

Holistic Healing: Alternative Natural Remedies



By American Institute of Health Care Professionals, Inc.

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About Holistic Care Practitioners

Holistic medicine is a type of alternative medicine and treatment that treats the three most important parts of the patient: their body, mind, and spirit.

These three elements are believed to make up the entirety of every human being, giving them a deep sense of purpose and their own personal energy. Those who practice holistic medicine are known as holistic care practitioners, or doctors with an emphasis in holistic care. The point of holistic care is to treat the whole person in order to promote optimal health and wellness and prevent disease.

Holistic care practitioners take the primary goal of holistic medicine and make it the center of their practice.

Who They Are

Holistic care practitioners are doctors who view their patients in a unique way that can make all the difference during treatment and care. They take the whole person into account when creating a treatment plan so that the patient's three most important elements will be in harmony to promote better balance throughout the body.

Not only do holistic care practitioners approach their patients as a whole person, they also strictly adhere to and believe in the Ten Practices of Holistic Medicine as according to the Holistic Medicine Organization website. Some of these practices include:

- Optimal Health
- The Whole Person
- Love and Its Healing Powers
- Everyone's Innate Healing Power
- Care that Builds a Patient-Practitioner Relationship

What They Do

Holistic care practitioners provide exceptional healthcare alternatives that integrate various treatment systems across different medicinal practices.

Holistic medicine incorporates unique alternative therapy methods along with conventional treatments, like prescription drugs and surgery. Holistic care practitioners take their vast knowledge of the holism philosophy and other forms of alternative medicines and treatments to bring their patients the best health care treatment plans and systems available.

They strive to create a real partnership with their patient and do so by talking with and getting to know their patients.

The best holistic care practitioner-patient relationship is achieved when both parties trust one another, exchange values, and come up with therapies and treatment plans that are effective.

Holistic care professionals also work alongside their patients to get to the root of all obstacles that are in the way of their health and wellness. So, as opposed to conventional doctors that treat disease, holistic practitioners treat the person.

This goes back to the idea of treating the “whole” person. When the practitioner takes the patient’s mind, body and spirit into account, they can explore other reasons behind diseases and mental health problems.

Once they have gotten to know their patient well enough, holistic care practitioners can usually discuss and explore other treatment plans and lifestyle changes to help them work their way to achieving ideal health and wellness.

How To Choose a Good Holistic Practitioner

Choosing a great holistic care practitioner is not hard, but, it does require research and patience. A good practitioner can be found a few different ways:

- **An Online Search:** Find a practitioner is as easy as typing key words into a database. While any database will do, the best place to search is on the American Holistic Medical Association’s database. Here patients can find a complete list of qualified practitioners in their particular area.
- **Peruse A Guide:** Stay informed by looking through the American Holistic Medical Association’s guide. This option can help patient’s find a great practitioner in their area.
- **Search Other Organizations:** Patients can also search other organizations to find the right practitioner for them.

The right practitioner can really make all the difference in a patient’s healing process and overall treatment. Look for one today using these resources and the above information and begin enjoying the healing effects of holistic medicine.

7 Natural Healing Methods For Depression

Dealing with the blues does not mean you have to keep on popping those orange pills. Studies show that one of the major deterrents to treating depression is the fear of patients to be addicted to anti-depressants.

While conventional anti-depression drugs provide an effective way of treating depression, it is by no means the single cure to this medical illness. There are a host of natural healing methods that are considered safe and effective in improving mood and altering brain chemistry to take your blues away.

Exercise to boost your mood

Exercising literally pumps you up because it releases feel-good chemicals called endorphins that interact with your brain receptors and diminish the perception of pain. Much like morphine, endorphins suppress pain by triggering a feeling of happiness and a positive outlook. Unlike morphine though, endorphins are naturally occurring chemicals that do not lead to dependence or addiction.

Scientific evidence points that doing a 30-minute routine of moderate aerobic exercise at least three times a week is effective in alleviating symptoms of depression. Those who maintain their exercise routine even after being treated of their depression are also less likely to return to a depressed state.

