

MEET Kim Ericson

*Have you ever heard of
integrative medicine?*

Maybe you've heard of complementary or alternative medicine. These are all very closely related. Essentially, alternative medicine is known as integrative medicine when used alongside modern medical treatment received from medical doctors, nurses, and other healthcare professionals.

Some examples of alternative medicine include acupuncture, animal-assisted therapy, aromatherapy, music therapy, massage therapy, meditation, and dietary supplements. You may have even used a form of this medicine without realizing what it was called!

Integrative medicine can help people with a chronic illness, pain, chronic fatigue, and many other conditions by helping to manage symptoms, prevent further harm, and improve quality of life. The experiences and results of using integrative medicine can be different for everyone. In this issue, Kim Ericson, an HR Advisor/Executive Assistant with 19 years of experience at Cosma Tooling & Automation Group (Cosma International), shares her experience with integrative medicine.

Kim's interest with integrative medicine began in 1993 after she injured her back in a car accident: "I was advised by my doctor at the time that I would not be able to lift weight over 5 pounds for the remainder of my life due to this injury. After months of prescription pain medications and dealing with chronic migraines, I decided to investigate holistic therapies as I became addicted to the pain medications. I began sessions with a holistic physiotherapist, who prescribed back and overall body strengthening exercises. Even though the therapy was painful at the beginning, it strengthened the muscles around the injury and lower body. After 4 months of therapy and diligent strength training, I no longer required the prescription medications. I then began aromatherapy for the chronic migraines.

The migraines are still present, but the essential oils have lessened the frequency by 75%."

For Kim, integrative medicine has been "100% life-changing in a positive way... it encompasses the overall health of the entire person including all aspects, such as physical, mental, spiritual and emotional along with overall lifestyle and environment."

Throughout the years, it has given her more energy, physical strength, mental clarity, and vitality.

She has found the experience so positive and self-fulfilling that she wanted to share her knowledge and experience by becoming a Certified Energy Medicine Practitioner / Emotional Freedom Technique, a Certified Nutritional Practitioner, and an Essential Oils Distributor. She is currently in the process of becoming a Certified Neuro Linguistic Practitioner, a Certified Life Coach, and is taking a course on Hypnosis.

Kim's results with integrative medicine have been "immediate, gentle, and non-invasive" and she hasn't taken a prescription pain medication for either of her car accident injuries since 1994.

KIM ERICSON

HR Advisor/Executive Assistant,
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Did you know:

OIL OF OREGANO— CAN IT HELP YOU FIGHT YOUR NEXT COLD?

Oregano oil is a popular herbal remedy that may help reduce cold and flu symptoms.

It is well-known for its antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and antiviral properties. That being said, there is little research looking at the effect of oregano oil on the common cold in humans. One study conducted in 2011 found that those using a throat spray including oregano oil, eucalyptus, peppermint, and rosemary had reduced symptoms of sore throat and coughing 20 minutes after use, though it did not change the duration of the cold compared to those not using the throat spray. More research is needed, although it does not hurt to try a natural remedy!

Remember to always speak to your health care provider before starting a new supplement or medication.



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Integrative/Complementary MEDICINE

Complementary medicine. Alternative medicine. Naturopathy. Holistic health. Wellness. Ever wonder what these terms mean and how they are all connected? This article aims to navigate through these confusing topics and how they relate to traditional modern medicine.

Modern medicine, also known as conventional or mainstream medicine, refers to the treatment provided by a medical doctor. Unconventional or alternative medicine, on the other hand, refers to practices that do not use standard medical care, such as yoga, meditation, acupuncture, chiropractic, etc. It also includes supplementation of products, such as herbs, probiotics, vitamins, and minerals. The term complementary or integrative medicine is used to describe when alternative medicine and modern medicine are used together to create a more holistic approach to treatment.

Alternative therapies are constantly changing and the validity of many of these approaches are still being studied. Though many of these therapies are generally considered safe, it is always recommended to consult your doctor before adopting any of these approaches, particularly as some may negatively interact with mainstream medicine, such as certain herbal supplements.

MIND-BODY APPROACHES

Mind-body therapeutic approaches include various therapies, such as chiropractic, acupuncture and massage therapy, as well as practices like tai chi, meditation, yoga and even hypnotherapies. While not all of these practices have sufficient scientific research to prove their effectiveness, many of them are considered beneficial, and as a result continue to increase in popularity.

