

Glossary of Terms for Complementary and Alternative Medical Health Care Practices

A

acupressure: type of Chinese medicine that uses direct stimulation by a therapist's fingertips, knuckles, or hands or from blunt-tipped instruments to stimulate specific points on energetic meridians and points on a patient's body.

acupuncture: a branch of ancient Chinese medicine that treats many conditions including diseases, drug or alcohol addiction, and sinus problems by stimulation of needles to directly manipulate a network along 12 major pathways or energetic meridians, connecting specific internal organs with energetic points on the network. Acupuncture regulates, or disperses Ki (also referred to as Chee, Chi, Ki, Qi, and Qui), the vital life energy that animates all living organisms, and results in a correcting and rebalancing Ki to relieve pain and restore health.

aikado: self-defense system that uses twisting and throwing techniques and aims at turning an attacker's strength and momentum against himself.

allergen: a foreign substance (such as pollen, house dust, and various foods) that can produce a hypersensitive reaction in the body but is not necessarily intrinsically harmful.

allopathy: the conventional method of medicine that combats disease by using active techniques specifically against the disease.

alternative therapies: interventions for improving, maintaining and promoting health and well being, preventing disease, or treating illness. Encompassing over 200 modalities and more than 10,000 uses, alternative and complementary therapies are not part of the standard North American biomedical regimen of health care or disease prevention. ? Standard refers to practices commonly taught in U. S. medical schools, covered by major insurers, or referred to as allopathic or Western medicine.

anthroposophic medicine: based on the principles of anthroposophy, developed by philosopher and spiritual scientist Rudolf Steiner, PhD (1861-1925); this medical system takes into account the spiritual and physical components of illness. A treatment regime may include herbal and homeopathic medicines as well as dietetics, art and movement therapies, massage, and hydrotherapy.

antioxidant: a substance capable of protecting other substances from oxidation; some are made by the body to inhibit the destructive actions of chemicals called free radicals; some, such as vitamins C and E, are nutrients.

aromatherapy: therapeutic use of essential oils extracted from flowers, stems, leaves, roots, or fruits of a plant or tree. Physiological and psychological benefits of treatment are achieved by absorption through massage, hydrotherapy, and inhalation.

art therapy: a type of therapy in which a person is encouraged to express feelings through a nonverbal process, using a variety of materials to create art. By observing the process, form, color, content, interests and comments, an art therapist makes a comprehensive diagnosis of a client's needs and determines treatment plans to restore, maintain, or improve an individual's physical and mental health.

Ayurvedic medicine: 5,000-year-old system of holistic and preventive medicine from India that treats illness as an imbalance or stress in the awareness of the individual, along with an imbalance of the doshas. The ayurvedic tradition employs diagnostic procedures such as reading the pulse and observing the tongue. Nutrition counseling, yoga, massage, herbal medicine, meditation, and other modalities are used to treat a broad spectrum of ailments in reaching a balanced state of inner harmony, health, and natural well-being.

B

bioelectromagnetics: the scientific study of interactions between living organisms and electromagnetic fields, forces, energies, currents, and charges. The range of interactions studied includes atomic, molecular, and intracellular, up to the entire organism.

bioenergetics: a method of studying and understanding the human personality in terms of the body and its energetic processes. Bioenergetic therapists believe that the body and mind are functionally identical and that repressed emotions affect the body and mind by creating chronic muscular tension and diminishing energy. Through movement, breath work, psychotherapy and emotional release techniques, the person works to resolve these issues; also called Reichian Therapy.

biofeedback: the process of furnishing an individual with information, usually in an auditory or visual mode, on the state of one or more physiological variables such as heart rate, blood pressure, or skin temperature; it often enables the individual to gain some voluntary control over the physiological variable being sampled. Biofeedback is used especially for stress-related conditions such as asthma, migraine headaches, insomnia, and high blood pressure.

botanical medicine: another term for herbal medicine--therapies of or derived from plants.

C

chakras: sensed by some practitioners of the touch therapies and first elaborated in ancient Indian metaphysics, describes seven major vortices of energy in the human biofield, each associated with a particular nerve plexus and endocrine gland. Chakra balancing is the clearing of energy blocks from the chakras.

chelation therapy: series of intravenous injections of the synthetic amino acid EDTA (ethylene diamine tetra acetic acid), designed to detoxify the body of undesirable heavy metals such as lead, mercury, nickel, copper, and cadmium. Chelation therapy is often used to treat atherosclerosis and arteriosclerosis by dissolving plaque that has built up in the circulatory system.