Eat Healthy

Depression tends to disrupt normal eating habits, pushing those who suffer the symptoms of depression to either overeat or starve themselves. Taking control of your eating habits does not only keep your body nourished, it also restores a certain sense of control over your life, which also in part relieves your state of depression.

Some studies show that eating foods that are rich in omega-3 fatty acids found in tuna and salmon, as well as those that are rich in folic acid such as avocado and spinach helps relieve depression by restoring chemical balance in the brain and nervous system.

Meditate To Relax

Much of the anxiety, stress and symptoms of depression that we experience can be relieved by giving ourselves some time to relax and clear our mind. Meditation enables deep relaxation by clearing the mind of distracting thoughts and focusing on proper and deep breathing. It provides us a means to have an altered state of consciousness.

Meditating on a daily basis is a good anti-depression practice because it trains us to let go of our thoughts, focus our attention on the here and now and cultivate an attitude of acceptance and openness, which could also help relieve depression and the negative feelings associated with it.

Do Yoga

Although most yoga techniques also involve meditation, yoga promotes an added incentive of exercising the body to improve balance, strength and flexibility while also practicing proper breathing techniques to help clear the mind and focus.

As a whole, yoga works to align the spine, invigorates the nervous system, improves blood circulation, promotes mental clarity, reduce stress and anxiety and promotes relaxation and emotional wellbeing. It provides a potent way of alleviating symptoms of depression.

Get Enough Sleep

Being in a state of depression can lead to an altered sleeping habit and make getting enough sleep feel like a tiring battle. Unfortunately, being sleep deprived can heighten your depression and make matters worse.

While it might prove difficult to sleep well, try hard to make certain changes in your sleeping habit to ensure that you get enough shut-eye when you need it most.

Try going to bed and getting up at a specific time every day to encourage your biological clock to cooperate.

Remove all distractions from sleeping such as TV, computer or even your mobile phone. Whenever you can, try to also take a nap during the day to relax and feel rejuvenated.

Take Anti-Depression Herbal Supplements

Supplement your diet and boost your mood by turning to natural supplements such as having a relaxing drink of chamomile tea or St. John's Wort. Both herbs are proven to relieve depression and anxiety.

Have A Massage

We know all too well that touch therapy promotes relaxation and uplifts our mind and spirit. Specific massage modalities such as Swedish, Shiatsu and Hawaiian Lomi-Lomi promote relaxation and healing. The use of aromatic oils and music that promotes relaxation during massage provides a holistic experience to deal with the blues.

These natural healing remedies for depression work well to complement whatever medication or psychotherapy session you may be undertaking to help you improve your mood, promote emotional healing and come out triumphant in your bout with depression.

Natural Treatment Methods For Anxiety

Many people who struggle with anxiety turn to prescription medications for treatment which can cause even worse side effects, or significant dangers to a person's health. This is one of the reasons that so many people are turning to natural treatment methods to help with anxiety issues that are causing problems in their lives.

What Is Natural Treatment?

Natural treatment is simply treatment that does not contain any chemicals. This can be non-medical treatments or natural supplements or even a mix of both.

The one thing that you must remember is that no matter what method you try, it is imperative to consult your physician and to take any advice, or treatments he recommends seriously, but, that does not mean that you cannot also add alternative treatments that are more natural for a holistic approach to your anxiety care.

Alternative/Natural And Non-Medical Treatment Options

There are many non-medical treatments for anxiety that you can use each day in order to get your anxiety under control. Non-medical treatments are for people who are willing to commit themselves to a treatment that is not plant based.

- Regular exercise will allow your body to release "feel good" hormones. This is a great non-medical treatment for those who are suffering from anxiety because you can create a routine where you exercise each day but you will also be able to use exercise to help you have unexpected moments of anxiety. This will also help your body to become healthier and a healthy body can deal with anxiety much better than an unhealthy body.
- Sound therapy is another form of non-medical treatment that can be used for anxiety. This is a new discovery that science is using to treat many things including depression and anxiety. The way sound therapy works is that the person listens to high frequency sounds, these sounds stimulate the brain and recharge it. Sound therapy has been proven to create a permanent state of peace and relaxation in patents.

