

Ways to Wellness™

Integrative Medicine for Kids

INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

What it's About? *Ways to Wellness* is a series of educational materials designed to introduce kids to **complementary and alternative medical (CAM) therapies**. CAM therapies include acupuncture, yoga, massage, biofeedback, herbal medicine and other treatments designed to complement your child's regular medical treatment, reduce side effects and improve the overall state of your child's health. Complementary therapies often promote the body's natural healing abilities, have minimal side effects and can be blended with conventional approaches to enhance functioning and accelerate progress. It is important to note that children's bodies are different than adult's and that CAM therapies that are appropriate for adults are not always safe for kids.



Why Should Kids Consider CAM? Clearly, your doctor's medical recommendations are your first and most important steps toward helping your child cope with or recover from an illness. CAM treatments, however, often help traditional medical treatment work better or can help when conventional therapies aren't completely helping.

First, CAM treatments help your child—and you—have a more active role in your child's health. When your child experiments with aromatherapy to control nausea, gains pain relief through massage, or learns to lower anxiety with biofeedback, they can feel more in charge of their own body and health. That sense of control is crucial to a strong physical and emotional recovery.

Second, CAM helps your child focus on health, not on illness. CAM therapies engage your child's whole body, mind and spirit—not just the symptoms of a physical problem. Through the various therapies, your child learns a new respect for what their body can do and feel, and gains confidence in their ability to create a sense of personal well-being.

Third, CAM therapies really work! Acupuncture, herbs, massage and other healing arts have been used successfully for thousands of years in treating illness. Hundreds of children have reported better feelings of health and coping skills as a result of these treatments.

How Do We Learn More? Read over these brochures with your child. Ask questions. Help your child choose the therapies that sound right for them, and discuss the options with your child's doctor. Most doctors are eager to participate in integrative medical treatment, which combines CAM treatments with their own medical recommendations.

An "Integrative" approach draws on a variety of healing traditions, blending the best of conventional and complementary therapies in a personalized plan that fits each child and family. Complementary and alternative therapies are not necessarily intended to replace conventional medical treatment, but often are to be used in conjunction with it. When using CAM with Kids and Teens, priorities should be placed on safety, scientific evidence and affordable treatment as well as personal preferences and values. All care should be coordinated with your child's various medical providers and all children should be encouraged to actively participate in their own health decisions and treatments. It is our hope that Ways To Wellness series will help kids in understanding and choosing good options.



For more information call 612-813-7888
INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE CLINIC
Minneapolis and St. Paul, Minnesota

Made possible through a grant from the Medtronic Foundation