Chinese medicine: a variety of ancient and modern therapeutic methods, including acupuncture, herbal medicine, massage, heat therapy, and nutritional and lifestyle counseling--to treat a broad range of chronic and acute illnesses.

chiropractic practice: a discipline that views the spine as the backbone of human health. Misalignments of vertebrae caused by poor posture or trauma cause pressure on the spinal nerve roots, leading to diminished function and illness. Through manipulation or adjustment of the spine, treatment seeks to analyze and correct misalignments.

chronic fatigue syndrome: an illness characterized by long periods of fatigue, often accompanied by headaches, muscle pain and weakness, and elevated antibody titers to some herpes viruses. The cause or causes are unknown.

colonic therapy: colonic irrigations with fluid under gentle pressure are a method of and therapy for bowel cleansing designed to detoxify the large intestine.

color therapy: the use of color in a variety of ways to promote health and healing.

complementary therapies: alternative therapies which enhance and support allopathic treatments; a term more frequently used in Europe.

craniosacral therapy: gentle manipulation of the brain, spinal cord, bones of the skull, sacrum and interconnected membranes--to correct misalignments and distortions in the structure and function of the craniosacral mechanism that surrounds the central nervous system.

crystal therapy or gem therapy or crystal healing: use of quartz crystals, gemstones, and other types of crystals and stones for therapeutic and healing purposes.

cupping: a technique of applying suction over selected points or zones in the body. A vacuum is created by warming the air in a jar of bamboo or glass and overturning it onto the body to disperse areas of local congestion. This therapy is used in the treatment of arthritis, bronchitis, and sprains, among other ailments.

D

dance and movement therapies: therapeutic technique which uses expressive movement as a tool for personal expression, psychological and/or emotional healing.

detoxification: the process of eliminating the build-up of wastes and toxins from the body, often accomplished with fasting, adhering to specific diets, colon therapy, vitamin therapy, chelation therapy, and hyperthermia.

diabetes -- any of various abnormal conditions characterized by excessive urinary output, thirst, and hunger; usually refers to diabetes mellitus.

diabetes insipidus -- a form of diabetes due to a dysfunction of the hypothalamus.

diabetes mellitus -- a metabolic disorder arising from a defect in carbohydrate utilization by the body, related to inadequate or abnormal insulin production by the pancreas. Blood-sugar levels are no longer well controlled through the hormone insulin. Insulin is a protein hormone produced by the beta cells of the islets of Langerhans which participates in carbohydrate and fat metabolism. Forms include Type I diabetes, also known as insulin-dependent diabetes, that is controlled through the use of daily insulin injections and Type II diabetes, also called non-insulin-dependent or adult-onset diabetes. Insulin is normally secreted when the level of blood glucose rises, such as after a meal. People with Type 2 diabetes aren't able to produce enough insulin to lower high blood-sugar levels, or their bodies are not as responsive to the hormone. .

diaphoretics -- herbs (and other medications) which promote perspiration.

dietics: the study and regulation of the diet.

diuretics -- herbs (and other medications) which increase the secretion of urine.

doshas: in Ayurvedic medicine, three basic physiological principles that interact to create health; an imbalance leads to disease.

E

ear candling or ear coning: a treatment for wax build-up, hearing problems, and ear and sinus infections. Treatment involves placing a narrow, specially designed tubular candle at the entry to the ear canal, while the opposite end is lit. The heat from the burning cylinder creates a vacuum and draws debris from the ear canal.

Eastern medicine: a broad term for Oriental, Indian, Tibetan, Japanese, and Chinese medicine, all of which share philosophies about the energy system of the human body and the necessity of balance and harmony. Practitioners are trained to use a variety of ancient and modern techniques of diagnosis and treatments.

ecbolics -- herbs (and other medications) that produce abortions.

electrotherapy: the use of electrical current for a variety of therapeutic purposes including pain relief, reduction of swelling, muscle relaxation, speeding up of the healing process, and stimulation of acupuncture points.

emetics -- herbs (and other medications) which produce vomiting.

emmenagogues -- herbs (and other medications) which stimulate menstruation.

emollients -- herbs (and other medications) used to mechanically soften and protect tissues.

endemic -- restricted to a certain geographical location -- often used to refer to a nutrient deficiency.

enzymes -- biochemical substances found in cells and the body that are catalysts (or helper substances) that enhance chemical reactions in the body. Many biological functions cannot occur without the help of enzymes. Some enzymes depend for activity only on their structure as proteins, while others also require one or more nonprotein components, called cofactors. The cofactor may be a metal ion or an organic molecule called a coenzyme; some enzymes require both.

errhines -- herbs (and other medications) which promote nasal secretions.

expectorants -- herbs (and other medications) which aid materially in expectoration of thick, mucoid matter.

expectoration -- the act of coughing up and spitting out materials from the lungs, bronchi, and trachea. Sputum.

F

Feldenkrais: a form of movement therapy designed to isolate separate muscles and muscle groups to promote flexibility, release tension, and enhance balance.

free radicals -- very reactive and unstable molecular intermediates that cause oxidative damage to cells and tissues. Damage caused by free radicals is what we recognize as aging. Without adequate protection from free radicals, you could very likely age faster; develop stiff joints and wrinkled skin sooner. Free radical damage also plays a part in the degenerative diseases we associate with aging such

as arthritis, allergies, circulatory disorders, diabetes, liver cirrhosis, heart disease, atherosclerosis, and others.

feng shui: ancient Chinese practice of arranging home or work environments to promote health, happiness, and prosperity. Importance is placed on color selection and furniture placement in order to promote a healthy flow of chi or vital energy.