It has become more common for doctors to include mind-body therapies in treatment plans to help support the healing for certain conditions and injuries. Mind-body approaches are also a popular preventative strategy for many people to help reduce their risk of disease and/or injury. It is important to always consult a doctor before participating in any of these therapies to ensure they are safe.

SUPPLEMENTATION

Dietary supplementation may include vitamins, minerals, herbs, amino acids, and enzymes. While not all supplements are scientifically proven to be effective, many people consider them to have a variety of beneficial properties, such as increasing nutrient supply, boosting the immune system, improving digestive health, nausea relief, and preventing illnesses and diseases. Although most supplements are considered safe, when paired with some prescription medication, there is a possibility of negative side effects. As a result, always consult your doctor or pharmacist before starting any type of supplementation.

NATUROPATHY

Naturopathy is the use of natural remedies to improve the body's ability to heal itself. Naturopathic doctors use a variety of treatment and preventative approaches, including herbal therapy, supplementation, nutrition, acupuncture and counselling. Naturopathic doctors focus on a holistic approach to improve the wellbeing of the mind, body and spirit. Refer to your benefits package to learn if Naturopathy is covered.

DID YOU know?

You can make your own natural body scrub with just a few simple ingredients!

STEP ONE



COMBINE 1 CUP OF COCONUT OIL WITH 2 CUPS OF GRANULATED SUGAR

and mix until you have a grainy paste.

STEP TWO



ADD APPROXIMATELY 40 DROPS OF YOUR FAVOURITE ESSENTIAL OIL. (PEPPERMINT, LAVENDER OR CHAMOMILE ARE GREAT CHOICES!)

Scoop the paste in a jar for easy storage, and label!



KEEP THIS SCRUB FOR YOURSELF

or

Gift it for the holidays!

ALL ABOUT

ACUPUNCTURE

Acupuncture is a form of complementary medicine that has been practiced for over 2000 years and is considered an important part of Traditional Chinese Medicine.

Over the last few decades, acupuncture has started to become integrated and adopted into conventional medicine. Acupuncture is a type of alternative therapy that can be used alone as a therapy or integrated with other complementary therapy or treatment to facilitate healing.

Acupuncture involves the insertion of thin, metallic needles into the skin to stimulate specific points on the body, called "acupoints," to serve a therapeutic purpose. This is based on the theory of Traditional Chinese Medicine that pain and illness are a result of imbalances of Yin and Yang within our bodies. These imbalances cause disruptions in the flow of energy in our body, known as Qi.

The energy flow is said to be accessed by the acupoints on the body by stimulation from acupuncture needles.

These points, once stimulated, re-establish a balanced flow of energy and subsequently eliminate pain and illness.

Contrary to this theory, conventional medicine embraces acupuncture with a perspective that the acupressure points on the body are where nerves, muscles and connective tissue can be stimulated. The stimulation may trigger an endogenous (inside the body) release of the body's natural painkillers and provoke an immune system response to relieve pain and various illnesses. Despite ongoing research into various theories on acupuncture, it remains a largely unknown area of interest and the physiological mechanism of how acupuncture works in the body is still not completely understood.

Evidence shows that acupuncture can be effective for relieving and managing pain related to osteoarthritis, migraines and headaches as well as disorders of the neck, back, and shoulders.

It may also help to relieve nausea for individuals undergoing chemotherapy. There are some research studies suggesting that acupuncture may facilitate smoking cessation by helping to suppress nicotine cravings, however research is still ongoing.

When Acupuncture is performed by a trained practitioner, it is considered a safe form of complementary therapy. The acupuncture needles are thoroughly sterilized before they are inserted smoothly through the skin without causing any damage. This therapy is generally painless, though infrequent side effects have been reported such as bruising and localized rash.

Ongoing research continues into the efficacy of acupuncture and its application in medicine. But if you think acupuncture is something that you may benefit from, always remember to refer to a professional to ensure you are getting adequate and safe therapy for you and your body!

CHEMICALS & TOXINS

Common Chemicals

Chemicals are everywhere. It is impossible to avoid toxins in everyday life, but it is possible to reduce the amount of exposure! As in most situations, knowledge is power; the more you know about chemicals, the easier it is to avoid them and reduce the chance of health risks.

Surprisingly, many of the chemicals that you come in contact with on a daily basis are found right in your home!

For example, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) make up many of the toxins that are in products and materials in your home such as paint, cleaning supplies, printers, air fresheners and dry-cleaned clothing to name a few. Common examples of VOCs are toluene, xylenes, benzene, and formaldehyde, which may cause adverse effects such as irritations, headaches, nausea, damage to the liver, and cancer.