Herbal Supplements

There are many herbal supplements that can be used to cure your anxiety. These can be used as an alternative treatment to prescription medications but should never be mixed with prescriptions without first talking to your health care provider.

- St. Johns Wart is a very well-known herbal supplement that can be used to cure anxiety. St. Johns Wart is the most popular herbal supplement for curing anxiety and it is the most reliable. St. Johns Wart also contains a sedative that can help you sleep. It is best to take St. Johns Wart with your evening meal or right before you go to bed.
- Kava is another herbal supplement that is well-known for treating anxiety. Kava is used to treat mild to moderate anxiety. Unlike St. Johns Wart Kava does not contain a sedative. You should be very careful when taking Kava because it can affect the liver so it is recommended that you not drink any alcohol when taking it. It is also known to interact with anti-psychotics. If you are taking anti-psychotics you should speak to your doctor before taking Kava.

Learning How to Handle Stress

Learning how to handle stress is another way you can naturally treat your anxiety. One of the ways you can do this is by keeping a daily journal. Here you will be able to write down all of your feelings, talk about the things that are causing you anxiety, determine if there is anything you can do to change the situation and create an action plan for changing the situation.

Listening to positive affirmations is another way some people handle anxiety. Positive affirmations teach your brain to think in a new way and after you have listened to them for a while you will find that when you are becoming overwhelmed by anxiety they will automatically play themselves over and over in your mind.

Putting It All Together

Now is the time that you should put everything you have learned together. If you want to cure your anxiety naturally, it is not enough just to exercise or just to take a supplement. You have to put all of the techniques together. Taking a supplement while creating an exercise routine, eating right, and learning to manage your stress is the best way for you to naturally cure your anxiety.

Natural Healing With Oil of Oregano

As people become more wary of prescription drugs with their numerous side effects and the generally poor quality of medical care that is common in the United States, from uncaring doctors who see 20 patients per hour, to the non-existence of treatment modalities that look to more natural methods, they are looking to a more wholesome approach to health care.

In recent decades, holistic health care has seen a huge increase in popularity, though holism has been around for hundreds of years. In holistic care natural alternative treatments can either accompany conventional medical care or simply be used on their own to elevate people's overall health, wellness and wellbeing.

When most people think of oregano, they imagine some sort of delicious pizza, pasta, or salad dish accompanied with the unique tasting herb. While this is certainly one use of oregano, the truth is that oil of oregano actually has some remarkable healing properties that promote one's overall health and wellness.

This unexpected oil also has a number of other qualities that make it worth looking into. Oil of oregano is inexpensive, has plenty of uses, and is wrought with health benefits for the mind and body.

What is Oregano Oil?

This aromatic herb is taken from the flowers and leaves of the oregano plant. This plant is a perennial herb that often grows as a bush and belongs to the mint family. A native of Europe, oregano actually grows and thrives in many places around the world, which means you can even grow some in your own garden.

The first known people to utilize the oregano plant were the ancient Greeks and Romans who, thanks to their immense appreciation of the herb, used it mainly for medicinal uses. The name "oregano" itself comes from the Greek words "oros" and "ganos" which mean mountain and joy respectively. It then translates to "joy of the mountain" literally, which is fitting considering its array of useful properties and qualities.

There are actually more than 40 species of the oregano plant out in the world but the one that is most beneficial and useful for natural healing is the oil from the wild oregano, also known as *Origanum Vulgare*.

This oregano species hails from the Mediterranean, and while it is easy to find and usually inexpensive, most oregano oils found in the grocery are not made from this species and therefore have little to no healing properties. The best species to choose from are the already mentioned *Origanum Vulgare* and the *Thymus Capitatus* native to Spain.

Uses for Oregano Oil's Natural Healing Properties

Most households should add this essential oil to their first aid kits due to its wide range of healing uses. Oil of oregano is a natural and powerful antimicrobial, antiviral, antifungal, and antibacterial that can fight infections and other germs and disease. Here are a few uses for this amazing essential oil.

