

# Unconventional medical approaches

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Overview of Complementary, Alternative and Integrative Medicines Aside from the conventional medical practice, there are also complementary medicine together with alternative and integrative medicines that can help the suffering individual alleviate their pains and health problems.

The National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM), National Institutes of Health has defined complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) as “ a group of diverse health care and medical systems, practices and products that are not presently considered to be part of the conventional medicine” (House Select, 2006 p.

10). It is very important to note, however, that Complementary medicine alone is very distinct from alternative medicine alone. According to the NCCAM: Complementary medicine is applied jointly with the conventional medicine such as the use of aromatherapy in reducing the patient's pain after undergoing a surgery while alternative medicine is applied as a substitute for conventional medicine such as the use of special diet to treat cancer instead of following the physician's recommendation to undergo surgery or chemotherapy.

Integrative medicine, on the other side, is a combined “ mainstream medical therapies and CAM therapies for which there is some high-quality scientific evidence of safety and effectiveness. ” (What is CAM? , 2007). II. How CAM Flourished in the United States? Due to beliefs by some millions of Americans that conventional medicine alone is not enough, CAM has gained its footing in the United States (U. S)

Aside from this reason, it was found out, through the survey conducted in 2002 by Advance Data From Vital and Health Statistics, that the growth in CAM usage among Americans are attributed to one or more of the following factors: marketing forces, on-line information availability, patients' desire to be actively involved with their medical and health decision making, and patients' general dissatisfaction with the conventional medical applications (Barnes, P. , E. Powell-Griner, K. McFann, and R. Nahin, 2004, p. 1) With these identified growth and popularity factors for CAM, the survey has identified major reasons for such usage.