



## Forms of Alternative Treatment

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### **Policy**

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Alternative treatment is considered a contract exclusion on most benefit plans.

### **Description of Procedure or Service**

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Alternative treatment consists of a group of diverse medical and health care systems, practices, and products that are not generally considered to be part of conventional medicine. While scientific evidence exists regarding some of these therapies, for most there are key questions that are yet to be answered through well-designed scientific studies – questions such as whether these therapies are safe and whether they work for the purposes for which they are used. Other terms used to describe such procedures include "holistic", "unconventional", and "complementary."

Alternative therapies are based on no common or consistent ideology, therapy of illness, or treatment. They derive from a variety of sources: ethnic and folk traditions, mainstream medical practices, established religions or semi-religious cults, philosophies or metaphysical movements, and health-and-wellness groups. The National Institutes of Health's Office of Alternative Medicine classified alternative therapies into the following seven categories:

- Diet and nutrition - use of specific foods, vitamins, and minerals to prevent illness and to treat disease
- Alternative systems of medical practice - use of medicine from another culture (e.g., Ayurveda, Chinese medicine)
- Herbal medicine - use of plants as medicine
- Mind-body interventions - use of the mind to enhance health (e.g., hypnosis, meditation, yoga)
- Manual healing methods - use of the hands to promote healing (e.g., massage, chiropractic and osteopathic manipulation)
- Pharmacologic and biologic treatments - use of various substances (e.g., drugs, serums) to treat specific medical problems
- Bioelectromagnetic therapies - use of electrical currents or magnetic fields to promote healing (e.g., bone repair, electroacupuncture)

The efficacy of various alternative medicine regimens is generally unproven, and some alternative therapies have been shown to be ineffective or even harmful.

Examples of Alternative Therapies include, but are not limited to:

714-X (for cancer)	Active Release Technique (A.R.T.)
Acupressure	Alexander technique
Amma therapy	Apitherapy
Applied kinesiology	Aromatherapy
Art therapy	Auto urine therapy
Ayurveda	Bioenergetic therapy
Brain Balance	Biofield Cancell (Entelev) cancer therapy
Chinese blood cleaning (Poon's)	Carbon dioxide therapy

Clinical ecology	Chung Moo Doe therapy
Colonic irrigation	Coley's toxin
Craniosacral therapy	Conceptual mind-body techniques
Dance/Movement therapy	Cupping
Diet-based therapies	Deep breathing exercises
Ear Candling	Digital myography
Electrodiagnosis according to Voll (EAV)	Egoscue method
Essential Metabolics Analysis (EMA)	Energy healing therapy/Reiki
Feldenkrais method of exercise therapy	Essiac
Fresh cell therapy	Flower essence
Gemstone therapy	Functional intracellular analysis
Gerson therapy	Geothermal spa treatment
Graston technique	Glyconutrients
Guided imagery	Greek cancer cure
Hako-Med machine (electromedical horizontal therapy)	Hair analysis
Hippotherapy	Hellerwork
Hoxsey method	Homeopathic treatment
Hydrazine sulfate	Humor therapy
Immunoaugmentive therapy Infratronic Qi-Gong machine	Hypnosis / Hypnotherapy
Inversion therapy	Insulin potentiation therapy
Ion therapy	
Iscador	Iridology
Kelley/Gonzales therapy	Kinesio Taping
Laetrile	Live blood cell analysis
Macrobiotic diet	Magnet therapy
Massage	Meditation
Meditation/transcendental meditation	Megavitamin therapy
Meridian therapy	Mesotherapy
Movement therapies	MTH-68 vaccine
Multiple Chemical Sensitivities (MCS)	Music therapy
Myotherapy	Natural products
Naturopathy	Neural therapy
Nonvitamin and non-mineral, such as herbs and other products from plants, enzymes, etc.	Ozone therapy
Pfrimmer deep muscle therapy	Polarity therapy
Primal therapy	Progressive relaxation
Psychodrama	Purging
Qigong longevity exercises	Ream's testing
Reflexology (zone therapy)	Reiki
Remedial massage	Revici's guided chemotherapy
Rolfing (structural integration)	Rubenfeld synergy method (RSM)
Sarapin injections	Shark cartilage products
Tai chi	Therapeutic Eurythmy-movement therapy
Therapeutic touch	Thought field therapy (TFT) (Callahan Techniques Training)
Traditional healers	Trager approach
Visceral manipulation therapy	Whitcomb technique
Wurn technique/clear passage therapy	Yoga

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## **Additional Policy Key Words**

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N/A

## **Policy Implementation/Update Information**

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7/1/09 New policy.

4/1/10 Hypnosis added to the table of Forms of Alternative Treatment

7/1/10 Geothermal spa therapy added to the table of Forms of Alternative Treatment

7/1/11 Brain balance and Kinesio taping added to table of Forms of Alternative Treatment

7/1/12 Ion therapy added to the table.

7/1/13 No policy changes.

7/1/14 No policy changes.

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