- **Soothing Colds and Sinus Infections:** When inhaled, oregano oil can open the sinus passages and soothe pressure and discomfort associated with colds. Simply add a few drops of the oil to a pot of steaming water and then inhale the steam for the best results.
- **Treating Fungal Infections:** Oil of oregano is ideal for treating foot and nail fungus. By simply adding a few teaspoons of the oil to a basin or tub of water and soaking your feet in it, you can combat the harmful and uncomfortable effects of fungal infections. The oil can also be diluted by adding a teaspoon of olive or coconut oil to it. Once this is done, it can be added directly onto nails and skin to fight fungus.
- **Kill Parasites and Infections:** After diluting the oil with a drop of coconut or other carrier oil, place a small amount under your tongue. Hold the oil there for just a few minutes and then rinse. This process should be repeated at least four times a day for best results.

Health Benefits

By adding oil of oregano to your pantry and first aid kit, you and your family can enjoy varying benefits. Since oregano oil has so many uses, it can be the go-to tool for plenty of health and wellness problems.

Viruses, various infections, pains, parasites, skin problems, and more are no match for this essential oil. Buy it, make it, store it and eat it to enjoy the healing effects of oil of oregano.

Natural Ways to Increase the Body's Immunity

Imagine a nation that lacks a capable army to defend itself against interlopers and invaders. Or think of what could happen to your important documents and files if you left your computer without any competent shield against malwares and viruses. In almost any imaginable scenario, we know all too well that keeping things defenseless is like walking on a tightrope of doom.

The same holds true with the human body, a system that is so fundamental yet at once complex in its workings. Without our body's built-in system of protection against germs, viruses, bacteria and other foreign bodies, our organs and essential bodily functions could very well be just time bombs waiting to explode. But thanks to our immune system, our body's crucial line of defense against infections, diseases and other ailments, we are protected against invaders that threaten the daily functioning of our bodily system.

Our immune system is key to maintaining health and vigor and intermittent bouts of colds and flu throughout our lifetime reminds us of how our daily functioning is affected when we let our body's defenses down. Worse, a weak immune system makes us susceptible to attacks of more potentially damaging bad cells such as cancer and autoimmune diseases.

When our immune system is compromised, whether through genetic predisposition or due to the environmental risks that we encounter on a daily basis, our body's natural ability to ward off the bad guys wanes and we are left defenseless against a host of infections and other ailments. Because not all immune systems are created equal, maintaining an immune system boosting approach to health will help us through and beyond the challenges we face.

Eat lots of fruits, vegetables and nuts

Adopting a diet that is rich in beta carotene, zinc and vitamins C and E found in fruits, vegetables and nuts aids in replenishing white blood cells, hence strengthening the immune system.

- Cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, cabbage, chard and kale enhances the liver's immune function by boosting its ability to clean out toxins.
- Brightly colored fruits and vegetables like carrots, citrus fruits, apples, berries and onions are rich in antioxidants that eliminate free radicals and improve the immune system.
- It is also helpful to make a dietary habit of incorporating certain foods that are known to boost the immune system.
- Examples of such foods are: raw garlic (a great antibacterial and antiviral compound), ginger (cleanses the lymphatic system, lungs and sinuses), avocado (rich in amino acids and a good source of antioxidants) and mushrooms (contains beta glucan, a complex carbohydrate that increases immunity against infections, allergies and cancers).
- Whenever you can, avoid refined sugars and complex carbohydrates found in sodas and sweets because they suppress the ability of white blood cells to ward off bacterial attacks.
- Drink water, teas and fruit juices instead to boost your immune system.

Catch a good dose of Zzzs

When you sleep, your body repairs itself and restores its ability to function properly. When we are sleep deprived, our body is unable to function optimally not only in terms of physical and mental alertness. Not having enough restorative sleep also compromises the ability of cells to regenerate, decreases the body's immune function and raises the level of inflammatory chemicals in the body, which in turn causes us to become ill.

This is why we may feel like we are likely to catch an infection or a cold when we are not getting enough sleep. This is supported by the results of an experimental study done by the University of Chicago which found that subjects who were restricted to only four hours of sleep during a weeklong trial produced only half of the normal level of antibodies when they were given a flu vaccine.

