

Wellness from Within: Complementary Approaches to Health and Healing

By Kevin Meddleton and Samantha Berg

“Wellness from Within” is a new weekly column exploring integrated approaches to health and healing. In the coming weeks, this column will offer insights from professionals in various healing modalities including holistic family medicine, acupuncture, physical therapy, yoga, chiropractic and nutrition.

Although each of the featured columnists will present unique perspectives and specialized approaches to wellness, they all share one conviction in common: patients who participate in the healing process and who commit to healthy life-style changes heal faster and suffer fewer relapses. The best return on investment in any therapy comes from work that happens outside the office. While an office visit is a catalyst for change, transformation happens in the patient.

Additionally, to experience the most benefits from a given therapy, the appropriate conditions for healing must be firmly in place. Restful sleep, nourishing foods, adequate water intake, appropriate exercise, rest, and a positive attitude all play an important role in healing.

Simply put, medicines, herbs, surgeries, exercises, adjustments, massage, dietary counseling and all other therapeutic interventions are designed to do one thing: help restore normal function to the body and mind and trigger the person’s innate capacity to heal. Without the basics of self care to support this work, the patient faces an uphill battle.

Unfortunately, a large percentage of people struggle to adopt meaningful lifestyle changes. Resolutions fail as pressing commitments diminish the priority of self-care. Fleeting convictions inspired by fear of illness rarely last. The result is a life propelled from one health crisis to the next.

Finding the conviction to make global changes is a journey that offers multiple rewards. Wellness is not the absence of disease; it’s a state of body and mind that opens doors to greater transformations and personal potential.

Keeping this in mind, future columns will also discuss preventative strategies to achieve radiant health. Chronic problems commonly announce themselves in the form of subtle symptoms and changes in the body’s structure and function. Often, the body sends multiple signals for a long time before full-blown pathology occurs; signals that go largely ignored in the context of a hectic and busy life.

The body is extremely adaptable and it will compensate as long as possible. But ultimately compensation compounds, aggravates or causes other problems. To restore the body to its normal efficiency, the underlying source of an imbalance must be addressed.

Prevention minded health care providers monitor and treat issues before they manifest as serious illness. It is far easier and less expensive to shift an imbalance before it becomes a health crisis.

Finally, another important objective of this column is to encourage people to ask questions. Understanding the basics of many different therapies can empower patients to choose an approach that uniquely meets their needs. Sometimes the best results are achieved by trying several types of therapies or a combination of therapies. Being an informed consumer and an inspired learner pays huge dividends.

Next week's featured columnists will be Anne Thomas and Gary Miller of Body in Balance Physical Therapy in Palmer. They will discuss healing approaches used in physical therapy to address conditions affecting body mechanics and movement.

You are invited to contact any of the featured columnists to learn more.

Featured Columnists:

Body In Balance Physical Therapy – 746-0722
Anne Thomas PT, OCS
Gary Miller PT, CSCS, CPed
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Alaska Center for Acupuncture – 745-8688 www.alaskaacupuncture.com
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