

Complementary Health Approaches – Q&A

- **Q: What can you tell us about aromatherapy?**

- A: Current studies suggest that aromatherapy is effective by sending chemical messages to the brain, including areas affecting mood and emotions. It may also have an effect on a variety of health conditions and have an impact on quality-of-life by reducing stress and anxiety. There are not many negative side effects.

- **Q: What is reflexology?**

- A: It is a science based on the principles that there are reflexes in the feet and hands that correspond to all organs, glands, and parts of the body. The goal is to encourage the release of blockages or congestion in and around the 7,000 nerve endings in the feet and hands. This stimulates circulation and improves nerve and blood supply.

- **Q: What is naturopathic medicine?**

- A: It is based on the belief that the body can heal itself. Naturopathic medicine attempts to improve health, prevent disease, and treat illness by promoting the use of organic foods and exercise; encouraging a healthy, balanced lifestyle; and applying concepts and treatments from other areas of complementary medicine. Today, a licensed naturopathic doctor attends a 4-year, graduate-level naturopathic medical school and studies the same basic sciences as a medical doctor. But the naturopathic doctor also studies alternative approaches to therapy, such as herbal medicine and acupuncture. Most traditional naturopathic physicians believe in natural therapies, such as nutritional and lifestyle counseling. They generally avoid prescribing medicines or performing surgery. A properly trained naturopathic physician works with other health professionals, referring people to other practitioners for diagnosis or treatment when appropriate.