



IEHP UM Subcommittee Approved Authorization Guideline			
Guideline	Complementary and Alternative Medicine or Holistic Therapies	Guideline #	UM OTH 01
		Original Effective Date	2/13/2013
Section	Other	Revision Date	8/17/23

COVERAGE POLICY

Policy:

IEHP does not cover the following complementary or alternative medicine (CAM) consults or follow up visits for diagnostic testing methods, systems, therapies, or treatments because each is considered experimental and investigational. Currently, there is inadequate evidence in the peer-reviewed published medical literature of their effectiveness.

CAM or holistic therapies not covered because of investigational status: (There are many other services not listed that fall into the category of CAM or Holistic therapies. This is not an exhaustive list.)

Diagnostic testing methods	Whole medical systems	Biologically-based practices	Energy medicine	Manipulative and body-based methods
Applied Kinesiology	Homeopathy	Aromatherapy	Biofield Therapeutics	Colonic Irrigation, Colonic Lavage, Colonic Cleansing
Live Blood Cell Analysis	Macrobiotics	Megavitamin Therapy	Crystal Healing	Craniosacral Therapy
Chemical Hair Analysis	Naturopathy	Ozone Therapy	Cupping	Ear Candling
Micronutrient Panel Testing	Polarity Therapy	Cell Therapy Or Immunoaugmentive Therapy	Magnet Therapy	Inversion Therapy
Antioxidant Function Testing (E.G., Spectrox™)	Ayurveda	Hydrogen Peroxide, Intravenous	Meridian Therapy	Neural Therapy
Salivary Hormone Panels	Naprapathy	Hydrazine Sulfate	Therapeutic Touch	Visceral Massage

COVERAGE LIMITATIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

N/A

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- **Applied Kinesiology (AK):** AK is a form of diagnostic testing that uses muscle testing as a functional neurological evaluation.
- **Chemical Hair Analysis:** Chemical hair analysis is a test in which a person's hair is analyzed for mineral content.
- **Salivary Hormone Panels:** Salivary testing for various hormones in the form of hormone panels (i.e., testing several different hormone levels in one test at the same time) has been proposed for numerous indications including screening and monitoring of menopause, aging and various other conditions.
- **Ayurveda:** Ayurveda provides an integrated approach to preventing and treating illness through lifestyle, based upon the premise that all disease begins with an imbalance or stress in the individual's consciousness. Lifestyle interventions are a major Ayurvedic preventive and therapeutic approach and include diet and herbal remedies.
- **Macrobiotics:** Macrobiotics is the art and science of health and longevity through the study and understanding of the relation and interactions between oneself, foods, lifestyles and the environment.
- **Naprapathy:** Naprapathy or naprapathic medicine is a system that employs manual medicine (e.g., spinal manipulation), nutritional counseling and therapeutic modalities (e.g., heat, cold, ultrasound, and electrical stimulation) for the treatment of pain caused by connective tissue disorders.
- **Naturopathy:** Naturopathy is a system of healing that views disease as a manifestation of alterations in the processes by which the body naturally heals itself. It emphasizes health restoration as well as, disease treatment. The core modalities utilized include diet modification, nutritional supplements, herbal medicine, acupuncture, Chinese medicine, hydrotherapy, massage, joint manipulation, and lifestyle counseling.

CLINICAL/REGULATORY RESOURCE

Medicare may have Local Coverage Determinations (LCD) or National Coverage Determinations (NCD) which supersede this guideline.

Apollo Managed Care CAM guidelines also consider alternative medicine interventions experimental and investigational because there is inadequate evidence in peer-reviewed published medical literature of the effectiveness of these interventions. Apollo suggests that referrals be limited to licensed and/or credentialed providers. Unlicensed providers usually are not able to obtain malpractice insurance; training and skills are usually unknowns, increasing liability if there should be an adverse event following a referral.

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (2017) established a policy regarding the provision of complementary and integrative health (CIH) approaches. This directive establishes the responsibilities of Veterans Health Administration when offering CIH approaches and integrating them with conventional care.

American Academy of Pediatrics policy on Pediatric Integrative Medicine concluded that pediatricians and primary care providers are encouraged to advise and counsel about relevant, safe, effective, and age-appropriate health services and therapies regardless of whether they are considered conventional or complementary therapies. Pediatricians should regularly inquire about all therapies the patient is using. CAM therapies used to treat autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) have been inadequately evaluated because of “methodologic flaws, insufficient numbers of patients or lack of replication” and cannot be recommended.

The National Cancer Institute (NCI) stated that “cancer patients using or considering complementary or alternative therapy should discuss this decision with their doctor or nurse, as they would any therapeutic approach. Some complementary and alternative therapies may interfere with standard treatment or may be harmful when used with conventional treatment. It is also a good idea to become informed about the therapy, including whether the results of scientific studies support the claims that are made for it.”

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) is a broad domain of resources that encompasses health systems, modalities, and practices and their accompanying theories and beliefs, other than those intrinsic to the dominant health system of a particular society or culture in a given historical period. CAM includes such resources perceived by their users as associated with positive health outcomes. Boundaries within CAM and between the CAM domain and the domain of the dominant system are not always sharp or fixed.

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) is a term that refers to health care approaches with a history of use or origins outside of mainstream medicine. Complementary medicine refers to the use of a non-mainstream approach together with conventional medicine. Alternative medicine refers to the use of non-mainstream approach in place of conventional medicine.

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) is also called unconventional, nonconventional, or nontraditional healthcare and includes a group of diverse medical and healthcare systems, practices and products that are not typically considered to be part of traditional healthcare in the United States.

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