



COMMUNITY MEDICAL FOUNDATION FOR PATIENT SAFETY PATIENT SAFETY CHECKLIST[®]

Choosing a Complementary and Alternative Medicine Practitioner

- Ask your primary care physician and pharmacist about the option and benefits of using CAM.
 - Discuss this option and benefits with your family and responsible caregiver.
 - Find a qualified and experienced CAM practitioner through:
 - Personal contacts, such as your doctor, family, co-workers and friends
 - Local hospitals, medical institutions or schools
 - Professional organizations such as:
 - National Library of Medicine's Directory of Health Organizations
<http://dirlin.nlm.nih.gov>
 - National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine
<http://www.nccaom.org/find-a-nccaom-certified-practitioner>
 - Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine
<http://integrativemedicine.arizona.edu/alumni.html>
 - American College of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine
www.acaom.edu
- Consider these factors before you choose a CAM practitioner:
 - Practitioner's education, training, competence and specialty
 - Practitioner's state and/or national board certification or registration
 - Updated information from credible sources, such as the National Center of Complementary and Alternative Medicine <http://nccam.nih.gov>, for the CAM treatment you are considering
 - Your health insurance coverage and co-payment for the CAM treatment
 - Acceptance of health insurance plan by the CAM practitioner
 - Location, safety and cleanliness of practitioner's clinic and treatment room
- On your first visit, take your important documents or a medical journal that contains your medical history and list of your current medicines.
- Discuss any concerns you might have about the appointment or CAM treatment with the practitioner.
- Ask your CAM practitioner questions:
 - What benefits of the CAM treatment should I expect and when?
 - Are there any risk or side effect that I might experience with the CAM treatment?
 - Will the CAM treatment affect my current medicines or regular, conventional treatments?
 - How long is my CAM treatment?
 - What kind of follow up should I expect with my CAM treatment?
 - What is the total cost for the CAM treatment?
- After your first appointment, determine the quality of your CAM treatment with the following factors:
 - Your comfort, satisfaction and trust with the practitioner and the CAM treatment and outcomes
 - Your impression of the clinic, treatment room, and staff
 - Answers to your questions and concerns
 - Your follow-up plan, if any, prescribed by the practitioner
- Get additional information about choosing a CAM practitioner from:
 - <http://nccam.nih.gov/health/decisions/practitioner.htm>
 - <http://nccam.nih.gov/health/howtofind.htm>