



U.S. Marine Corps photo by Mike DiCicco

Doc Talk: Have a CAM Conversation

Wounds, illnesses, and injuries are accompanied by a range of side effects. As a wounded, ill, or injured (WII) service member, you may experience pain, mobility challenges, anxiety, depression, anger, fatigue, and nausea. These may originate with the wound, illness, or injury itself, or from the associated therapy or treatment.

To help improve your quality of life and overall well-being, you may be considering adding complementary or alternative health practices to your conventional treatment. Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) includes such products and practices as herbal supplements, meditation, chiropractic manipulation, and acupuncture. ¹

Whatever your reason for considering CAM, it is important to engage your doctor in the whole range of your treatment as complementary health practices can have an effect on conventional medicine. Talking to your doctor before you start using CAM helps him/her partner with you, be fully informed, and ensure coordinated and safe care. Remember, giving your health care providers a full picture of what you do to manage your health helps you stay in control. ²



Capture Your CAM Use

Before beginning use of any CAM therapy, it is essential that you partner with your doctor to help determine the safety of integrating it with your conventional treatment. After consulting with your doctor, track your CAM use in the table below. Document the particular CAM therapy, the date you started using it, how much or often you are using it, your reason for using it, and note any additional information such as positive or negative side effects. Maintain the list, keeping it up-to-date so that you can bring it with you to your doctor’s visits. This will help keep your doctor informed to make the best recommendations regarding your care and aid you in taking an active role in your healing and recovery.

| Name of CAM | Date Started | Amount & Frequency | Reason for taking it | Notes |
|---------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|----------------------|--|
| <i>Ginger</i> | <i>07/11/2014</i> | <i>One 8 oz glass of tea per day</i> | <i>Nausea</i> | <i>Tastes great; questionable impact on nausea</i> |
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References

1. Time to Talk- Ask Your Patients About Their Use of Complementary Health Practices. National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine.
<http://nccam.nih.gov/timetotalk/forphysicians.htm>. Updated 4 June 2012. Accessed 15 July 2014.
2. Time to Talk- Tell Your Health Care Provider About Your Use of Complementary Health Practices. National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine.
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