



WII and CAM: Message for the Commanding Officer

The theme “CAM with Care” relates to encouraging wounded, ill, and injured (WII) service members to keep safety in mind when considering complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), which includes such products and practices as herbal supplements, meditation, chiropractic manipulation, and acupuncture. ¹

Currently, a reported 40 percent of Americans 18 or older use some form of CAM. ² Also, individuals with cancer, back pain, and depression are turning to complementary health practices in large numbers. ² The perceived or actual effectiveness of conventional treatment, the need for additional relief, or the desire for a more holistic health care approach, may prompt wounded, ill, or injured Sailors and Marines to turn to CAM.

It is important for WII service members to know that while certain CAM health practices may help improve their quality of life, they must also approach CAM with caution. It is essential that they partner with their doctor to help determine the safety of integrating a particular CAM therapy with their conventional treatment, as certain CAM practices may interact poorly with conventional medical treatments.

Things you can do:

- Encourage WII service members to [Have a CAM Conversation](#) with their doctor
- Encourage WII service members to do their research and identify qualified providers

References

1. Time to Talk. *National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine*. June 04, 2012;:Providers. Available at: <http://nccam.nih.gov/timetotalk/forphysicians.htm>. Accessed July 15, 2014.
2. Barnes PM BBNR. *Complementary and alternative medicine use among adults and children: United States, 2007*. United States: CDC; 2008. #12.