In order to maintain a healthy immune level, always try to get a regular dose of uninterrupted sleep of seven to nine hours daily. Avoid chronic sleep deprivation at all costs as this would impale the body's ability to heal from daily stresses and function properly.

Keep a daily exercise routine

We might have heard it all too often: The human body was not created to endure long hours of inactivity. Being stuck behind a desk for hours, lounging on a couch in front of the TV, or just plain avoiding the need to exercise reduces the efficiency of the systems of our body, including the immune system. Moving or exercising not only increases oxygenation at the cellular level; it also stimulates the body's lymphatic system (which flushes out toxins) and promotes the reproduction of leukocytes (cells that fight infection).

Maintaining an exercise regimen to keep your immune system going does not even require you to be a hard-core exercise buff. A daily dose of 30 minutes of moderate movement through walking around the block, running after your child or taking the stairs instead of riding a lift can already do wonders to help keep your immune system up and about.

Overcome stress

It doesn't take a genius to understand that stress has become a normal part of our daily lives. We are exposed to stress at work, at home, even in our social interactions. Stress seems so omniscient that some have opted to develop adaptability to it, acclimating to chronic stress until they burn out or fall sick.

Stress is a part of life and we need to manage it properly, just like any other challenge we encounter. Keep in mind that stress is a condition that could be overcome by learning a few tricks to keep it at bay.

Learn to meditate, slow down once in a while, strike connections and develop deeper relationships with people, find a way to work out to blow off some steam, laugh every once in a while—whichever route you decide to use, remember that you are making not just your immune system but your whole being better by learning to overcome stress.

Holistic Approach To Anti-Aging

As people live longer and longer many of us search for a way to slow down the effects of aging. Many people use different creams and gels or go as far as getting surgery in order to keep their youthful appearance but there is a holistic approach that we all can use when it comes to anti-aging.

Holistic medicine unlike the creams and gels treats the underlying cause for the problem and not just the symptoms of the problem. Now while we will never be able to treat the causes of aging we can use holistic medicine to slow down the side effects.

Your Skin

The skin is the largest organ in the human body and is easily impacted by day to day factors. The truth is that you cannot have good skin if you are not eating right, getting enough sleep, or are under a large amount of stress

Inflammation and free radicals

Understanding that free radicals cause inflammation in the body is very important because according to Dr. Michael Klentze, international medical director of the Vitalife Corporation at Bumrungrad Hospital in Bangkok inflammation is what causes us to age. You also must understand that free radicals occur naturally and if your body does not get enough antioxidants to fight the free radicals they are free to go about the body and do their damage.

Damage caused by free radicals can be stopped by eating antioxidant rich foods or taking supplements such as vitamin C, Coenzyme Q10, Zinc, and Magnesium. Water is also an important factor if you want to slow the signs of aging. Your body is made mostly of water and if you allow it to dehydrate you will see more wrinkles. Ensuring that you get enough water will also ensure that your skin retains its elasticity over time.

Proper circulation

Using holistic medicine to maintain proper circulation is also very important when it comes to slowing down the aging process. Your entire body relies on proper circulation and without it you will quickly see your body start to age and “fall apart” as it is called. Cheyenne is often used by those who practice holistic medicine to help with circulation.

How holistic medicine works

You must understand at this point that there are reasons one person would age faster than another and it is those reasons that must be treated with holistic medicine. You can not separate the health of your skin, your mind and your body. It must be treated as a whole. The chances of you reducing the signs of aging by simply focusing on your skin are slim but if you focus on your entire body ensuring that you are physically, mentally, and spiritually healthy you will see that you quickly reduce the signs of aging.

Reversing the signs of aging

It is also possible to reverse the signs of aging with holistic medicine. One of the ways you can do this is to ensure that your body is getting enough essential fatty acids. Each cell must have essential fatty acids in order to function properly. Essential fatty acids will help to nourish the skin as well as provide tone. You can find essential fatty acids in foods such as leafy greens, walnuts, fish oils and flax seed oils.

Exercise

Physical activity is also an important factor when it comes to reversing or slowing down the aging process. Our bodies are made to move and physical exercise can help to raise your metabolism as well as reduce your weight. Ensuring that you are not over stressing your body by causing it to carry around extra weight is very important if you want to slow down the signs of aging.

