INNOVATION ENGINES AT NORTHWESTERN MEDICINE

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Northwestern Integrative Medicine

Northwestern Integrative Medicine is committed to optimizing the wellness of each of our patients through empowerment, education, and patient-centered care. We consciously blend the very best of conventional medicine with evidence-based complementary and alternative medicine practices from around the world to deliver the highest quality, personalized health care.

At Northwestern, we aspire to advance the practice of Integrative Medicine and transform healthcare through:

- Innovative clinical care models;
- Scientific research on complementary and alternative approaches; and
- Medical education of future physicians and health care providers.

History and Overview

Since the 1960s, studies by David Eisenberg at Harvard and other researchers have shown a steady increase in the number of people in the United States who are turning to non-conventional healthcare practices. More than ever, Americans are embracing the idea that optimal health and wellness are achieved by positive lifestyle behaviors and through the integration of conventional medical services with complementary care. According to the National Institutes of Health’s National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine, nearly two-thirds of Americans are using some form of complementary and alternative medicine to treat common health concerns such as pain, anxiety or depression, gastro-intestinal disorders, and sleeping problems.

Northwestern Integrative Medicine is directed with distinction by Melinda Ring, MD. In this unique center physicians work in close partnership with complementary providers to offer whole-person care. The center offers integrative medicine consults, primary care, acupuncture, naturopathic medicine, nutrition counseling, health psychology, bodywork, energy therapies, smoking cessation, and a range of wellness classes. Northwestern Integrative Medicine is identified as the leading regional resource for reputable information on lifestyle and complementary medicine. Staff members regularly share knowledge on integrative medicine with the media, including local and national TV shows as well as popular magazines and newspapers. In October 2009, the peer-reviewed medical journal *Alternative and Complementary Therapies* recognized Northwestern Integrative Medicine with an article profiling its accomplishments.

In 2008, Northwestern Integrative Medicine led Northwestern’s acceptance into the Consortium of Academic Health Centers in Integrative Medicine, a group of 57 highly esteemed national academic centers whose mission is “to help transform medicine and healthcare through rigorous scientific studies, new models of clinical care, and innovative educational programs that integrate biomedicine, the complexity of human beings, the intrinsic nature of healing, and the rich diversity of therapeutic systems.” Dr. Ring was elected to the executive board of this influential organization in 2011.

“At Northwestern Integrative Medicine we believe in healthcare that addresses the whole person, acknowledges the connection between lifestyles and health, includes all safe and effective options for treatment, and embraces the complexity of the human body.”

Melinda Ring, MD, Director
Our Vision for Integrative Medicine

Our vision is a healthcare system in which all appropriate conventional and complementary approaches are used to optimize health, promote whole-person wellness, and prevent chronic disease.

Our major priorities are to:

- Deliver exceptional whole-family integrative care and underwrite the provision of care for patients with varied disease types that would benefit immensely from the compassionate and innovative care provided through integrative medicine. Collaborations exist for the benefit of patients with cancer and those suffering from a neurological disease or from heart conditions. With an expansion of clinical faculty members and patient space, we seek to expand services from newborns to the aging public;
- Initiate new evidence-based research projects and enhance this knowledge through dissemination. Northwestern Integrative Medicine has been chosen as one of the 10 leading integrative medicine centers to participate in BRAVENET’s PRIMIER launch. This is a landmark study for which we will collect data on patient care outcomes in integrative settings. Further, we will initiate our own research work such as the current ACTIVATE Cancer Care, a pre- and post-acupuncture assessment for patients undergoing chemotherapy as part of their cancer treatment;
- Establish a full spectrum of medical education programs aimed at expanding the knowledge and attitudes of current and future physicians and the community-at-large. Northwestern Integrative Medicine has established a benchmark of high-quality symposiums for patients as well as national medical conferences. We also offer ongoing educational programs for students earning their medical degrees. We place a strong value on educating the future generation of physicians to appreciate the value inherent in integrative medicine principles, while providing valuable knowledge to the public on current best practices.

Five categories of complementary and alternative medicine may facilitate the healing process:

- Mind/Body medicine, such as yoga, tai chi, and meditation;
- Energy therapies, such as Reiki and healing touch;
- Manual therapy, such as massage, chiropractic therapy, and craniosacral therapy;
- Culturally-based healing traditions, such as Traditional Chinese Medicine and homeopathy; and
- Pharmacological and biological therapies, such as dietary approaches, vitamins and herbs.
Definition of Integrative Medicine

Integrative Medicine is the practice of medicine that reaffirms the importance of the relationship between practitioner and patient, focuses on the whole person, is informed by evidence, and makes use of all appropriate therapeutic approaches, healthcare professionals and disciplines to achieve optimal health and healing.


THROUGH NORTHWESTERN MEDICINE, WE INTEND TO CREATE A NATIONAL EPICENTER FOR HEALTHCARE, EDUCATION, RESEARCH, COMMUNITY SERVICE, AND ADVOCACY.

NORTHWESTERN MEDICINE

Northwestern Memorial Hospital and Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine are seeking to impact the health of humankind through Northwestern Medicine. We aspire to be the destinations of choice for people seeking quality healthcare; for those who provide, support, and advance that care through leading-edge treatments and breakthrough discoveries; and for people who share our passion for educating future physicians and scientists. Our commitment to transform healthcare and to be among the nation’s top academic medical centers will be accomplished through innovation and excellence. Northwestern Integrative Medicine is one of our drivers of innovation, known as the Innovation Engines at Northwestern Medicine. As a matrix organization, our innovation engines interact in a cross-cutting manner with our Northwestern Medicine Institutes.