Harmful chemicals are also used to preserve many cosmetic and beauty products. Beauty products such as shampoos, moisturizers, shaving creams, cleansing gels,

and personal lubricants all contain harmful chemicals, which are usually unidentified on labels as they are disguised by the term “fragrance”. Many of the common chemicals that are in cosmetics include parabens, petroleum, sodium laureth sulfate (SLS), and triclosan. These chemicals can cause many health risks such as cancer, reproductive issues, birth defects and learning disabilities.

Additional chemicals include bisphenol A (BPA), phthalates, lead, mercury, mineral oil, and many more that are not listed. Although it is hard to avoid all chemicals, there are ways to reduce the amount of exposure to them!

REDUCING EXPOSURE

PROTECT YOURSELF FROM HOUSEHOLD CLEANERS

Swap household cleaners for natural cleaning products. White vinegar can be used to cut grease, remove mildew, and eliminate odours and some stains. Lemon juice can be used to eliminate odours and some stains and disinfect kitchen surfaces. Baking soda can be used to eliminate tough stains and eliminate odour. Open windows when cleaning and using chemical products.

EXERCISE

Exercise is a great way to rid toxins from our body through breathing and sweating.

USE NATURAL COSMETIC AND BEAUTY PRODUCTS

Try using natural skincare ingredients such as aloe, beeswax, honey, shea butter, and oils. Avoid sunscreens that have chemicals containing oxybenzone, benzophenone, and octyl-methoxycinnamate. Instead, use a sunscreen that contains zinc, titanium, avobenzone, or natural products such as oils. There are a few companies that have “natural” product lines such as Bare Organics and Burt’s Bees.

EDUCATE YOURSELF

The more you know, the better you will be at protecting yourself from harmful chemicals.

READ LABELS

Reading labels on products is an excellent way to know what chemicals and substances are used.

AVOID AIR FRESHENERS

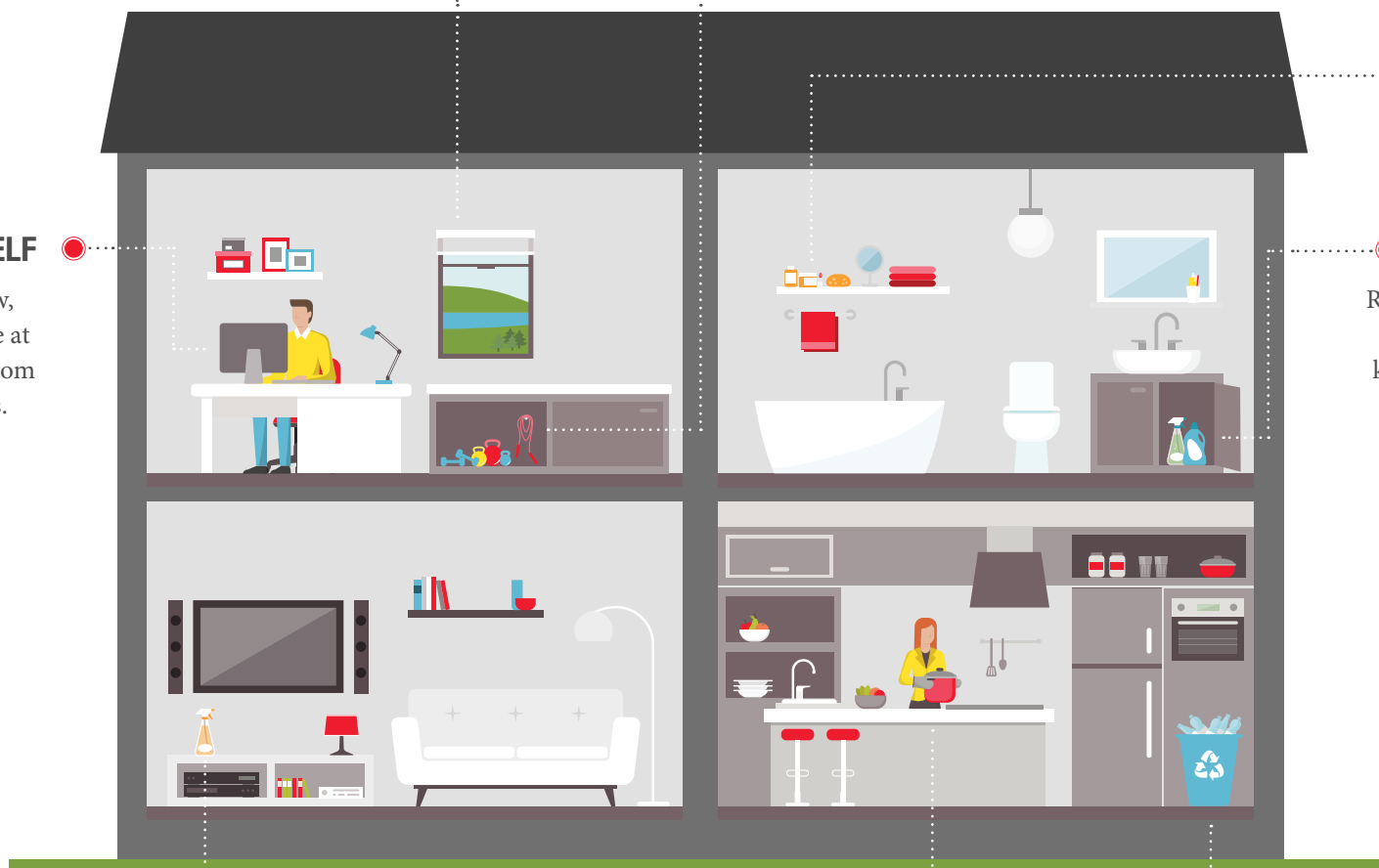
Try using essential oils instead.

