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HOLISTIC APPROACH TO PATIENT CARE IS GROWING

In the past year, integrative medicine patient visits at Abbott Northwestern Hospital have increased by 78 percent. That kind of annual growth rate would be impressive in any health care or business setting. But the impact here goes beyond numbers – it reflects our commitment to create a healing environment that serves the whole patient.

One year ago, the Institute for Health and Healing's integrative medicine staff provided an average of 200 patient visits per month. We are now providing an average of 900 visits per month with a 98 percent increase in physician referrals. So what's the draw? Quite simply, it is relationship-centered care that emphasizes the whole patient. It is about reflective listening, human touch, engaging in the patient's experience from their view and introducing therapies that stimulate the innate healing abilities.

In a recent letter, a man whose son was diagnosed with myeloma described the care his son required and how he coped with his fears. He wrote, "If it were not for the therapies and people who provided the therapies from integrative medicine, my son would not have been able to receive the medical care he required with such ease and bravery. We were thankful for the night nurse who provided healing touch and guided imagery which allowed him to relax enough to sleep."

Sometimes the most profound life transitions occur in that window of vulnerable health experiences. We have an opportunity to enter into this moment in the patient's life and perhaps be a catalyst in changing it forever.

Integrative medicine practitioners within the Institute for Health and Healing include nurse clinicians, massage therapists, a music therapist, reflexologists and an acupuncturist. Their roles are described below.

- ❖ Integrative medicine nurse clinician – teaches patients and staff about integrating healing into the medical care

provided, provides hands-on therapies and trains staff nurses in using healing therapies.

- ❖ Massage therapists – incorporate imagery, music, breathing/relaxation techniques and coaching with hands-on massage. Many massage therapists are former nurses, social workers or therapists who have expertise in both conventional and complementary care.
- ❖ Music therapist – assists staff in understanding the therapeutic use of music, develops music listening programs and provides music therapy to patients and their families.
- ❖ Reflexologists – integrate techniques similar to the massage therapist but focus on stimulating the energetic reflexes of the feet and hands.
- ❖ Acupuncturist – practices acupuncture and Chinese medicine. As a pharmacist, he has a unique understanding of pharmaceuticals, herbal therapy and acupuncture.



Neither conventional medicine or complementary care can serve all the needs of the individual's health and healing. The growth of integrative medicine services in the past year is proof of the basic need for health care to be holistic and evidence-based. It is through the patient experience that physicians and nurses are seeing the value and impact that this work has in successful patient outcomes. The impact has also affected the patient care environment. As one nurse recently stated, "When my patients receive healing therapies, their pain and anxiety is reduced which allows me to work more calmly."

As health care professionals at the bedside become more exposed to their patients' experiences with integrative medicine practices, they begin to see that there is more to this work than an intervention.

For more information, contact Lori Knutson RN, HNC, director, Institute for Health and Healing, 612-863-6123 or lori.knutson@allina.com.



VITAMIN E IN THE NEWS

A November 2004 pre-publication of an *Annals of Internal Medicine* meta-analysis has shed a controversial light on the long-established benefit of vitamin E.

Researchers at Johns Hopkins University (*Annals of Internal Medicine*, January 4, 2005, Volume 142, Issue 1) conducted a meta-analysis, which is a statistical technique of combining the results of a number of previously published studies. This analysis suggests that high-dose vitamin E supplementation may increase all-cause mortality. But many researchers and scholars believe this conclusion is overstated. It is apparent that there are a number of flaws in the study.

Study methods in question

A meta-analysis is not a clinical trial. A meta-analysis is intended to ask questions and provide clarification rather than provide answers. The researchers analyzed 19 clinical trials involving vitamin E. In these studies, originally published from 1994-2004, vitamin E was given for a variety of purposes, such as reducing the risk or delaying the progression of disease. Some studies found that vitamin E was beneficial for these purposes. The association of vitamin E and overall death is highly speculative because the protocol for each study varied. For instance, different studies used different doses and forms of vitamin E.

Contradictory results

Secondly, researchers concluded, "high dose (greater than 400 IU) vitamin E supplements may increase all-cause mortality and should be avoided." However, the meta-analysis results also included a contrary statement: "The average death risk in the control groups was 10 per 10,000 persons.

Overall, vitamin E supplementation did not affect all-cause mortality." All-cause mortality is the number of people who died from any cause, regardless of whether it had anything to do with the study's purpose. In any long-term study, a certain number of people will die. The patients in these studies were elderly and sick enough that it is unlikely that vitamin E contributed to their deaths. Additionally, the researchers themselves stated that because "the trials were often small and performed in patients with chronic disease, the generalizability of the findings in healthy adults is uncertain."

A press release issued by the Council for Responsible Nutrition says "this meta-analysis inappropriately tries to draw conclusions for the whole population based on a combination of studies of people who were already at grave risk with existing diseases..."

The Council also said "even though the researchers noted limitations in their meta-analysis, they continue to make sweeping generalizations about the use of vitamin E and all-cause mortality for the whole population."

Other studies show vitamin E efficacy

Finally, the meta-analysis looked at only 19 of the thousands of published papers investigating the efficacy and safety of vitamin E. For example, a January 2004 study, also conducted by the Bloomberg School of Public Health at Johns Hopkins University and published in the *Archives of Neurology*, showed that 400 IU of vitamin E, taken with 500 mg of vitamin C, reduced the prevalence and incidence of Alzheimer's disease significantly. Other studies focusing

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THE ART OF HEALING



The Art of Healing is an art show on display at the Institute for Health and Healing's Outpatient Center. Each month a local artist is invited to display her or his work at the Institute. The art portrays visions of health, healing and spirit.

