

Is integrative medicine right for you?

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Integrative medicine centers are now part of many leading institutions across the United States, such as the University of Arizona, Duke, Scripps, Vanderbilt and the University of California, San Francisco. Board certification for practitioners from the American Board of Integrative Medicine was introduced in 2014. These advances have made it easier to find integrative doctors and medical centers.

Key Tenets of Integrative Medicine:

- Creating a partnership between patient and practitioner.
- Using conventional and alternative methods as needed, and less-invasive yet effective interventions when possible.
- Focusing on prevention and promoting good health as well as treating illnesses.
- Training practitioners to be models of health and healing.

(HealthDay)—Any approach that differs from conventional—or Western—medicine is typically considered complementary and alternative, or CAM.

But these practices have become much more mainstream, leading to growth in the [health](#) care approach called [integrative medicine](#), which draws on traditional and non-traditional systems tailored to each individual's needs.

The U.S. National Institutes of Health agency that reports on CAM therapies has even changed its name to the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, to better reflect this shift in philosophy. Getting familiar with integrative health will help you decide if it's the approach you want.

Integrative [medicine](#) focuses on your well-being and considers all aspects of your health: physical, emotional, mental, social, spiritual and environmental. It draws on whatever medical approaches—traditional or alternative—will serve you best.

Prevention is a hallmark of integrative care because it's easier, less expensive and better for people to avoid an [illness](#) rather than have to treat and manage one. Integrative medicine also recognizes that physical illnesses can affect you emotionally and vice versa, so all aspects of your well-being are addressed.

This, too, means a better outcome for you.

More information: To locate integrative health centers around the country, visit the [Academic Consortium for Integrative Medicine and Health](#).

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