G

galactogogues -- herbs (and other medications) which increase the secretion of milk.

guided imagery: a technique that involves using the imagination and mental images to promote relaxation, changes in attitude or behavior, and encourages physical healing. Also known as visualization.

H

healing touch: one of the touch therapies that uses a variety of techniques to re-pattern and align the biofield, allowing the innate healing process to occur. Healing touch is an energy-based, therapeutic approach to healing and uses touch to influence the energy system thus affecting physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health.

hemostatics -- herbs (and other medications) which arrest hemorrhages.

herbal therapy or botanical therapy or herbalism employs parts of plants (seed, stem, flowers, root, bark, leaf) for the relief of conditions, ailments, or complaints; the earliest known form of medicine. Some popular herbs and common applications are:

algae (spirulina): the most commonly used variety is blue-green algae. Algae is available in powder, tablet and supplemental fruit drink forms. Used to reduce cholesterol levels and to treat degenerative disorders, including arthritis. Unproven medical benefits include treating obesity, colitis, and diabetes mellitus.

aloe or aloe vera: plant widely used as a skin moisturizer and healing agent, especially in treating cuts, burns, insect stings, eczema, bruises, acne, poison ivy rash, sunburn, and psoriasis.

American ginseng -- an herbal extract that typically contains 5% ginsenosides as active components; historically used as a tonic, adaptogenic, antioxidant, and for energy.

arnica: used as an external remedy for bruises, sprains, and sore muscles and joints.

artichoke -- an herbal extract that typically contains 2.5-5% caffeoylquinic acid as active components; historically used as a choleric.

ashwaganda -- an herbal extract that typically contains 1.5% with anolids as active components; historically used as a tonic, adaptogenic and for energy.

astragalus: from a family of peas that benefits digestive processes and the immune system; increases resistance to disease and infections; restores depressed immunity, and is used to treat peripheral vascular diseases and to restore peripheral circulation.

bilberry -- an herbal extract that typically contains 25% anthocyanosides as active components; historically used as an anti-inflammatory and antioxidant.

Bioperine® -- an herbal extract from the pepper plant that, when consumed along with vitamin and mineral nutrients, increases the bioavailability (the absorption and utilization) of the nutrients. See additional information in product information on [BioAssist™](#) which contains Bioperine®.

bitter orange -- (*Citrus aurantium*) a small citrus tree with globular, dark green immature fruit (see [zhi shi](#)) often used as an ornamental house plant. A decorative plant in the U.S., it is cultivated in Europe for the essential oil of its blossoms (neroli oil) and has been used for millennia in China as a medicinal herb.

black cohosh helps relieve sinusitis and asthma; lowers cholesterol levels and blood pressure; relieves pain, morning sickness, hot flashes, and menstrual cramps.

black walnut -- an astringent herb that is used for diarrhea. Because of its high tannin content, it has also been used internally as an anthelmintic and externally for ringworm. It is an excellent traveling companion in areas where water and food may contain bacteria or parasites, leading to gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, abdominal pains, and diarrhea. Use as a preventative several times daily.

borage oil -- an herbal extract that typically contains 24% gamma-linolenic acid as active components; historically used as an anti-inflammatory.

Boswellin® -- an herbal extract that typically contains 65% boswellic acids as active components; historically used as an anti-inflammatory.

broccoli -- an herbal extract that typically contains 0.04% sulforaphane as active components; historically used as a phytonutrient and anticarcinogenic.

burdock: with diuretic and orexigenic properties, used to treat cutaneous eruptions, rheumatism, gout, anorexia nervosa, and eczema.

butcher's broom -- an herbal extract that typically contains 10% saponin glycosides as active components; historically used as an anti-inflammatory.

calendula: traditionally used to treat gastric and duodenal ulcers, amenorrhea, dysmenorrhea, and epistaxis; varicose veins, hemorrhoids, and conjunctivitis.

capsicum/capsaicin/cayenne fruit: taken orally to improve circulation, digestion, and stop bleeding from ulcers, to relieve nausea, rheumatism, arthritis, and pleurisy. Used externally for painful muscle spasms of shoulder, arm, and spine and to treat arthritis, rheumatism, neuralgia, lumbago, chilblains, intractable pain associated with shingles (herpes zoster), post mastectomy, diabetic neuropathy, and cluster headaches.

cat's claw bark: used to treat AIDS patients, arthritis, neurobronchitis, allergies, rheumatism, diverticulosis, Crohn's disease, peptic and gastric ulcers, gastritis, parasites, colitis, leaky bowel syndrome, dysentery, hemorrhoids, cancer, herpes, diabetes, and inflammation.

chamomile: often made into a tea and used as a digestive aid, nerve tonic, sleep aid, and appetite stimulant.

