

What about alternative medicine?

The conventional treatment options we've suggested to you provide your best chance of cure and a longer life. Some patients are interested in using alternative treatments that they've heard about from friends or family, over the Internet, or in the media.

If you're thinking about such a treatment, please ask us about it. We'll help you obtain objective, scientific information about the risks and benefits to you of combining any unconventional therapy with your conventional treatments. In particular, we want to ensure that the unconventional therapy you are considering won't counteract or interfere with your conventional therapy.

Make sure you know how the word "alternative" is being used when referring to a specific therapy. Many people use the term for any treatment that's not practiced in mainstream medicine, whether used instead of or along with conventional therapies, and whether used to cure disease or just to feel better in some way. In this context, nontraditional healing techniques used in addition to conventional therapy, especially to relieve side effects or stress, may well have a role in your treatment.

Other treatments are simply "quackery." There are warning signs of possible con artists, though. **Beware if a company, clinic, or person offering treatment:**

- ☒ claims the treatment is harmless, painless, and nontoxic.
- ☒ uses a secret formula that is never revealed and can't be tested or reproduced by anyone else.
- ☒ explains the treatment's action on the basis of unproven theories.
- ☒ requires patients to follow special diets or intense nutritional support during and after treatment (in which case the failure of the treatment can be blamed on the patient's inability to follow the rigorous diet).
- ☒ discusses their treatment only in the mass media.
- ☒ supports the success of their treatments with testimonials and anecdotes.
- ☒ has never done controlled studies to document the therapy's effectiveness.
- ☒ doesn't require a consent form.
- ☒ attacks the medical establishment.

It's best if I know everything you do on your own to try to control your disease. That way I can monitor your progress and detect and treat any problems, and we'll be able to prevent any benefits of conventional therapy from being offset.

I may not always agree with your decision about unconventional therapies, but if you feel strongly that you must use one or more in conjunction with your conventional medicines, it's safest for you if I'm at least aware of what you're doing.

Resources: The Complete German Commission E Monographs-Therapeutic Guide to Herbal Medicine www.pitt.edu/~cbw/altm.html www.quackwatch.com www.altmedicine.com AltHealthNewsOnline <http://nccam.nih.gov/> NIH Center for Complementary & Alternative Medicine *NCCAM Clearinghouse; PO Box 8218; Silver Spring, MD 20907 1-888-644-6226 www.acupressure.com www.ncrhi.org Nat'l Council for Reliable Health Info www.hcrc.org/faqs/claims.html Healthcare Reality Check www.medherb.com Medical Herbalism www.herbs.org Herb Research Foundation 303-449-2265 Natural Health Village www.naturalhealthline.com/learning/learning.htm www.herbalgram.org

Neil Matthew Kassman, M.D.
Piedmont HealthCare - Digestive Diseases
704-838-8215
www.PiedmontHealthCare.com

Herbs for GI troubles:

German chamomile fights gas & diarrhea. Usual dosage: One tsp of concentrated tincture three times a day.

Ginger soothes irritated stomach lining. Usual dosage: One-quarter to three-quarters of a tsp (1 gram) of fresh-grated root every 4 – 6 hours. *Avoid > 2gm/day.*

Goldenseal is healing agent for the intestines. Usual dosage: One tsp of tincture three to four times a day.

Peppermint oil = menthol 1gm every 4-6 hours or Wrigley's Peppermint gum (or oil cap 3 times/day
www.enzy.com 800.783.2286 or Mentharil)

Fennel seeds 2 tbs 3-4 times a day (boiled in 2 cups water x 3 min strain & add honey) promotility + antispasmodic

Herbs for Non-GI disorders:

Butterbur Ze330 acts like antihistamine for allergy disorders (hay fever...) without sleepiness of many prescription antihistamines.

Fads that are **foolish**: *The human body can clean itself* – so beware of detoxification claims.

- **Colonic Cleansing** - Herbs and special cocktails make you have bowel movements, yet so will prune juice or bran cereals. You may lose money as well as healthy colon bacteria that protect your immune system; could be infected by unclean equipment; may injure the colon and anus.
- **Chelation** – The injection of these chemicals into your veins will not clear plaque from your arteries, but will clear cash from your wallet.
- **Excessive Sweating** – Long saunas and seaweed wraps may feel good, but not because you are eliminating toxins.
- **Herbal Teas and capsules** – Various extracts, exotic roots and brews may sound healthy, but they will not help your liver, colon or lymphatic system to clear *toxins*.
- **Activated Charcoal Capsules** – These will decrease gas and flatulence; will turn your stool black and may be used by your doctor to rid the body of certain ingested pills if you take an overdose; however they *won't flush 'toxins,'* which is the job that your liver does 24-7.
- **Patches** – Foot patches with vinegars and other natural ingredients that “pull” toxins out of the body? Try a foot massage instead.
- **Detox Diets** – A healthy bowel movement is a good thing – up to 3 per day or 3 per week is normal. Flushing the system out is important before a colonoscopy exam or some gastrointestinal surgeries. Laxatives will not make you healthier or thinner beyond the immediate effects. Let nature work for you and detox by eating less toxic foods – ask for our educational handout called ‘Diet Tips for healthy living’

Neil Matthew Kassman, M.D.

Piedmont HealthCare, P.A.

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208 Old Mocksville Rd. Statesville, NC