



COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE



OBJECTIVES

- Define complementary and alternative medicine (CAM)
- Provide examples of mind and body practices
- Provide examples of natural products
- Learn how to assess the safety and effectiveness of practices and products
- Discuss ways to choose a complementary health practitioner that fits within your current healthcare team



UNDERSTANDING COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE (CAM)

- Refers to a diverse range of healthcare practices and products not considered conventional medicine
- Often used alongside standard medical treatments





DEFINITIONS

Complementary Medicine vs. Alternative Medicine

Complementary Medicine

- Used alongside standard medical treatments
- Works synergistically with standard medicine to enhance well-being

Alternative Medicine

- Used instead of standard medical treatments
- Unconventional and lack scientific validation

COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH SYSTEMS OF HEALING

- ALLOPATHIC MEDICINE
- TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE
- AYURVEDIC MEDICINE





COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH APPROACHES

- Two main categories:
 - Mind and body practices
 - Natural products



COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH

MIND AND BODY PRACTICES

- Procedures or techniques performed by a trained person
- Subgroups:
 - Mind-body therapies
 - Manipulative and body-based practices
 - Energy healing





COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH

MIND-BODY THERAPIES

- Meditation
- Biofeedback
- Hypnosis
- Yoga
- Tai Chi
- Imagery
- Creative Outlets
- Qigong



COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH

MANIPULATIVE AND BODY-BASED PRACTICES

- Massage Therapy
- Chiropractic Therapy
- Reflexology
- Acupuncture





COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH

ENERGY HEALING

- Reiki
- Therapeutic Touch





COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH

BIOLOGICALLY BASED PRACTICES

- Natural Products
 - Vitamins
 - Dietary Supplements
 - Botanicals
 - Special Foods or Diets



MOST COMMON COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH APPROACHES

Traditional Chinese Medicine



Massage Therapy



Acupuncture



Yoga



Meditation



Chiropractic manipulation



WHY ARE THEY USED?

REASONS PEOPLE MIGHT USE COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH APPROACHES:

- Emotional Support
- Symptom Management
- Sense of Control
- Natural Appeal
- Comfort and Support
- Hope and Positivity
- Immune System Boost
- Cautions about Alternative Medicine





ARE THEY SAFE?



01.

Mind and body practices are generally considered safe when done properly.

02.

The safety of natural products are mostly unknown.

03.

Any treatment has risks: every individual will react differently.

ARE THEY EFFECTIVE?

1. Mind and Body practices (i.e. yoga, acupuncture)
 - Mixed results
 - Varies widely depending on the practice
 - More studies needed
2. Natural Products (i.e. supplements)
 - Some products show potential benefit
 - However, many have been shown to have little clinical significance





MORE ON SAFETY AND EFFECTIVENESS

- Many complementary health approaches fact sheets available at <https://nccih.nih.gov/health/tips>
 - For example, fact sheets on complementary health approaches for chronic pain, low back pain, migraines, ADHD, Rheumatoid Arthritis and more
- Look up a product or practice to find safety information, side effects, and cautions at <https://nccih.nih.gov/health/safety/topics.htm>
- Look up FDA notices about recalls and tainted products at <https://nccih.nih.gov/news/alerts>





RESEARCH FOR YOURSELF

- When researching information online, ask yourself:
 - Who operates the website? Is it reputable?
 - What is the purpose of the site? To educate or sell?
 - When was the information posted? Is it current?
 - Where did the information come from? What is the source of the information? References?
 - Why does this site exist?
- Research the cost





CHOOSING A COMPLEMENTARY HEALTH PRACTITIONER

Seek Recommendations

Research Credentials

Use a Collaborative Approach

Look for Condition-Specific Expertise

Check Insurance Coverage

Inform Your Healthcare Team



INFORMING YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM

- Complete a Patient History Form
- Inform at Every Visit
- Ask Questions
- Be Proactive



QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR HEALTH INSURANCE COMPANY

- Is this complementary approach covered for my health condition?
- Does it need to be preapproved, ordered by prescription, or require a referral?
- Does the practitioner need to be in-network?
- How many visits and/or what dollar amount will be covered?
- How much will I have to pay?





SUMMARY

- Be Informed
- Communicate
- Choose Carefully
- Safety First





QUESTIONS? CONTACT US!

Name: Tracey Brooks
Title: Wellness Coordinator
Company: Millennium Health and Fitness

Phone Number:
804-401-4565

Email Address:
caro-len.t.brooks.ctr@mail.mil

EAP Website and Phone Number:
Magellan Ascend
866-580-9046
www.MagellanAscend.com