

A to Z Complementary and Alternative Therapies



Brighton Holistics

**Registered and Accredited College for the Federation of
Holistic Therapists, Guild of Holistic Therapists & The
Complementary Medical Association.**

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Thank you Jon Matson MCMA, MFHT, BABTAC & MGHT

Principal of Brighton Holistics & Lodge Hill Holistics



A-Z of Complementary and Alternative Therapies

A

Acupressure

Often called "acupuncture without needles" acupressure seeks to remedy illness through the application of deep finger pressure at points located along an invisible system of energy channels called meridians. Shiatsu is the Japanese version of acupressure. Tuina is a Chinese variation that involves more massage-like kneading motions.

Acupuncture

The "puncture" in acupuncture refers to insertion of tiny needles at certain very specific points on the surface of the body. The treatments vary widely, depending on the individual practitioner and the style of acupuncture. There are several "schools," including Chinese, Korean, Japanese, and a westernized version (based on neurology, not Oriental medical philosophy) called trigger-point therapy.

Alexander Technique

Alexander encourages people to shed ingrained (and inappropriate) muscular reactions and allow healthy natural reflexes to take over. To encourage the release of natural reactions, a teacher will lead a student through various movements, occasionally touching the neck, back, or shoulder to help trigger the proper reflexes.

Amatsu

Amatsu is a modern interpretation of a Japanese physical therapy dating back hundreds of years with an ethos of a purely practical nature. Amatsu is comprised of a number of different techniques such as massage, mobilisation, re-patterning, cranial balancing and energy techniques. These can be used in many different combinations to suit the individual needs of each client.

Aromatherapy

Aromatherapy treatments rely on the use of highly concentrated essential oils extracted from various healing herbs. In most cases, these oils are produced by steam distillation or cold pressing from a plant's flowers, leaves, branches, bark, rind, or roots. The volatile, flammable oils are then mixed with a "carrier"--usually a vegetable oil such as soy, evening primrose, or almond-or diluted in alcohol before being applied to the skin, sprayed in the air, or inhaled.

Ayu rveda

Ayurveda emphasizes prevention of disease, rejuvenation of our body systems, and extension of life span. It is India's traditional, natural system of medicine and has been practiced for more than 5,000 years. Ayurveda is a Sanskrit word that literally translated means "science of life" or "practices of longevity." Ayurveda was the system of health care conceived and developed by the seers (rishis) and natural scientists through centuries of observations, experiments, discussions, and meditations. For several thousand years their teachings were passed on orally from teacher to student; about the fifth to sixth century BC, elaborately detailed texts were written in Sanskrit, the ancient language of India.

B

Biofeedback

Biofeedback has been devised to allow people to gain control over physiological reactions that are ordinarily unconscious and automatic. Malfunctions in these automatic responses contribute to a wide variety of medical problems. In study after study, biofeedback has shown the ability to help bring such counterproductive reactions back into line, providing significant relief for many of the people who try it. Biofeedback is not a passive treatment. It requires your intensive participation as you learn to control such normally involuntary ("autonomic") functions as heart rate, blood pressure, brain waves, skin temperature, muscle tension, breathing, and digestion.

C

Chinese Herbalism

Chinese herbalism classifies herbs according to the Four Energies, the Five Flavors, the Four Directions and their relationship to the 12 Internal Organs. While they are called herbs because the majority of the substances used consist of plants, in fact, to a lesser extent, substances from the animal and mineral kingdoms are also used. Herbs are also described as food-like, mildly toxic and very toxic.

Chiropractic

Chiropractic is aimed at the relief of back pain; however the manipulations can be applied to any muscle or joint in the body. Techniques vary among practitioners. Typically, after preparation and proper positioning, the chiropractor creates tension around the offending joint, then applies pressure to return it to its proper position. A popping sound is often heard-and sometimes felt-following this manoeuvre. The noise is similar to the one you hear when cracking your knuckles. It results from the sudden release of built-up pressure in the joint, and is *generally* painless.

Colonic Irrigation

Colonic Irrigation flushes "built-up" toxins from the bowel. The treatments may involve taking an enema.

Craniosacral

Craniosacral therapy is a manual procedure for remedying distortions in the structure and function of the craniosacral mechanism - the brain and spinal cord, the bones of the skull, the sacrum, and interconnected membranes. It is used to treat chronic pain, migraine headaches, TMJ, and a range of other conditions.

Crystal Therapy

Crystal Therapy involves healing with gemstones. Different crystals and stones are applied upon the body within specific energy centers known as the seven chakras of the body.

D

Deep tissue bodywork

Deep tissue bodywork is a general term for a range of therapies that seek to improve the function of the body's connective tissues and/or muscles. Among the conditions treated are whiplash, low back and neck pain, and degenerative diseases, such as multiple sclerosis.

