

## Alternative Medicine – Good or Bad?



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Not a few prestigious hospitals in the U.S. have embraced the concept of alternative medicine, turning this method of treatment into a lucrative business. This trend has created friction within some of these hospitals as many physicians believe it undermines the credibility of the organisations, according to a report from STAT.

Chinese herbal therapies, acupuncture, homeopathy and reiki are some of the products being offered by these hospitals, even though the safety and effectiveness of these alternative treatments are not supported by scientific evidence. The Cleveland Clinic, Johns Hopkins, Yale and Duke University are among those who have a hand in the \$37-billion-a-year business.

Several of the hospitals highlighted in the STAT report declined to talk to the publication about why they have embraced unproven therapies. However, critics have said that patients are being “snookered” and physicians who promote these therapies forfeit claims that they belong to a science-based profession.

Nonetheless, there are those who say that alternative therapies have helped patients and modern medicine doesn't offer a cure for everyone. Linda Lee, MD, who runs the Johns Hopkins Integrative Medicine and Digestive Center, explained that the therapies offered are meant to complement, not supplement, conventional treatment.

Dr. Novella is worried that patients would think these unconventional treatments are legitimate as these are promoted by prestigious institutions. The problem only worsens when patients find the treatments being sold online by the institution. Thomas Jefferson University Hospital, for instance, sells homeopathic bee venom to relieve symptoms of arthritis.

Daniel Monti, MD, director of the hospital's integrative health centre, admits the evidence behind some of these treatments is largely anecdotal but said the hospital only offers the treatment when there are few other options.

Source: [Fierce Healthcare](#)  
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