Through adding exercise and supplements to your daily routine as well as ensuring you are getting enough water, sleep and are keeping stress levels at a minimum you can help to reduce the signs of aging. The best way to slow down the signs of aging is to focus on your body as a whole ensuring that you are in the best health possible instead of focusing on the symptom of aging. This way you will be sure to keep your youthful appearance for years to come.

Alternative Therapy for Heart Disease

It seems amazing that an organ as strong and as resilient as the heart can be slowed down and diseased, but this is a very real possibility that affects more people than you may imagine. In fact, in the United States heart disease is the leading cause of death.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, approximately 600,000 people die of heart disease in the United States each year. This equates to 1 in 4 deaths. Each year 720,000 Americans have a heart attack. 205,000 of these heart attacks are in people who have already had another.

Heart disease costs the United States \$108.9 billion each and every year, and includes expenditures for medications, health care services, as well as, lost productivity.

Heart disease is often tackled by modern medicine with drugs and even surgery. Unfortunately, the treatment plans for this condition can be just as frightening as the condition itself, which causes many people to ignore their symptoms and avoid medical help.

Luckily, there are alternative therapy options for those suffering with heart disease that are both natural and effective and when used in concert with conventional medicine can increase the probability of healing success and also go a long way for prevention.

What Happens When You Have Heart Problems

Heart disease is defined as any condition that prevents your heart from working correctly. Over time heart disease can cause a deterioration of the heart's arteries and vessels which make your chances of heart attack very high.

Coronary heart disease is the most common type of heart disease and it is defined as the hardening of the arteries on your heart's surface. The hardening of these arteries is caused by plaque accumulating on the artery walls and this plaque is caused by too much bad cholesterol in your system.

When left unchecked, the plaque can keep building up and narrowing the arteries, making it harder for blood to flow through the heart and the rest of the body. This, in turn, makes the likelihood of a blood clot, heart attack, or acute chest pain very high.

When these conditions are not treated or improved, they can lead to sudden death. It is important to maintain heart health in order to maintain a healthy body. There are many everyday practices and habits that can lead to heart disease and these often start when you are young and build up gradually.

The Road to Heart Disease: Risk Factors & Prevention

One of the most prevalent risk factors is a family history. If heart disease is simply part of your genetics, you will be higher risk for developing this disease yourself. However, there are still preventive steps that can be taken to protect yourself.

Even if a family history does not already exist it does not make the chances of developing heart disease disappear. Fortunately, you can do something about the risk factors that can lead to heart disease. Here is a list of the factors you can control and how to manage them:

- Avoid high levels of low-density lipo-protein cholesterol, also known as bad cholesterol and low levels of high-density lipo-protein, also known as good cholesterol
- Avoid high levels of triglycerides, which can increase when you consume too many fatty foods and take in excess calories.
- Avoid or quit smoking
- Exercise more regularly
- Avoid a high fat diet
- Monitor high blood pressure
- Monitor ongoing stress, anxiety, and depression
- Monitor weight gain to avoid being overweight and obese
- Monitor diabetes

Alternative Care

The best alternative medicine for heart disease is prevention. Stop it before it starts and stay on top of symptoms and risk factors.

Most modern medicine becomes necessary once heart disease exists, but, by simply trying alternative preventative practices and treatments, you can avoid the damaging effects of this condition.

Alternative Methods For Heart Disease Prevention

- Consult with a holistic nutritionist that will teach how to eat smart and fill your diet with healthy foods high in Omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and other nutrients. These include fish, vegetables, fruits, and lean meats.
- Consult with a holistic practitioner that can help assess your individual needs and provide a customized treatment plan to get you on the road to general health and wellness.
- Practice regular exercise a few times a week and attend regular doctor's appointments to stay updated on your heart health.
- Dietary Treatments: Learn to avoid foods high in fat and cholesterol
- Chelation Therapy: This treatment rids the body of heavy metals and is often used for mercury poisoning and the like. It adds the amino acid called EDTA to your body which can help remove dangerous blockages from the arteries
- Stress Reducing Exercises: Engage in Yoga, Pilates, Tai Chi, and other similar exercise

Alternative Treatments for Chronic Stress

Stress is an everyday word that you can encounter too often in this busy, fast-moving world. While a week's worth of stress may easily be relieved after a Friday night with friends, stress over long periods of time can result into a wide array of conditions, encompassing physical, mental, and behavioral aspects.