Detox

Detox stands for detoxification. Detox therapy is the activation of elimination organs (kidney, liver, skin, lymphatic system etc.) in order to help rid the body of toxins.

Diathermy

Diathermy uses a deep-heat therapy of high-frequency electric currents to produce heat in body tissues. Physical therapists and sports physicians use diathermy to treat arthritis, bursitis, and fractures. It also may help treat gynecological diseases and sinusitis.

Dream

Dream therapy is the analysis of recurrent dreams, which in reality are messages that we receive from our subconscious. Trying to understand our subconscious is the key to dream therapy. Learning things about ourselves through the unlocking of our minds. Freud emphasized dreams as keys to the makeup of the individual and distinguished between the experienced content of a dream and the actual meaning of the dream. Jung held that dreams are not limited to the personal unconscious but may also be shaped by archetypes that originate in the collective unconscious of the human species.

E**Ear candling**

Ear candling aka ear coning. Involves placing the narrow end of a specially designed hollow candle at the entry of the ear canal, while the opposite end is lit. Primarily used for relieving wax build up and related hearing problems, ear candling is also used for ear infections and sinus infections.

Enzyme

Enzyme therapy employs supplements of plant and animal enzymes to improve digestive function and other conditions. During digestion, the body's own digestive enzymes are not the only ones at work; the enzymes present in raw fruits and vegetables also contribute to the breakdown of food in the stomach. Enzyme therapy advocates supplementation to reduce the work that the body has to do, and because plant enzymes are destroyed in cooking. Since enzymes can't be synthetically manufactured, supplements are derived from plants or from animal tissues. Some practitioners inject liquid enzymes to treat cancer and multiple sclerosis. Enzyme supplements are available over the counter, singly or in combination, in capsule, tablet, powder, and liquid form.

F**Feng Shui**

Feng Shui is the ancient Chinese practice of configuring home or work environments to promote health, happiness, and prosperity. Feng shui consultants may advise clients to make adjustments in their surroundings, from colour selection to furniture placement, to promote a healthy flow of chi, or vital energy.

Flower Essences

Flower Essences are intended to alleviate negative emotional states that may contribute to illness or hinder personal growth. Drops of a solution infused with the captured essence of a flower are placed under the tongue or in a beverage. The appropriate essences are chosen, focusing on the client's emotional state rather than on a particular physical condition.

G

H

Herbalism

Herbalism, sometimes referred to as Herbal Medicine or Botanical Medicine, is the use of herbs for their therapeutic or medicinal value. An herb is a plant or plant part valued for its medicinal, aromatic or savoury qualities. Herb plants produce and contain a variety of chemical substances that act upon the body.

Holistic

The word holistic is an adjective meaning 'targeted to the whole person - mind, body, and spirit'. Holistic or 'wholistic' medicine considers not only physical health but also the emotional, spiritual, social, and mental well-being of the person. Holistic therapy is the art and science of healing that addresses the whole person - body, mind, and spirit. The practice of holistic medicine integrates conventional and alternative therapies to prevent and treat disease, and most importantly, to promote optimal health. This condition of holistic health is defined as the unlimited and unimpeded free flow of life force energy through body, mind, and spirit.

Homeopathy

Homeopathic remedies are *extremely* diluted solutions (usually 1 part per million or less) of assorted herbs, animal products, and chemicals. According to homeopathic practitioners, the solutions continue to hold a "trace memory" of the original substance. Homeopathic medicines are available without a prescription, so anyone can read up on the remedies suggested for a particular symptom, buy them, and try them on their own. If you visit a homeopathic practitioner, however, you'll be introduced to a whole "through-the-looking-glass" approach to medicine unlike anything in standard health care.

Hypnotherapy

The induction of a trance-like state for therapeutic purposes.

I

Iridology

Iridology is a diagnostic system based on the premise that every organ has a corresponding location within the iris of the eye, which can serve as an indicator of the organ's health or disease. Used by naturopaths and other practitioners, particularly when diagnosis achieved through standard methods is unclear.

J

Jin Shin Do

Jin Shin Do is a therapy that combines acupuncture, Taoist yogic breathing and Reichian segmental theory (addresses how emotional tension affects the physical body) with the goal of releasing physical & emotional tension and armoring. Aims to promote a state in which the patient can address the emotional factors that underlie various physical conditions.

K

Kinesiology

Kinesiology is the study of muscles and their movement. Applied kinesiology is a system that uses muscle testing procedures, in conjunction with standard methods of diagnosis, to gain information about a patient's overall state of health. Practitioners analyze muscle function, posture, gait

Magnetic

Magnetic field therapy or bio-magnetic therapy involves the use of magnets, magnetic devices or magnetic fields to treat a variety of physical and emotional conditions, including circulatory problems, certain forms of arthritis, chronic pain, sleep disorders, and stress.

