

Complementary Medicine in Clinical Practice

Rakel DP, Faass N

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This book was designed as a tool to “empower you through greater access to evidence-based therapies of complementary medicine” and to “expand communication between the professions, and aid physicians and practitioners in identifying other providers with whom they would like to share mutual referrals or collaborate on care.” With estimates that approximately 40% of the general population utilizes CAM in some form, it is necessary to be well-informed of what alternative treatment options are available and which ones are currently being utilized.

While this book may at first glance seem quite lengthy and impractical to read with 70 chapters, it is well indexed and information is easily located within the 10 sections: Expanding the Continuum of Care, Clinical Nutrition, Exercise and Fitness, Mind-Body Medicine, Self-Care, Therapeutic Massage, Acupuncture, Chiropractic, Herbal Therapy, and Models of Integrative Medicine. Each section outlines theories and provides relevant information on clinical research and strategies, and often-times a helpful list of resource tools. The text is seemingly well indexed, and offers many tables to reiterate applicable topics. Information portrayed in the text is well referenced, ensuring that current research is the goal of each corresponding authors.

While many of the chapters may seem redundant or irrelevant to some providers, it is a useful tool in that it offers the preliminary information necessary to understand various aspects of the wide spectrum of complementary care. Readers can then choose if they wish to skim the brief overview for a mere understanding of the alternative approach, or reach further into the literature through the use of offered references and suggested sources of further information to fully understand the approach that they are seeking.

Expanding the continuum of care to include lifestyle approaches and complementary medicine can provide additional powerful tools and resources to address the health concerns that challenge patients. This approach is essential in a world where patients continue to seek alternative approaches, yet limited integrative health care models are readily available. This text provides an excellent resource for clinicians striving to stay abreast of current trends in alternative approaches, yet desiring an evidence-based approach to understanding the complementary medicine continuum.

Dr. Cara L. Borggren, BS, DC

Chiropractic Clinical Resident

Northwestern Health Sciences University, College of Chiropractic

cborggren@nwhealth.edu