Citrin® -- an herbal extract from an Indian fruit that affects the appetite by making one feel full and not hungry, and affects the metabolism of digested fats and decreasing the accumulation within the body. See our special [report on Citrin®](#) or visit our product information on [Diet Therapy®](#) which contains Citrin®.

citrus oil -- an herbal extract that typically contains 85% d-limonene as active components; historically used as a phytonutrient and anticarcinogenic.

cranberry fruit: used for the relief of bladder and urinary tract infections, blood disorders, stomach ailments, liver problems, vomiting, appetite loss, scurvy, and cancer.

dandelion -- the root of the common dandelion of lawns and gardens is a widely-used herb for cooling and cleansing the liver. Use it in a tea form to help with headaches, emotional swings during menstruation, acne, mood swings, and other problems related to "liver heat."

devil's claw -- an herb with strong anti-inflammatory and pain-killing properties. It is derived from an African plant. It is useful for relieving pain after an initial injury but is also quite useful for chronic conditions such as degenerative joint diseases and arthritis. An herbal extract that typically contains 5% harpagoside as active components.

dong quai root: used for hot flashes, menopause, premenstrual syndrome, vaginal dryness, anemia with dizziness and palpitation, amenorrhea, dysmenorrhea, constipation, rheumatic arthralgia, menorrhagia, rheumatism, functional bleeding, chest, and abdominal pain.

echinacea herb, also called *purple coneflower*: bitter herb used for colds and chronic infections of the respiratory tract and lower urinary tract, treatment of *Candida albicans* infections, prostatitis, and polyarthritis (rheumatoid arthritis). Externally, an ointment is used for poorly healing wounds and chronic ulcerations, burns, eczema, psoriasis, and herpes simplex.

elecampane -- an herb whose root is used mostly for pulmonary dysfunction. For more detailed information, see [Elecampane](#) in our [Nutritional Focus](#) section. We do not, as yet, offer this herb in a product.

evening primrose oil: aids in weight loss, reduces high blood pressure, and helps to treat all skin disorders, female disorders such as cramps and heavy bleeding, hot flashes, multiple sclerosis, arthritis, and alcoholism.

feverfew: used for prophylaxis and treatment of migraine headaches, nausea, vomiting, arthritis, fever, and menstrual disorders.

flaxseed: used for female disorders, colon problems, inflammation, and tumors. Promotes strong nails, bones, and teeth and healthy skin.

garlic cloves: used in the West primarily for its cardiovascular effects, principally as a support to dietetic measures at elevated levels of lipids in blood and as a preventive measure for age-dependent vascular changes. Garlic is also used for atheroma, prophylaxis of atherosclerosis, hypertension, respiratory infections, and catarrhal conditions and as a natural antibiotic.

ginger rhizome : primary uses of ginger are prophylaxis of the nausea and vomiting of motion sickness, dyspepsia, and stomachic. It is also used as a tonic digestant in sub-acid gastritis, for

lack of appetite, as a postoperative antiemetic for minor surgical procedures, for colic, for morning sickness, anorexia, bronchitis, and rheumatic complaints.

ginkgo biloba leaf extract: improves memory loss, brain function, depression, cerebral and peripheral circulation, oxygenation, and blood flow. Good for tinnitus, asthma, Alzheimer's disease, heart and kidney disorders, and glucose utilization.

ginseng root: used for impotence, stress, cocaine withdrawal, energy, diabetes, colds, and chest problems. Promotes lung function, enhances immune function, stimulates appetite, and normalizes blood pressure. Varieties popularly used include American ginseng, Asian ginseng, and Siberian ginseng.

goldenseal: used to strengthen the immune system; acts as an antibiotic; has anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties, potentiates insulin, and cleanses the body. Good for colds, flu, inflammation, glandular swelling, gum disease, morning sickness, diabetes, hypoglycemia, and ulcers.

grape seed extract: used as a dietary supplement for antioxidant and other cardiovascular benefits and for anti-inflammatory actions.

green tea leaf: believed to act as an antioxidant to prevent cancer and possibly other diseases; reduces the risk of stroke; lowers the risk of cardiovascular disease.

hawthorne -- the extract is well-researched and has a long history of use as the herb of choice for strengthening and protecting the cardiovascular system, especially the heart. To be used in extract form long-term, even over a number of years. English hawthorne is an herbal extract that typically contains 3.2% vitexin as active components; historically used as a cardiotonic.

hops fruit -- an herbal extract that typically contains 5.2% bitter acids and 4% flavonoids as active components; historically used as a sedative and antimicrobial.

horsetail -- an herbal extract that typically contains 10% silicic acid and 7% silica as active components; historically used as an anti-inflammatory and antibiotic.

kava kava rhizome: used to treat nervous anxiety, stress, and restlessness. Contraindicated in pregnancy, nursing, or endogenous depression.

