

# What Is Holistic Medicine?

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### Principles of Holistic Medicine

Holistic medicine is also based on the belief that unconditional love and support is the most powerful healer and a person is ultimately responsible for their own health and well-being. Other principles of holistic medicine include the following:

- All people have innate healing powers.
- The patient is a person, not a disease.
- Healing takes a team approach involving the patient and doctor, and addresses all aspects of a person's life using a variety of [health care](#) practices.
- Treatment involves fixing the cause of the condition, not just alleviating the symptoms.

### Holistic Medicine: Types of Treatments

Holistic practitioners use a variety of treatment techniques to help their patients take responsibility for their own well-being and achieve optimal health. Depending on the practitioner's training, these may include:

- Patient education on lifestyle changes and self-care to promote wellness. This may include diet, exercise, [psychotherapy](#), relationship and spiritual counseling, and more
- Complementary and alternative therapies such as [acupuncture](#), [chiropractic](#) care, homeopathy, [massage therapy](#), naturopathy, and others
- Western medications and surgical procedures

## **Holistic Medicine: Where to Find a Holistic Provider**

Holistic providers may include medical doctors, doctors of osteopathy, naturopathic doctors, chiropractors, and homeopathic doctors. To find a holistic practitioner in your area, visit the American Holistic Medical Association web site. There you can use an online provider search to find a practitioner near you.

Here are some tips to keep in mind when choosing a holistic provider:

**Don't go to just anyone.** As with all professionals, there are those who are good at their jobs and those who are not as good. Before choosing a holistic medicine doctor, get a recommendation from someone you trust, or contact a credible health organization and ask for a recommendation.

**Do your homework.** When selecting a holistic doctor, find out as much as you can about that person's training, experience, specialty, and association with professional organizations and hospital affiliations. Are they board certified in holistic medicine by a credible medical board? Also, consider the doctor's treatment philosophy. Is it similar to your own views?

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**How do you feel?** Consider how comfortable you are with the provider. Do they make you feel at ease? Is the provider respectful of your concerns and beliefs? Remember, holistic medicine takes a team

approach, involving you and the provider, so make sure you feel comfortable and respected and that they are someone with whom you would like to work.

**Appointment time.** Choose a provider who will spend enough time with you so that they can gain a full understanding of your needs.

**Are the right questions being asked?** In order to understand you as a whole person and not just a disease, be prepared to answer lots of questions, including questions about your diet, [exercise](#), [sleep](#) habits, how you feel emotionally, your religious beliefs and practices, close relationships, and more.

**Treatment options.** When determining a treatment approach, does the wellness plan go beyond pills? Make sure the practitioner examines all lifestyle factors, along with medical factors that could be contributing to your illness.

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