

Complementary MEDICINE:

Keeping women's health in balance

By Lesa Knollenberg

A friend of mine* is a fan of all things holistic. She and her husband tried to get pregnant for years with no luck. They tried conventional fertility treatments, and then my friend met Kali. Kali was a student of intuitive massage and offered to treat my friend, enlisting the concepts of positive imagery and energy sources. She concentrated on my friend's uterus and fallopian tubes and within two months my friend was pregnant.

Another friend of mine* struggled with back pain from the rigors of life and a curved spine, but thanks to continued chiropractic care, is now completely pain-free.

With so many friends who are fans of complementary medicine, I set out to learn more.

The first thing I learned was that, as opposed to alternative medicine, the term "complementary medicine" refers to treatments intended to assist traditional medical care. A cancer patient undergoing chemotherapy might seek out an acupuncturist, for example, to help with nausea that accompanies traditional chemotherapy.

As we age and learn the art of "maintenance" with our bodies, the search for complementary care can be empowering. Becoming aware of a pain or a feeling that "something's not quite right" can lead us to research possible options. Complementary medicine is about well-being.

According to the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, complementary medicine is comprised of four primary categories:

- **Biologically based practices** involve supplementing a person's normal diet with additional nutrients, herbs, extracts and certain foods.
- **Manipulative and body-based therapies** focus on the body's various systems and structures. Chiropractors and massage therapists fall into this category.
- **Mind-body interventions** use the connection between a person's mind, body and spirit for total well being. Mind-body techniques include meditation, yoga and biofeedback.
- **Energy therapies** are meant to restore disturbances in the body's natural energy. Energy therapies include such practices as Qi gong and Reiki.

Dane County is home to a plethora of complementary care dynamos. **Cheri Haines**, a nationally certified Asian Bodywork Therapist through the NCCAOM (National Certification Commission for Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine) and Wisconsin's first Jin Shin Do® Bodymind Acupressurist™, sees great results with

acupressure, especially for women.

"Acupressure means finger pressure," Haines explains. "The NIH (National Institute for Health) has acknowledged that stimulation of acupoints increases the body's production of endorphins, our body's natural pain reliever. Acupressure works very well for most pain conditions. Acupressure points also release and relax muscle tension, which allows this form of bodywork to be deeply relaxing and helps to reduce stresses that we tend to hold in our bodies."

Like other types of holistic care, acupressure helps balance energy in our bodies. "Acupoints are areas where qi or energy comes closest to the surface of the body to be accessed. Imbalances of qi can cause many conditions, some chronic, which acupressure can be very useful for treating," Haines continues. For women, this can include hormonal imbalances, painful periods and PMS.

Chiropractic care has long been a proponent of combining conventional and complementary medical practices. **Dr. Laura J.**



Cheri Haines
Asian Bodywork
Therapist

Boyle, D.C., a chiropractor with **Luedtke-Storm-Mackey Chiropractic Clinic, S.C.**, explains, "Chiropractic works with traditional medicine to help patients in many ways. Chiropractors and medical doctors often work as a team to assess and treat a given condition, and we refer patients back and forth regularly, depending upon the condition. Chiropractic works on restoring mobility, reducing pain and increasing the quality of daily living. This approach integrates well with traditional medicine and has proven very beneficial."



Dr. Laura J. Boyle
LSM Chiropractic
Clinic, S.C.



Dr. Sara M. Knobloc
LSM Chiropractic
Clinic, S.C.

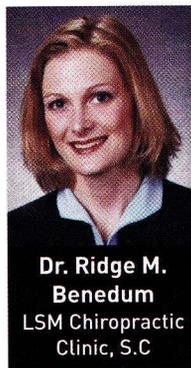
Her colleague, **Dr. Sara M. Knobloc**, agrees. "Women have several common complaints that respond well to chiropractic care.

Proper spinal alignment can alleviate the pain that results from carrying heavy purses and children, not to mention pregnancy itself. Women with low back pain commonly associated with the menstrual cycle can also benefit from chiropractic care."

Although our days are already full, balancing our body's needs is especially important for women. "Chiropractic adjustments can help reduce the severity and frequency of headaches and/or migraines that often plague busy women," says **Dr. Ridge M. Benedum D.C.**, also with LSM Chiropractic Clinic.

Throughout my research on complementary medicine, one tenet appeared repeatedly: Complementary medicine is about balance. In fact, the University of Wisconsin's cancer center now provides a program that integrates conventional and complementary medicine. This approach explores all appropriate therapies, with a focus on the person as a balanced whole.

"I help people walk



Dr. Ridge M. Benedum
LSM Chiropractic
Clinic, S.C.

through their fear and anxiety to enable them to make the best decisions possible," says **Dr. Lucille Marchand**, clinical director of Integrative Oncology Services at the **University of Wisconsin Paul P. Carbone Comprehensive Cancer Center**. She, like other proponents of complementary medicine, share this belief: "It's important to look at the person, not the disease. I help people achieve their highest level of well-being."

That's something to believe in. I'm going to tell all my friends.

**Okay, it's me.*



Lesa Knollenberg is a local freelance writer who is looking forward to the day when traditional and conventional medical facilities combine to co-exist, co-operate and co-insure.



Dr. Lucille Marchand
UW Paul P. Carbone
Comprehensive
Cancer Center



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