Connie Halpern is the featured artist for January. Halpern's current work was inspired during a trip to California. She sketched and photographed a type of tree she had never seen before and then created a series of oil paintings. Smooth, strong forms glide through her work, giving the viewer the feeling of swimming through a calm sea.

In February, Sarah Schaleger's beautiful multi-media collages will be displayed. Schaleger's artwork explores forms found in nature and the healing aspects of the creative process. In describing her work, she says, "my inner experience becomes an outside gift that I can share with you."

To see these exhibits, visit the Outpatient Center weekdays, 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m. If you would like to take a class in creativity and healing, or are interested in exhibiting your artwork, call 612-863-3333.





WASIE CORNER

News from the Wasie Fitness Center

WINTER EXERCISE: DON'T LET THE COLD KEEP YOU INDOORS

Let this be the year that you head outside to exercise during the winter months. Even in Minnesota, many people find that they still enjoy exercise outdoors. In this state, when winter seems to be our longest season, we need to keep moving any way we can.

Here are some ideas to help keep things fun this winter:

- ❖ cross-country skiing (it's one of the best cardiovascular exercises)
- ❖ downhill skiing
- ❖ snowshoeing
- ❖ sit skiing
- ❖ walking or running outdoors
- ❖ broomball
- ❖ ice skating
- ❖ sledge hockey
- ❖ curling
- ❖ wheelchair basketball.

It is important to dress appropriately and drink enough fluids during winter exercise. Here are some suggestions.

Clothing. What you wear during outdoor exercise means the difference between comfort and misery. Layers are key. Select your clothing based on weather conditions and on how strenuously you plan to exercise.

- ❖ **First layer.** The most important layer is the one next to your skin. While cotton may feel comfortable next to your skin, it absorbs moisture rapidly and dries very slowly. Wet clothing robs heat from the body 20 times

faster than dry clothing. You get clammy and chilled to the bone. Most modern base layers today are made from polyester and disperse moisture from the inner fiber to the exterior surface.

- ❖ **Second layer.** When the temperature dips below 40 degrees, add a second layer. An outer shell on the upper body will protect you from the cold, wind and snow yet still allow perspiration to evaporate. One layer on the legs should be fine, though it may need to be heavier as it gets colder.
- ❖ **Third layer.** Even the best two-layer system won't keep you warm when the temperature drops below zero. That's when you need a third layer. A thermal layer is worn between the base layer and the outer shell. This layer continues the moisture-transfer process but traps air to keep your body's natural heat from escaping.

Hat. Although clothing, hats deserve a separate category. Always wear a hat during winter exercise. During prolonged outdoor activity, as much as 25 percent of your body's heat escapes from your head.

Hydration. Often people do not drink enough fluids during winter exercise because they don't feel as hot. Your body still needs to replace the fluid it loses. Drink even if you are not thirsty as thirst is a poor indicator of how much fluid you need to replace.



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on vitamin E are on Oregon State's Linus Pauling Institute Web site: <http://lpi.oregonstate.edu/>

The majority of scientific and clinical research shows well-established benefits of vitamin E. The Institute of Medicine, a scientific advisory board, and the National Institutes of Health have set an upper limit of 1,500 IU per day for vitamin E as safe and effective (common

dosage being 400 IU). Until specific clinical trials show harm or an increased risk of overall death, we can feel confident in using vitamin E and take the meta-analysis as it is intended: as academic analysis, not "scientific proof" on which recommendations are based.

For more information, contact Carolyn Denton, MA, LN, 612-863-6259 or carolyn.denton@allina.com.





*January/February
2005*

INSTITUTE FOR HEALTH AND HEALING: **MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

Registration is required for all classes unless otherwise noted. To register, or for more information, call 612-863-3333.

Special Presentation

Full Dimensional Health: 4 Weeks to Vitality and Wellness™ – Series 1

- ❖ Mondays in January, starting Jan. 10 and Wednesdays in February, starting Feb. 2, 7-9 p.m.
- ❖ \$128 (includes materials)

Yoga for Beginners

- ❖ Thursdays, 5-6:15 p.m.
- ❖ Series start Jan. 6, Feb. 17 and Mar. 31
- ❖ \$59

Yoga for Healing and Recovery

- ❖ Thursdays, 9:30-10:45 a.m.
- ❖ Series start Feb. 17 and Mar. 31
- ❖ \$59

'Fun'-damentals of Exercise

- ❖ Thursday, Jan. 6, Noon-1 p.m.
- ❖ No charge

Mind/Body/Spirit Skills Training

- ❖ Six Tuesdays, starting Jan. 11, 6-7:30 p.m.
- ❖ \$55

Diets: Myths and Realities

- ❖ Wednesday, Jan. 12, 7-8 p.m.
- ❖ No charge

Boosting Your Immune System with Intregative Therapies

- ❖ Thursday, Jan. 20, 6:30-8 p.m.
- ❖ No charge

Couples Massage

- ❖ Wednesday, Jan. 26, 6:30-8:30 p.m.
- ❖ \$20 per couple

Introduction to Aromatherapy

- ❖ Thursday, Feb. 3, 6:30-8 p.m.
- ❖ \$20

Drawing from the Heart

- ❖ Mondays in February, starting Feb. 7, 7-9 p.m.
- ❖ \$120 (includes materials)

The Basics of Meditation

- ❖ Thursday, Feb. 10, 6:30-8 p.m.
- ❖ \$20

Cardiovascular Health with Herbs and Supplements

- ❖ Thursday, Feb. 17, 6:30-8 p.m.
- ❖ No charge

Heart Health and Nutrition: Cholesterol and Beyond

- ❖ Tuesday, Feb. 22, 6:30-7:30 p.m.
- ❖ No charge

For more details on upcoming classes and events, visit www.abbottnorthwestern.com, find "Institute for Health and Healing" and click on "Classes and Events."