



Alternative Medicine

More and more adults in the U.S. are complementing traditional medical care with health treatments long used by cultures around the world. Mind and body practices such as yoga, meditation and chiropractic care have grown in popularity over the past decade. Meditation, used to help manage conditions ranging from high blood pressure and headaches to anxiety and depression, more than tripled in use among adults between 2012 to 2017, rising from 4.1 percent to 14.2 percent. Other holistic and wellness approaches include aromatherapy, therapeutic massage, and acupuncture, the insertion of fine needles into the skin to treat pain, arthritis and gastrointestinal problems.

The use of natural products, including dietary supplements such as fish oil and herbal medicines administered in teas, lozenges or ointments, is also increasingly widespread. However, it is important to remember that supplemental products are regulated as food, not drugs, by the Food & Drug Administration (FDA); companies do not have to provide the FDA with evidence of a product's safety before marketing it unless it contains a new dietary ingredient. Some ingredients found in supplements may interact badly with prescription medicines; for example, St. John's wort can increase the breakdown of certain medicines and reduce their effectiveness. A physician should always be consulted before adding any supplements to a diet.

Sources: Craig Hospital, 2017 National Health Interview Survey, National Institutes of Health National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, U.S. Food & Drug Administration, National Institutes of Health Office of Dietary Supplements.

Please consult with your physician before trying any types of alternative medicine.

Alternative & Innovative Therapies for Physical Disability

<http://www.healingtherapies.info>

This site provides information on alternative, complementary, energy-based, non-mainstream, or innovative therapies for individuals with physical disability, especially spinal cord injury and dysfunction and multiple sclerosis.

Alternative Medicine Primer for Spinal Cord Dysfunction

<http://www.healingtherapies.info/Alternative%20Medicine%20Primer.htm>

This alternative medicine primer briefly summarizes alternative, complementary, or energy-based therapies relevant to spinal cord dysfunction, including spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, and post-polio syndrome. Therapies discussed are acupuncture, qigong, scalp acupuncture, laserpuncture, laser acupuncture hand therapy, Ayurvedic medicine, craniosacral therapy, chronologically controlled developmental therapy, herbal remedies, nutritional approaches, aromatherapy, plant essences, homeopathy, magnetic therapy, energy fields, and Edgar Cayce approaches.

Craig Hospital: Complementary & Alternative Medicine Resource

<https://craighospital.org/resources/complementary-and-alternative-medicine-general-overview>

Craig Hospital: Herbs & Herbal Medicine

<https://craighospital.org/resources/herbs-herbal-medicine>

National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health

<https://www.nccih.nih.gov/>

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NCCIH is the federal government's lead agency for scientific research on the diverse medical and health care systems, practices, and products that are not generally considered part of conventional medicine. The site has information on medical conditions and on alternative therapies. Information Specialists at the NCCIH Clearinghouse can answer questions about the Center and complementary and alternative medicine.

Medline Plus: Complementary and Alternative Medicine

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/complementaryandalternativemedicine.html>

This page defines complementary and alternative medicine and has links to general information on complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), news, information related to treating specific conditions with CAM therapies, videos, clinical trials, research, journal articles, and more.

National Multiple Sclerosis Society: Acupuncture for MS

<https://www.nationalmssociety.org/managing-ms/treating-ms/integrative-medicine/acupuncture>

National Multiple Sclerosis Society: Clear Thinking About Alternative Therapies

<https://cdn.sanity.io/files/y936aps5/production/442658200c8814483375d442f049d40ff1f6ed87.pdf>

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