
CHOOSE: Finding an Integrative Healthcare Provider

When seeking an integrative healthcare provider, know you're in good company. According to the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, 36% of adults in America are using some form of integrative medicine, or IM.



Some providers are more informed and/or more comfortable exploring and recommending integrative therapies than others. If your healthcare philosophy includes IM, consider these tips as you search for a practitioner:

- **Ask a healthcare professional you trust and who shares or respects your integrative health philosophy whether s/he can recommend someone or make a referral.** Many providers rely on word of mouth, so first-person accounts are helpful.
- **Contact a nearby hospital or a medical school** and ask if they maintain a list of area "integrative medicine" practitioners. Some regional medical centers may even have integrative medicine departments or practitioners.
- **Contact a related professional organization.** Whether it's the American Academy of Family Practice, the American Chiropractic Association, the Society of General Internal Medicine, the American Academy on Physician and Patient or the American Academy of Medical Acupuncture, professional organizations can often provide trustworthy referrals. They may also provide information training, licensing, and certification in your state. Professional organizations can be located by searching the Internet or directories in libraries (ask your librarian).

Once you have selected a potential practitioner, it is your right and responsibility to:

- Request information about his or her education, training, and professional history.
- Request referrals from other patients (note: practitioners cannot release such patient names to you).
- Request proof of licensure, if applicable.
- Interview him or her to establish if your communication styles and healthcare philosophies are compatible.

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