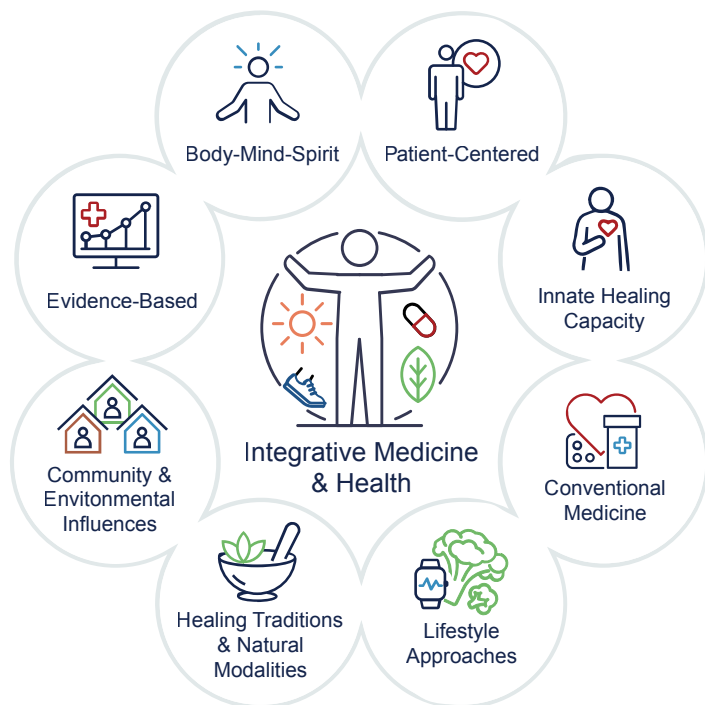





Elements of Integrative Medicine & Health

WHAT IS INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE & HEALTH?

Integrative Medicine & Health (IM&H) is a healing-oriented approach that considers the entire person, encompassing all lifestyle aspects. It highlights the therapeutic partnership between practitioner and patient, is informed by evidence, and utilizes all suitable therapies.




COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT

 An individual's health is significantly impacted by their physical environment and the community in which they live. This aspect of IM&H incorporates the major components of social determinants of health into the patient's care. Social determinants of health include economic stability, education access and quality, neighborhood and built environment, health care access and quality, and the greater social and community context.

What does this look like?

Each of these components of the environment and community significantly impact the health and wellbeing of the individual. In an IM&H appointment, these areas of health need to be assessed and addressed as a part of a thorough integrative approach to health.


BODY-MIND-SPIRIT

 IM&H recognizes the interrelated roles of body-mind-spirit on the individual's health and wellbeing. Focus and value are placed across these interconnected elements—considering one's physical symptoms, mental health, and connection to what is sacred or vital.

What does this look like?

An IM clinician intake explores all aspects of a person's health and wellbeing. Addressing the body-mind-spirit connection may occur through the teaching of mindfulness exercises, guided imagery, breathwork, and practices around gratitude and meaning/purpose into their patient care.

PATIENT-CENTERED

 IM&H is relationship-centered, collaborative, compassionate, and individualized. There is a focus on respecting and empowering the patient to be active in their care. IM&H partners with the patient to fully understand and support their health journey and wellbeing. It recognizes the therapeutic value of the relationship between patient and practitioner. Through an emphasis on listening, motivational interviewing, and compassionate communication, the focus is on long-term results.

What does this look like?

Many IM&H clinicians will spend 60–90 minutes in an initial appointment and at least 30 in follow-ups, as needed to address the needs of the patient. Instead of focusing on disease, all aspects that influence health are considered—centering on the patient's individual goals, needs, and abilities. It may include integrative, conventional, and complementary modalities, genomics and epigenetics, to provide personalized care.

HEALING TRADITIONS & NATURAL MODALITIES



Complementary (vs Alternative) is an umbrella term used to indicate non-conventional approaches to health and wellbeing that are used in conjunction with conventional treatment approaches.

What does this look like?

Key areas that fall within “Complementary” are below:

- Botanicals, Herbal Medicine
- Dietary Supplements
- Mind-Body Modalities (Guided Imagery, Progressive Muscle Relaxation)
- Manual Medicine (Massage, Osteopathic Manipulative Treatment, Chiropractic)
- Traditional Medicine (TCM, Ayurveda)/Whole Systems (Naturopathy)
- Energy Medicine (Reiki, Healing Touch)

CONVENTIONAL MEDICINE



IM&H brings the skills, experience, and professional guidelines from a practitioner’s scope of practice into the integrative approach. The ultimate aim is to optimize patient care and improve overall health outcomes through the intelligent combination of both evidence-based conventional and non-conventional practices.

What does this look like?

In conventional medicine, the primary tools are often pharmaceuticals, procedures, or surgeries. An IM&H practitioner will use the best evidence from their conventional medicine scope along with that from their expanded toolkit of integrative approaches to offer the most patient-focused and personalized care with least potential for harm.

EVIDENCE-BASED



Evidence-based means Integrative Medicine & Health takes into consideration the relevant scientific evidence, the patient’s preferences, and the practitioner’s clinical judgment. The practitioner’s guidance highlights therapies that provide the greatest benefit and least harm. This *benefit:risk* approach honors low-risk interventions found in traditional medicine and cultural healing practices and research supported complementary therapies, as well as more invasive and higher-risk interventions found in conventional medicine.

What does this look like?

Assessing is on a continuum:

- Higher-risk interventions (includes both conventional and complementary) require higher levels of evidence to recommend.

Lower-risk interventions (Traditional healing practices, nutrition, exercise, mindfulness, etc.) may require less evidence to recommend.

LIFESTYLE APPROACHES



IM&H is deeply committed to looking at lifestyle approaches to improve health and wellbeing, lower disease risk, as well as support the management of disease. Guiding patients to healthy behavior changes and helping them reduce barriers to these changes can both empower the individual as well as make a significant impact on health outcomes.

What does this look like?

IM&H considers each of the 7 Core Areas of Health as part of a whole person—body-mind-spirit approach.

The 7 Core Areas of Health are:

- Sleep
- Nutrition
- Movement
- Resilience
- Environment
- Relationships
- Spirituality

INNATE HEALING CAPACITY



IM&H values the innate healing capacity of the human body—an intrinsic force for health that perpetually operates within each of us. When disease or injury strains this response, an IM&H approach bolsters the body’s natural ability to rebound from the insult. The multifaceted approach of IM&H serves a dual purpose: strengthening the innate healing capacity and removing the obstacles to health.

What does this look like?

IM&H has long emphasized preventive approaches and addressing root causes of health issues. A focus on addressing health impediments include poor dietary habits, sedentary lifestyle, and chronic stress. By recognizing and harnessing the power of innate healing, integrative medicine offers a comprehensive and personalized path to wellness, addressing not just symptoms, but the root causes of health issues.