Massage

Massage is the systematic manual application of pressure and movement to the soft tissue of the body-- the skin, muscles, tendons, ligaments, and fascia (the membrane surrounding muscles and muscle groups). It encourages healing by promoting the flow of blood and lymph, relieving tension, stimulating nerves, and stretching and loosening muscles and connective tissue to keep them elastic. Massage therapy doesn't claim to cure any serious or life-threatening medical disorders, but it can provide welcome relief from the symptoms of anxiety, tension, depression, insomnia, and stress, as well as back pain, headache, muscle pain, and some forms of chronic pain.

N

Neurolinguistic Programming

Neurolinguistic Programming seeks to replace counterproductive reactions that hamper the healing process with beneficial ones that boost it. Proponents say that it can ease pain, speed recovery from injury, combat allergies, and even enhance the immune system.

The theory behind this form of treatment is that people who are ill, particularly those with chronic disorders, become victimized by their own negativity. This process ultimately changes their self-perception and even their identity. They begin to think of themselves primarily in terms of their disease. When someone becomes 'a diabetic', rather than a person with diabetes', the disease has taken over. The more you identify with your condition, say neurolinguistic therapists, the less likely you'll be able to overcome it.

Nutritional Therapy

A very broad spectrum of treating medical conditions through modification of diet.

O

Osteopathy

Manual therapy frequently involving spinal mobilisation for musculoskeletal problems, such as back pain.

P

Pilates

Pilates (pronounced peh-lot-ees) is an exercise technique developed by Joseph Pilates over eighty years ago. Pilates focuses on improving flexibility and strength for the overall

body through a series of controlled movements, but doesn't build bulk.

Q

Qigong

Qigong seeks to stimulate the flow of *qi* (the elemental life force of Chinese medicine) along the invisible channels, or meridians, that are thought to course throughout the body. This can be achieved through internal Qigong, the do-it-yourself exercises now familiar in the West, or external Qigong, a form a psychic therapy available only from a Qigong master.

R

Reflexology

Reflexology takes the premise that the foot is a microcosm of the entire body. Reflexologists press on various "reflex points" along the foot to relieve symptoms elsewhere in the body. Although reflexology doesn't promise to cure the underlying cause, the belief is that the technique can alleviate a wide variety of stress-related problems, as well as headache (both tension and migraine), premenstrual syndrome, asthma, digestive disorders, skin conditions such as acne and eczema, irritable bowel syndrome, and chronic pain from conditions such as arthritis and sciatica. Reflexology is also sometimes used for neurological symptoms, such as those seen in multiple sclerosis.

Reiki

Reiki (pronounced ray-key) is a Japanese word representing universal life energy, the energy which is all around us. It is derived from rei, meaning "free passage" or "transcendental spirit" and ki, meaning "vital life force energy" or "universal life energy". Reiki practitioners channel energy in a particular pattern to heal and harmonize. Unlike other healing therapies based on the premise of a human energy field, reiki seeks to restore order to the body whose vital energy has become unbalanced.

S

Shiatsu

A type of acupressure used in Japan where acupuncture points are stimulated by external pressure, usually applied manually by the therapist.

Sound Therapy

A holistic therapy system that combines modern scientific and ancient esoteric knowledge and experience, to provide a treatment that uses pure tones and overtones through voice and instruments to encourage healing on all levels.

Stress Management Therapy

Stress Management therapy includes a combination of learning ways of dealing with stress combined with deep relaxation processes both at a physical and emotional level.

T**Tai Chi**

More of a fitness regimen than a "therapy," Tai Chi is gaining popularity in the West as an aid to good health, especially for older adults. This slow, graceful Chinese exercise program pays dividends in increased strength and muscle tone, enhanced range of motion and flexibility, and improved balance and coordination. In clinical trials, it has also shown an unquestionable ability to reduce blood pressure and heart rate.

Tai chi exercises encompass a set of "forms." With names like "Grasping the Bird's Tail" and "Wave Hands like Clouds," each form consists of a series of positions strung together into one continuous movement, including a set beginning and end. A single form may include up to 100 positions and may take as long as 20 minutes to complete. The forms can be performed anywhere at any time, but for maximum health benefits, tai chi experts recommend setting aside the same time every day. In China, tai chi is often performed in large groups as an early morning exercise.

U**V****W****X****Y****Yoga**

The age-old set of exercises known in the West as "yoga" offers a significant variety of proven health benefits. It increases the efficiency of the heart and slows the respiratory rate, improves fitness, lowers blood pressure, promotes relaxation, reduces stress, and allays anxiety. It also serves to improve coordination, posture, flexibility, range of motion, concentration, sleep, and digestion. It can be used as supplementary therapy for conditions as diverse as cancer, diabetes, arthritis, asthma, migraine, and AIDS, and helps to combat addictions such as smoking.



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