for my type of cancer?

Mistletoe (Iscar/Helixor) can be used in malignant and non-malignant tumors for stimulation of bone marrow activity alongside conventional treatments to offset the side effects of chemotherapy/radiation such as nausea, vomiting, and lack of appetite. It can also be used to diminish tumor--related pain and to reduce the risk of tumor recurrence.

Why is mistletoe not available at cancer institutions in the United States?

Even though it is used all over the world and proven effective in treating cancer, until a clinical trial is done here in the United States, oncologists cannot offer this treatment as standard of care. Mistletoe can be prescribed in the United States by approved anthroposophic physicians who are trained in complimenting conventional treatment.

Can I be part of the clinical trial that is being developed at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine or are there physicians nearby that I can contact to pursue mistletoe treatment?

Contact Believe Big for more information about how to enroll in the clinical trial. There are anthroposophic physicians in the United States who are trained in mistletoe. You can view a list of physicians by state at: www.believebig.org/find-a-mistletoe-doctor

How is mistletoe administered and how often?

Mistletoe is administered subcutaneously (an injection) or intravenously (IV) at a frequency determined by the prescribing physician based upon your individual needs.

How much do mistletoe treatments cost?

Mistletoe treatments are a fraction of the cost of chemotherapy. Unfortunately, mistletoe is not typically covered by health insurance. The cost depends on a physician's recommendations of extract strength and frequency, averaging \$150 - \$250/month for subcutaneous. IV mistletoe cost varies by dosage and frequency.

Are there side effects of mistletoe treatment?

Patients may experience headaches or fever, but it is rare. Most patients experience a better quality of life since mistletoe stimulates the immune system.

How can I help with the mistletoe clinical trial?

You can donate online at www.believebig.org/donate or via mail: Believe Big, 4821 Butler Road, Suite 1D, Glyndon, Maryland 21136. All donations are tax deductible.