# COMPARISON OF MEDICAL PARADIGMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONVENTIONAL MEDICINE</th>
<th>INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE</th>
<th>ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEFINITION</strong></td>
<td>Medical care based on training from a U.S. medical school and conventional residency program.</td>
<td>Medical care that integrates conventional medicine with alternative medicine.</td>
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<td><strong>The majority of U.S. medical doctors practice Conventional Medicine</strong></td>
<td>Integrative Medicine physicians are those that have completed a conventional medical education but then take the initiative to continue to educate themselves either through a professional integrative medicine organization (see below for examples) or through personal study of research outside of Big Pharma. Personal study can include evaluation of research funded by supplement companies or by medical device manufacturers, or conducted internationally where natural remedies are preferred.</td>
<td>Minority of physician workforce. Numbers are growing as society evolves, and patient-consumers become more sophisticated.</td>
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<td><strong>EXAMPLES IN MEDICINE</strong></td>
<td>American Medical Association</td>
<td>American Holistic Medical Association</td>
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<td></td>
<td>American Psychiatric Association</td>
<td>Institute for Functional Medicine</td>
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<td>American Holistic Medical Association</td>
<td>American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>EXAMPLES IN PSYCHIATRY</strong></td>
<td>American Psychiatric Association Caucus on Complementary &amp; Alternative Medicine</td>
<td>Safe Harbor (online community)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Safe Harbor (online community)</td>
<td>True Hope (multisupplement retailer)</td>
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<td><strong>TREATMENT GOAL</strong></td>
<td>Treatment of disease</td>
<td>Attainment of optimal health</td>
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<td><strong>EXAMPLE:</strong></td>
<td>EXAMPLE:</td>
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A physician checks a patient's Vitamin B12 level only if the patient complains of poor memory. Goal is for Vitamin B12 level to be >200. This value of >200 corresponds to the minimum acceptable Vitamin B12 level necessary to avoid memory loss and peripheral neuropathy (i.e. numbness or abnormal sensations in the fingers & toes).

**Reactive medicine.**

The body is something that can be "made to behave" via aggressive treatments of medications & surgery.

The body's various systems are conceptualized as inter-related. For example, the distinctions between a neurotransmitter (i.e. a chemical that affects the brain), a hormone, and an inflammatory cytokine (i.e. a chemical released by immune cells) are considered blurry and somewhat arbitrary.

**Preventative medicine.**

The body has innate healing power. Treatment should assist the body in healing itself.

The body's various systems are conceptualized as inter-related. For example, the distinctions between a neurotransmitter (i.e. a chemical that affects the brain), a hormone, and an inflammatory cytokine (i.e. a chemical released by immune cells) are considered blurry and somewhat arbitrary.

**VIEW OF THE BODY**

The body is conceptualized as being comprised of distinct "systems", such as the neurological, endocrine, and immune systems.

**STRENGTHS**

Best for **acute traumas and illnesses**, where the body's ability to heal itself has been superseded by the severity of the trauma.

Best for **chronic illnesses and conditions**. Chronic illnesses usually have a multifactorial etiology.

Best for illnesses, whether acute or chronic, where conventional and integrative medicine approaches have failed, and/or offered a prognosis of "poor".

**EXAMPLES:**
- Multiple sclerosis
- Diabetes
- Psychiatric conditions
- Fibromyalgia
- Chronic sinusitis

**EXAMPLE:**
- Stage IV pancreatic cancer for which "there is no cure".

**BIASES**

Supplements are "scary". Since supplements are not strictly regulated by the FDA, one cannot be certain of a given supplement's potency (irregardless of the manufacturer's claims) nor its purity from fillers or adulterants.

Ideally, none. Aware of the biases (or concerns) of both sides. Takes the initiative to personally investigate these concerns in detail. Maintains an attitude of humble open-mindedness combined with critical thinking.

Medications are "scary" because they are artificial and ignore the body's natural healing mechanisms. Medications can cause more harm than good. The long-term effects of medications are unknown since drug-company-sponsored trials last usually for only 6 weeks, or at most one year.