Stress is the body's response to the pressure perceived from our surroundings. While a daily, little dose of stress might be normal, exposure to excessive stress for a prolonged period can lead to more serious diseases and behavioral disorders.

Chronic stress is in fact one of the known culprits for developing anxiety, depression, asthma, heart attack, diabetes, and even premature death.

Conventional Versus Alternative Treatment

Conventional medicine had often focused on treating the mind and the body separately. But in most recent studies, more scientific evidences have shown the interconnection between the body and the mind through certain metabolic, hormonal, and biochemical changes that the body undergoes when it is under stress.

On the other hand, proponents of alternative treatments have long since believed that the body reacts differently when the mind is in a state of imbalance.

Primarily, the focus of alternative medicine is to treat the body and the mind as a whole, creating a unified balance that promotes relaxation and reduces stress.

Mindful Meditation for Brain Health

Introduction to Mindful Meditation: Meditation is a form of alternative medicine that has been associated with a number of benefits, specifically to the individual's mental health, such as decreased stress levels and improved mood. Mindfulness, in particular, is a form of meditation that involves intense concentration and focus on the present.

Mindful meditation requires awareness of one's thoughts and actions in the present, putting aside all thoughts of the past and the future.

Meditation In Holistic Care

No matter who you are, or the stresses you have in your life, mediation is a sure fire way to improve wellbeing. Those who mediate will attest to its powers and mediation masters can literally detach themselves from any type of chaos and outside noise by simply going into their minds and a meditative state.

Enlightenment is often experienced by those who mediate and is it brings them close to their internal feelings and who they are.

In holistic medicine, meditation is often used to treat those with anxiety, depression, and stress. It can help relax, calm and provide a truly 100% natural and effective treatment method that has numerous health benefits.

Here are some key points to remember when performing mindful meditation:

- Be aware of your own breathing- pay attention to the sensation of air entering your nostrils and leaving your mouth, and the rise and fall of your belly.
- Let each thought come and go, without suppressing or ignoring each of them. Stay calm and focus on your breathing.
- If you get distracted, simply follow your thoughts without being too hard on yourself.

Mindful Meditation Evidenced-Based Study

A recent study published in the "Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences" online journal suggested that a few hours of mindful meditation or integrative body-mind training can help improve mood, self-control, and response to stress.

The study, which was published on June 11, 2012, involved 68 undergraduates from the Dalian University of Technology in China. The students were divided into relaxation training and meditation training groups. Each of the group underwent either a 30-minute relaxation training or integrative body-mind training over a period of two weeks, totaling 5 hours of training for each group.

Researchers of this study have found changes in the brain's "white matter"- a part of the brain's anterior cingulate cortex- after performing mindful meditation after just a short period. These changes weren't observed in the brains of those who underwent relaxation training. None of the participants from both groups had any previous meditation training experience.

A non-invasive, MRI-based technology known as diffusion tensor imaging was used to observe the white matter in the brains of the students, together with other imaging technology that measures the white matter's ability to adapt and change.

