

Western medicine - to harm or to heal? [↑ Top](#)

The Hippocratic oath, the one all doctors are supposed to take when starting to practice, stipulates that the first and golden rule is to "do no harm".

Although this might seem to be a bit obvious, since doctors are supposed to be healers in the first place, there comes a time when you start to doubt the sincerity of certain medical practitioners.

When saying this, let us immediately state that we have the highest regard for truly professional doctors, and also see a normal allopathic doctor when need be, but this is not what this month's newsletter is about.

Also please note that we are in no way advocating that anybody should stop taking their normal medicine, or that people should no longer see their normal western doctors - nor are we indicating that alternative medicine should replace the more conventional ways of healing - all we are saying is that people should keep an open mind - that there is place for both these treatments to live in harmony.

The controversy regarding western medical practitioners (known as allopathic medical practitioners) and alternative healers is heating up, since more and more people are turning to more natural ways of healing for many reasons, and with allopathic medicine on the whole not wishing to acknowledge the benefits it may have.

People in the past only turned to alternative therapies when suffering from terminal illnesses, and where no hope was held for any recovery and normal conventional therapies failed.

This trend also seems to be changing with more and more people looking at alternative therapies at the start of an illness or problem, and also looking with greater interest at alternative ways to promote vital health in general.

There might be a couple of reasons for this:

- Firstly, some people have wonderful results with alternative medicine, and although some uninformed allopathic practitioners may scoff at this, the proof of the treatment still lies in the way a person reacts to it.
- Secondly, there is a cost implication, and with the exorbitant cost of certain allopathic treatments, alternative medicines are more financially accessible to many people. But this is not always the case, since there are also alternative practitioners that are solely practicing their craft (for lack of a better word) just for the sake of money.
- Thirdly, there seems to be far more humanity involved in alternative medicine, since most of the alternative practitioners take a personal interest in their patients, whereas allopathic practitioners try to keep their patients at a distance.

When we talk about alternative therapies, what do we really refer to?

This could refer to a variety of treatments, from the ancient Chinese herbal and acupuncture wisdom to the equally ancient Indian Ayurvedic way of dealing with illness and disease, to homeopathy, reflexology, aromatherapy, herbal compounds, light therapy, crystal therapy, and all other alternative healing methods.

Although some of these therapies might be too way out or too New Age for some people, it is interesting to note that some of the ancient medical wisdom has been around for thousands of years - long before we in the west even had an inkling of what medicine was all about.

That is why we find some allopathic western medical people so utterly conceited when they in all their infinite wisdom declare that there is no worth in some of the ancient remedies!

A medical treatment system scarcely a couple of hundred years old, are calling some of the most ancient ways of dealing with problems worthless - who is the ridiculous party?

It was wonderful to see in India, on my recent visit to that hugely interesting country, how the population accepts both forms of medicine - the ancient Ayurvedic system and the more contemporary western style of medicine.

We have found that truly professional and thorough allopathic medical people are never intimidated by other alternative remedies, and are willing to help their patients try them if they are safe enough to use. My personal allopathic doctor also practices acupuncture on his patients when it is called for, and when it is indicated as a way to help the patient.

Safety of treatment is also a sore point - there are both medical companies and herbal suppliers, which manufacture products that can be potentially dangerous when not used properly.

It must also be kept in mind that a wide variety of medical drugs that are in use today, can trace their roots back to herbal origin, although the drug manufacturers would sometimes like us to forget that.

The refusal of some medical doctors to accept other therapies, although not totally alien to the medical world, such as nutrition, is really astounding.

Years ago the world famous nutritional expert - Adelle Davis, found that the addition of niacin (vitamin B3) to the diet of troubled children yielded great results.

When our company donated niacin tablets to the children's ward at a state mental hospital, they were promptly returned with the explanation that the idea of helping with vitamin B3 was too alternative and that they would not even give it a try.

Even at a dosage that could do NO harm, and possibly have helped some children, the powers to be were not prepared to give it a try.

It is this pig-headedness of some medical people that we object to - yes we agree - there is a place for normal western medicine, but the flip side of the coin is that there is also a place for alternative medicine to promote health and to deal with problems.

In future newsletters we will dwell on various aspects of alternative medicine, and see how they work, and what beneficial effect they can have on your holistic health.

We will still, as usual, also cover nutrition, herbs, skin care - all the things to help "make living and aging a stunning experience."

If you have some time, please visit our herbal site at www.ageless.co.za and our nutritional site at www.anyvitamins.com.

This newsletter is not meant as a substitute for medical advice and cannot be used to diagnose or treat illnesses nor should it be seen to replace any medical advice - if you have a medical problem, please consult your health practitioner.