Korean ginseng -- an herbal extract that typically contains 15% ginsenosides as active components; historically used as an adaptogenic.

kudzu -- an herbal extract that typically contains 1.5% daizen and 0.95% daidzen as active components; historically used as a diaphoretic.

licorice root: used for catarrhal conditions of the upper respiratory tract and gastric/duodenal ulcers. Licorice is an ingredient in cough drops and syrups, tonics, laxatives, and antismoking preparations.

ma huang: has been used to relieve allergies, asthma, hay fever, colds, and inflammatory conditions. The plant contains two primary alkaloids, ephedrine and pseudoephedrine.

milk thistle seed -- the seed-shell of this wonderful herb yields a group of flavonoid-like compounds, collectively called silymarin, which show remarkable virtues in restoring and maintaining liver health. In Europe, it has a centuries-old reputation and many years of scientific study. Milk thistle is used for hepatitis, cirrhosis, any toxic condition of the liver, and by alcoholics, to protect and rebuild the liver. The flavonoids bind to the cell membrane of the liver cell hepatocyte, protection it from damage by toxic chemicals such as pesticides. It also enters the hepatocyte and speeds the production of new enzymes and proteins, so the liver actually is regenerated and restored at an increased rate. It is useful also for psoriasis, according to clinical results. Wild crafted. An herbal extract that typically contains 80% silymarin as active components; historically used as an anti-hepatotoxic.

nettle -- an herbal extract that typically contains 1-2% plant silica as active components; historically used as a diuretic.

passionflower: said to possess sedative, hypnotic, antispasmodic, and calming effects. Used to treat neuralgia, seizures, hysteria, nervous tachycardia, spasmodic asthma, and insomnia.

Pau d'arco -- since information on its anti-fungal and anti-candida properties were made known, this South American herb, derived from a common forest tree, has been tremendously popular. It is the herb of choice for Candidiasis, an increasingly widespread disease of the last several years, due to the overuse of antibiotics and other stressors on our immune function. Scientific studies also show that the active ingredient of pau d'arco, lapachol, can inhibit tumor growth. Also call "ipe roxo," it is actually the inner bark from a tree of the Bignoniaceae family, though there is some confusion about the tree's botanical identity -- probably several species from the genus *Tecoma* or *Tabebuia* are used. Pau d'arco should have a rich red color and an aroma resembling vanilla. It contains quinones that are strongly anti-bacterial and anti-fungal. Plantation-grown Argentinian. An herbal extract that typically contains 3% naphthoquinones as active components; historically used as an anti-inflammatory, anti-androgenic and for prostate disorders.

propolis -- a natural bee product, propolis is used by the colony to seal the hives against invaders or bacteria or fungal infection. It has shown strong anti-bacterial, anti-viral, and anti-fungal properties. It is especially useful in the mouth, to prevent gum disease. Externally it can be used for any kind of infection. Internally, it counteracts urinary tract infections, respiratory infections, and it is warming and expectorant (helps remove excess mucus). There are international conferences every year where many scientific papers are delivered on the benefits of propolis. It contains flavonoids and resins as the main active compounds.

pygeum -- an herbal extract that typically contains 12-13% phytosterols (African) as active components; historically used for urinary and prostate disorders.

Pycnogenol® -- an herbal extract from the bark of particular pine trees grown in southern France, shown to be the most potent antioxidant available. We have more detailed information in our [Pycnogenol Question & Answers](#) section and in our [Pycnogenol Science](#) section. See additional information in our [report on Liqui Pyc™](#) or from information on our products [Liqui Pyc™](#) or [PycC™](#) (which are equally effective when used in animals such as our [Pet PycC™](#) and [Liqui Pet Pyc™](#)). An herbal extract that typically contains 95% proanthocyanidins as the active component.

red wine -- an alcoholic beverage made from grapes that typically contains 20% polyphenols as active components; historically used as an antioxidant.

rehmannia -- an herbal extract that typically contains 1% glutannic acid as active components; historically used as a cardiotonic.

Reishi mushroom -- a mushroom renowned for its powerful immune-strengthening, antiviral, and antitumor properties. This rejuvenative tonic has shown the ability to regulate blood sugar and may help lower cholesterol. It is known to protect the body against free radicals and the effects of radiation. The mushroom extract typically contains 4% triterpenes and 10% polysaccharides as active components; historically used as an immunomodulator.

saw palmetto -- an herbal extract that typically contains 95% free fatty acids as active components; historically used as an anti-inflammatory, anti-androgenic and for prostate disorders.

schisandra -- an herbal extract that typically contains 9% schisandrins as active components; historically used as an antioxidant.

senna -- an herbal extract that typically contains 5% sennosides as active components; historically used as a potent cathartic.

Shiitake mushroom -- a mushroom or extract that typically contains 3.2% KS-2 polysaccharides as active components; historically used as an immunostimulant.

Siberian ginseng -- this herb is a member of the ginseng family, Araliaceae, like Panax ginseng, but has a different action than Panax. Panax is considered a digestive and "chi" tonic, and Siberian ginseng is considered the "best of the adaptogens". Panax is also warmer and more stimulating than Eleuthero. Panax is not traditionally recommended to be taken by young people (under 40) for long periods (more than a week or two), because it may be too stimulating, but it is a wonderful warming tonic for older people and can be taken on a regular basis. Eleuthero, on the other hand, can be taken regularly by both men and women of all ages. It is by far the best studied in this class of herbs, with the Russians leading the way in research. Twenty million Russian workers take "Eleuthero" (as it is also called) every day -- the treatments are sponsored by the government. In studies with thousands of people, eleuthero preparations, when taken consistently, decrease sick days, increase productivity and learning, and combat fatigue. It modulates stress hormones through the 'pituitary-adrenal' axis, helping the body to adapt to non-specific stress and supporting adrenal function. It is good for blood-sugar regulation, jet-lag, chronic tiredness, increased endurance, and whenever a person is under stress. An herbal extract that typically contains 0.8% eleutherosides as active components; historically used as an adaptogen.

