

# Editorial Note on Alternative & Integrative Medicine - Complementary Medicine

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## Abstract

Complementary Medicine is treatment and medicine that you use in addition to your doctor's standard care. Examples include new and traditional medicine practices such as homeopathy, naturopathy, chiropractic, and energy medicine, various forms of acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine, Ayurvedic medicine, and faith healing.

**Keywords:** Complementary Medicine • Energy medicine

## Introduction

To make sense of the many Complementary therapies available, it helps to look at how they're classified by the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM): Whole medical systems, Mind-body medicine, Biologically based practices, Manipulative and body-based practices, Energy medicine.

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) is the term for medical products and practices that are not part of standard medical care. People with cancer may use CAM to:

- Help cope with the side effects of cancer treatments, such as nausea, pain, and fatigue
- Comfort themselves and ease the worries of cancer treatment and related stress
- Feel that they are doing something to help with their own care
- Try to treat or cure their cancer

**Integrative medicine** is an approach to medical care that combines standard medicine with CAM practices that have shown through science to be safe and effective. This approach often stresses the patient's preferences, and it attempts to address the mental, physical, and spiritual aspects of health.

**Standard medical care** is practiced by health professionals who hold an M.D. (medical doctor) or D.O. (doctor of osteopathy) degree. It is also practiced by other health professionals, such as physical therapists, physician assistants, psychologists, and registered nurses. Standard medicine may also be called biomedicine or allopathic, Western, mainstream, orthodox, or regular medicine. Some standard medical care practitioners are also practitioners of CAM.

**Complementary medicine** is used along with standard medical treatment but is not considered by itself to be standard treatment. One example is using acupuncture to help lessen some side effects of cancer treatment.

**Alternative medicine** is used instead of standard medical treatment. One example is using a special diet to treat cancer instead of cancer drugs that are prescribed by an oncologist.

NCI provides evidence-based Physician Data Query (PDQ) information for many CAM therapies in versions for both the patient and health professional.

## Types of Complementary and Alternative Medicine

Scientists learn about CAM therapies every day, but there is still more to learn. Some of the therapies listed below still need more research to prove that they can be helpful. If you have cancer, you should discuss your thoughts about using CAM with your health care provider before using the therapies listed below.

People may use the term "natural," "holistic," "home remedy," or "Eastern Medicine" to refer to CAM. However, experts often use five categories to describe it. These are listed below with examples for each.

## Related Journals of Complementary Medicine

Chinese Herbal Medicine Journals, Alternative Medicine Journals, Journal of Ayurveda and Integrative Medicine, Journal of Natural Medicines, Chinese Journal of Natural Medicines, Chinese Medicine, Comparative Medicine.

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