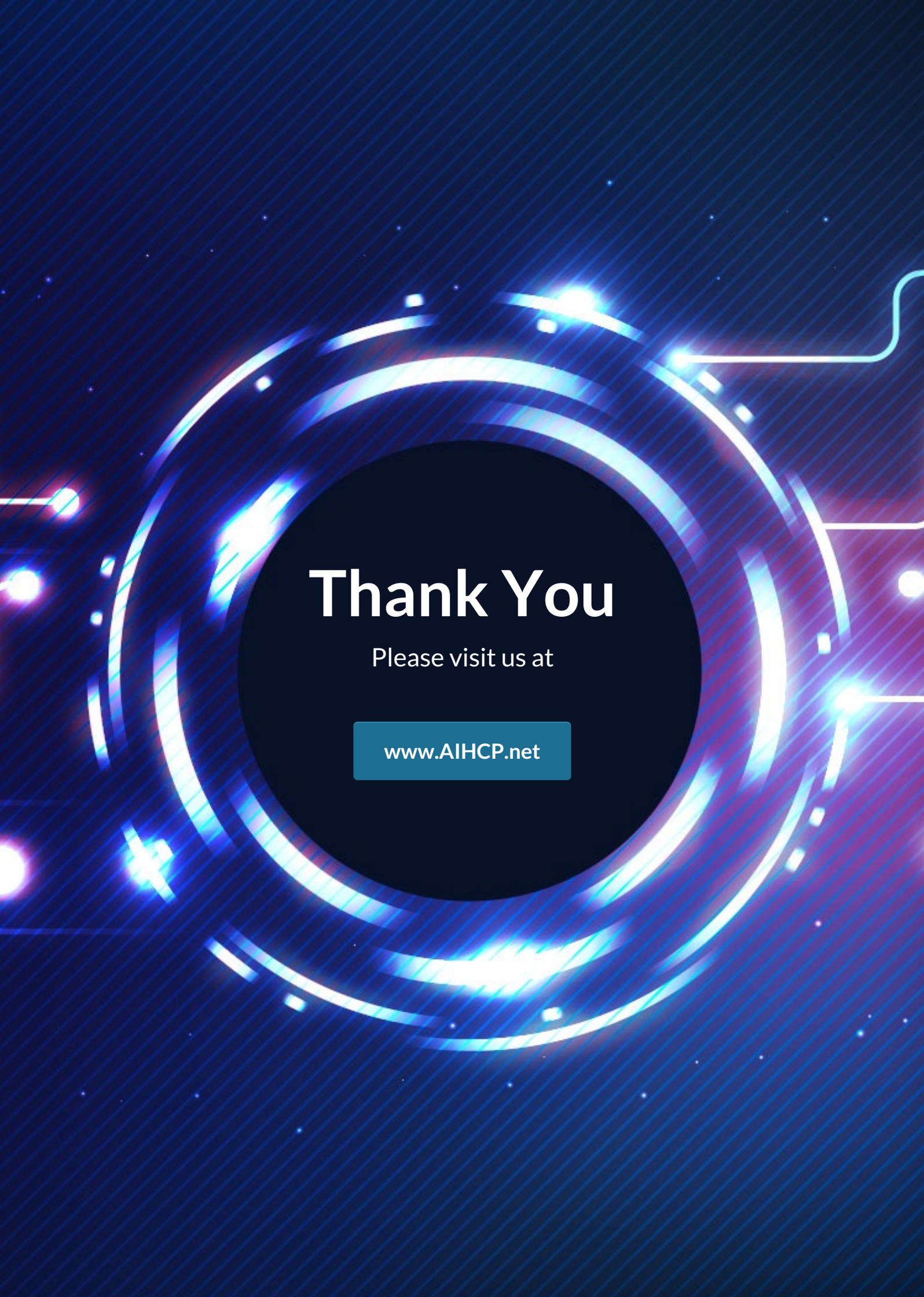
The researchers focused on certain areas of the brain that were most susceptible to these physical changes, and measured these areas before and after mindful meditation training.

The white matter is an area in the brain that affects how it learns, and coordinates and relays information among the various brain regions. According to the authors, understanding the white matter in relation to training, learning, and human development can potentially prevent various mental conditions such as anxiety, ADHD, depression, borderline personality disorder, schizophrenia, and even addiction, disorders that all involved the anterior cingulate cortex of the brain.

The most common problem with meditation, just like with any other alternative form of medicine is that scientific evidence is often lacking.

People who have practiced meditation may have been "conditioned" to feel positive about the therapy, and thus have responded favorably to the training.

This study, on the other hand, offers a quantifiable result that is actually based on scientific evidence. Because the actual structural changes that the brain went through were observed and measured, this breakthrough study opens up a number of new possibilities in the world of alternative medicine.



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