St. John's wort -- this common European and American weedy plant shows great promise as an antiviral and anti-inflammatory agent. It has long been used as a remedy for mild depression. St. John's wort is excellent for repairing nerve damage and reducing pain and inflammation. An herbal extract that typically contains 0.3-0.5% hypericin as active components; historically used as an antidepressant.

suma root -- an herbal extract that typically contains 5% beta-ecdysterone as active components; historically used as an adaptogen.

turmeric -- a spice and herbal extract that typically contains 95% curcumin as active components; historically used as an anti-inflammatory.

usnea -- known as the herbal antibiotic. In the laboratory, this common lichen has shown powerful inhibitory activity against strep, staph, and pneumonia infections. It is also good for urinary tract infections, respiratory ailments, and colds.

uva ursi -- an herbal extract that typically contains 20-25% arbutin as active components; historically used as an astringent and urinary antiseptic.

valerian -- the root is used primarily for sleeplessness, restlessness, anxiety, or tension -- especially in the body (as opposed to passion flower, which relaxes the mental and emotional processes). There are scientific studies which show it helps one fall asleep faster, by lessening the time spent trying to get comfortable and tossing and turning. It was long used for hysteria and any emotional upsets. Valerian is best when fresh or freshly-dried.

vitex -- one of the best known women's herbs, it was recommended by Hippocrates (450 B.C.) for the same purposes as today: menstrual imbalances, hormonal difficulties (PMS, menopause), and to bring on mother's milk. Also used in larger amounts to remove uterine fibroids.

wild Mexican yam -- an herbal extract that typically contains 10% diosgenin as active components; historically used as an antispasmodic, anti-inflammatory and is a natural precursor to DHEA. It is commonly *incorrectly* thought that estrogen can be obtained from wild Mexican yam.

wild oats -- a tonifying nervine and sedative herb that is well-known for its anti-addictive effects. It strengthens the nerves and is good for insomnia due to mental exhaustion.

willow bark -- an herbal extract that typically contains 7-9% salicin as active components; historically used as an analgesic and antiseptic.

yucca -- an herb recommended for its anti-inflammatory abilities. It is useful in horses suffering from stiffness and swelling.

zhi shi -- the dark green immature fruit of the bitter orange plant. In traditional Chinese medicine it is used as a digestive aid helping to break up stagnant qi (vital energy) and move it downward in the body. It works through the spleen/stomach meridian to relieve nausea, indigestion with gas, and intestinal sluggishness. Key active constituents include synephrine and N-methyltyramine that have been shown in pharmacological studies to have some adrenergic activity. These compounds, structurally similar to ephedrine, have the ability to stimulate some of the body's adrenoreceptors. Somewhat calming though, zhi shi does not have the negative central nervous effects of ma huang.

herbology -- the selective use of herbs to treat disease. Herbologists believe that a natural herbal product is safer, more effective and causes less disruption to the body than a manufactured substance. Herbology dates back as far as 77 A.D. when a Greek pharmacologist named Pedanius Dioscorides compiled a list of about 1,000 plant-based remedies.

holistic medicine: philosophical approach to health care which treats the patient as a whole person, not simply as a disease process or a collection of symptoms. Holistic health care practitioners may combine allopathic medicine with complementary therapies, taking into account the emotional, spiritual, social, nutritional, mental, environmental, and physical aspects of health and illness.

homeopathy: derived from the Greek word homoios meaning similar and pathos meaning suffering, homeopathy is an alternative medical system that treats the symptoms of a disease with minute doses of a natural substance or remedy. In larger doses, the remedy would produce the same symptoms as the disease or disorder that is being treated.

hydrogogues -- herbs (and other medications) which cause large watery discharges.

hydrotherapy: treating a disease with hot or cold water, externally or internally to maintain and restore health. Treatments include full body immersion, steam baths, saunas, sitz baths, colonic irrigation, and the application of hot and/or cold compresses.

hypnotherapy: the clinical use of hypnosis, in which the subject's powers of consciousness are mobilized and subconscious memories and perceptions are brought into consciousness. Heightened responsiveness to suggestions and commands, suspension of disbelief with lowering of critical judgments, the potential of alteration in perceptions, motor control, or memory in response to suggestions and the subjective experience of responding involuntarily are induced through hypnotherapy.

I

integrative medicine: practitioners of integrative medicine have training and interest in both conventional Western medicine and alternative and complementary therapies, bringing a variety of techniques to their practices.

iridology: a diagnostic technique which uses the markings and patterns of the irises of the eyes to determine the condition of various systems or organs of the body.