EAT WELL

Eating whole foods such as beets and carrots help facilitate your body to rid toxins.

REDUCE PLASTIC USE

Try swapping out plastic for glass to avoid BPAs and phthalates.



TIP:

Looking to try something new this winter?

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TAI CHI MIGHT BE THE ANSWER!

Tai chi is a form of exercise that began as an ancient Chinese Tradition. It involves a series of slow movements accompanied by a strong focus and deep breathing. Tai chi is known to have amazing effects on the mind and body. It helps to improve body awareness, which can also help to reduce injury!



GINGER Snaps

Bake with herbs this winter season to make these delicious ginger snap cookies that are sure to be a hit!

INGREDIENTS

- 2 CUPS all-purpose flour
- ½ TSP baking soda
- ¼ TSP salt
- 1 TSP cinnamon
- ½ TSP ground cloves
- ¾ CUP butter, room temperature
- ¾ CUP white sugar
- ¼ CUP brown sugar
- ¼ CUP molasses
- 1 egg
- 2 TSP fresh ginger, grated
- ½ CUP white sugar (for rolling)

DIRECTIONS

- 1 Combine all-purpose flour, baking soda, salt, cinnamon and cloves together in a bowl and set aside.
- 2 In a separate bowl, cream the butter and ¾ cup of white sugar together using a hand mixer.
- 3 Slowly add brown sugar, molasses, egg, ginger and the flour mixture into the bowl, and mix with a hand mixer until fully combined.
- 4 Refrigerate the dough for 1 hour.
- 5 Form dough into 1 ½ inch balls and roll each ball in the remaining white sugar until coated.
- 6 Place each ball approximately 2 inches apart on a lightly greased baking sheet and flatten each ball with a fork.
- 7 Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and then bake the cookies for 15 minutes or until the edges begin to brown.

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HERB Health

Experimenting with different herbs and spices can make a dish go from good to delicious, and even provide added health benefits.

Scientific studies have found that many herbs have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties which can help boost the immune system. Certain herbs and spices can also provide alternative health benefits, such as relieving indigestion or being high in certain vitamins. It is always important to talk to your doctor to see if using these herbs and spices is right for you.

Listed below are a few common herbs that benefit the body:

PEPPERMINT

Peppermint Oil can help with pain management for those with Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) and reduce abdominal bloating.



ROSEMARY

Rosemary is an antioxidant that also has anti-inflammatory effects. It may help to improve memory, and concentration.



SAGE

Some studies show that sage can help improve memory and brain function in healthy people.



GINGER

Ginger is mainly known for its ability to subside nausea and motion sickness, but it may also be effective at treating pain and inflammation.



PARSLEY

Parsley is an antioxidant with anti-inflammatory properties. Parsley is a great source of vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, iron, and fibre.



TURMERIC

Turmeric has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. It is also linked with improved brain function and arthritis relief.



GARLIC

While garlic is not classified as an herb, it is used in many dishes to increase flavour. Garlic is an antioxidant that may help the immune system resist the common cold, reduce cholesterol, and reduce blood pressure.



CINNAMON

Cinnamon has powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. It has been shown to help lower blood sugar and reduce cholesterol. Cinnamon is a good alternative to add some sweetness to coffee.



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WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!

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 and **GOOD for you**

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