L

laxatives -- herbs (and other medications) which are mild purgatives.

laying-on of hands: healing technique often practiced in Christian fundamentalist churches. The

practitioner is felt to have a God-given gift and is an instrument of God to promote healing.

light therapy: many health disorders are traced to problems with circadian rhythm, the body's inner clock, and how it governs the timing of sleep, hormone production, body temperature, and other biological functions. Disturbances in circadian rhythm can lead to health problems such as depression and sleep disorders. Natural sunlight and various forms of light therapy can help reestablish the body's natural rhythm and are becoming an integral treatment for many health-related conditions.

local anesthetics -- herbs (and other medications) which act when applied as a local anesthetic, or localized numbness of sensation.

M

macrobiotic diet: low-fat, high-fiber diet of whole grains, vegetables, sea algae, and seeds, that are prepared in accordance with specific principles; said to synchronize eating habits with the cycles of nature.

magnetic field therapy: also known as biomagnetic therapy; uses magnets or electromagnetic fields, generally for pain control and bone growth stimulation following a fracture. Magnetic waves pass through tissues enhancing blood flow and bringing more oxygen to that area.

manipulation: a term used in connection with the therapeutic application of manual force. Spinal manipulation, broadly defined, includes all procedures in which the hands are used to mobilize, adjust, apply traction, massage, stimulate, or otherwise influence the spine and nearby (paraspinal) tissues with the goal of positively influencing the patient's health.

massage therapy: systematic, therapeutic stroking, rubbing, or kneading of the skin and underlying muscle and other soft tissue of the recipient for the purpose of physical and psychological relaxation, improvement of circulation, relief of sore muscles, and other therapeutic effects.

meditation: a technique of mind control with the goals of feeling an inner calm and peacefulness, profound experiences of self-realization and transcendental awareness. Meditation is a discipline found in many of the world's religions, including Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam, and Christianity, but it is also advocated by many practitioners of holistic health for its impact on stress-related disease.

megavitamin therapy: administration of vitamins vastly exceeding the amount recommended for nutritional balance.

melatonin: hormone synthesized in the pineal body, implicated in the regulation of biological rhythms, such as sleep.

meridian: in Eastern traditional medicine, it is believed that the body has a channel with 12 parts, or meridians, that loop through the body in an endless circuit, connecting the principal organs and other

body parts. Meridians are said to carry ching qi that regulates the relationship between, and the functioning of, various body structures.

mind-body techniques: therapies such as meditation, hypnosis, guided imagery which focuses on the interaction between the mind and the body.

music therapy: systematic application of music to produce relaxation and desired changes in emotions, behavior and physiology. Music can also be created by the client, allowing nonverbal self expression.

mydriatics -- herbs (and other medications) which cause dilation of the pupil.

mycotics -- herbs (and other medications) which cause the contraction of the pupil.

N

narcotics -- herbs (and other medications) which are powerful anodyne hypnotics.

Native American Indian health care: community-based health care practices found among the tribes of North America that share the use of sweating, purging, herbal remedies, and shamanism.

naturopathy: integrates traditional natural therapies such as botanical medicine, clinical nutrition, homeopathy, acupuncture, hydrotherapy, and naturopathic manipulative therapy with modern scientific medical diagnostic science and standards of care. Naturopaths recognize the innate intelligence and inherent healing ability of the body; great emphasis is placed on preventive medicine.

neurolinguistic programming (NLP): process of guiding a subject to review current thought, behavior, and linguistic patterns. By discovering personal patterns and removing self-induced limits, new levels of awareness and personal effectiveness can be achieved.

neurotransmitters -- nerve and brain chemical components that are responsible for all nerve and brain function and communication between nerve endings. Some neurotransmitters are adrenaline (epinephrine), serotonin, acetylcholine, norepinephrine and dopamine. These chemical messengers promote mental acuity and alertness. Increased levels of the neurotransmitters can affect mood and behavior, fostering a tendency to think more quickly and react more rapidly.

nutraceuticals (sometimes spelled nutraceuticals) -- a term coined for medical foods; foods which have a beneficial effect on health and disease, in treatment and prevention through the use of nutritional

vitamins, minerals and herbal remedies. The name is derived from combining nutrition and pharmaceuticals.

nutrients -- herbs, vitamins and minerals (and other medications) which promote nutrition.

osteopathic medicine: a system of therapy that emphasizes normal body mechanics and manipulation to correct faulty body structures. Osteopathic physicians provide comprehensive medical care.

O

oxidative therapy: supplies oxygen to the body for its potential therapeutic benefit. The two most widely known types of oxidative therapy are hydrogen peroxide therapy and ozone therapy.

P

pellagra -- a severe niacin deficiency disease characterized by the three D's: dermatitis, diarrhea and dementia. This disease can also be caused by a lack of nutrients needed to transform the amino acid tryptophan into niacin (vitamin B3). At least three other vitamins (thiamin, pyridoxine and riboflavin) are necessary for the conversion into niacin.

photoestrogens: plant compounds that exert estrogen-like effects.

polyunsaturated fats: fats, mostly from plants, with double bonds that can bind to hydrogen; these tend to be liquid at room temperature and are called oils.

precursor -- within a series of chemical and biochemical transformations where one chemical compound leads to another in a synthetic pathway, the precursor is the chemical compound that is necessary for the next chemical compound in the pathway to be synthesized.

provitamin -- a vitamin precursor that assumes vitamin activity upon activation or chemical change (i.e. beta-carotene is a provitamin that is converted within the body to vitamin A).

purgatives -- causing evacuation of the bowels. Cathartic, particularly one that stimulates peristaltic action.

putrefaction -- enzymatic decomposition, especially of proteins, with the production of foul-smelling compounds, such as hydrogen sulfide, ammonia, and mercaptans. Fermentation.

Q

Qi (also referred to as Chee, Chi, Qui or Ki): in Eastern philosophies, the energy that connects and animates everything in the universe; includes both individual qi (personal life force) and universal qi, which are coextensive through the practice of mind-body disciplines, such as traditional meditation, aikido, and tai chi.

qigong (gi gong and chi-kung): ancient Chinese exercise that stimulates and balances the flow of qi, or vital life energy by using breath, movement, and meditation to cleanse, strengthen, and circulate the blood and vital life energy. Certain qigong "masters" are considered to be "energetic healers," who via "external" qigong use some of their own energy to strengthen the vitality of others who have ailments.

R

reflexology: a body work technique in which the practitioner applies pressure with thumbs and fingers to points on the feet, hands and ears said to correspond to specific organs and parts of the body. Similar to acupressure.

reiki therapy: an Eastern touch therapy in which the practitioner systematically uses light hand placement in one of 12 positions on the recipient's body to balance and direct healing energy to those sites.

rolfing: a massage technique developed by Swiss-born American biochemist Dr. Ida Rolf that involves deep fascia and muscle manipulation and education about body position. The purpose is to help the recipient establish deep structural relationships within the body that manifest via a symmetry and balanced function when the body is in an upright position. Also known as structural integration.

S

sialogogues -- herbs (and other medications) which excite the salivary gland.

saturated fats: fats that have no double bonds and cannot accept more hydrogen atoms; such fats tend to be solid at room temperature and are mostly from animal sources such as meat, whole milk, butter, and eggs.

sedatives -- herbs (and other medications) which lower functional activity.

senile dementia -- a progressive degenerative brain disease of old age, marked by such symptoms as short-term memory loss, slowness in thought and movement, confusion, disorientation, depression, difficulty communicating, and the loss of physical function. Alzheimer's disease accounts for about half of all senile dementia cases.

shamanism: an ancient spiritual and medical tradition practiced in native cultures around the world. Using ritual, shamans often enter altered states of consciousness to promote the healing of their clients. Shamans regard themselves as conductors of healing energy or sources from the spiritual realm.

shiatsu: a form of acupressure used in Japan to treat pain and illness as well as for general health maintenance. Practitioners apply rhythmic finger pressure at specific points on the body to stimulate qi.

soporifics -- herbs (and other medications) which cause sleep.

stimulants -- herbs (and other medications) which increase functional activity.

stomachics -- herbs (and other medications) which stimulate the stomach.

styptics -- herbs (and other medications) which stop hemorrhage powerfully.

sudorifics -- herbs (and other medications) which profuse perspiration.

T

taenicides -- herbs (and other medications) which kill tape worms.

tai chi: through this form of movement, one achieves health and tranquility while developing the mind and body. Tai chi teaches the individual how to control the nervous system in order to put the entire body to rest, believed to be an effective way of staying healthy.

therapeutic touch: a healing modality that involves touching with the conscious intent to help or heal. The practitioner moves the hands through a recipient's energy field for the purpose of assessment and treatment of energy field imbalance.

tonics -- herbs which tone up the system by stimulating nutrition.

touch therapy: broad range of techniques in which the practitioner uses the hands on or near the patient's body to assist the individual toward optimal function.

triglyceride: a compound found in most animal and vegetable fats that are made up of a fatty acid and glycerol.

trigger points: specific points in the muscular and facial tissues that produce a sharp pain when

pressed; may also correspond to certain types of traditional acupuncture points.

V

vermicides -- herbs (and other medications) which kill intestinal worms.

vermifuges -- herbs (and other medications) which expel intestinal worms.

visualization: a variety of visual techniques used to treat disease based on inducing relaxation in the patient who actually wills away his disease. Also known as guided imagery.

vulnerary -- healing.

W

Western medicine: a term used by holistic health care practitioners to describe allopathic medicine, orthodox medicine, or the way medicine has traditionally been practiced in the United States and Europe. The basis for the separation and division of the mind and the body along with the diseased part from the whole is the Cartesian system of analytic, reductive reasoning with human beings divorced from nature. Pharmaceutical products and surgery are the major modalities used to combat disease.

Y

yoga: ancient philosophical system and spiritual practice from India; it involves stretching exercises, breathing practices, and meditation.

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