

## **NORTHAMPTON AREA PEDIATRICS, LLP**

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*Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*

### **Complementary and Alternative Medicine Referral Policy**

All the providers at Northampton Area Pediatrics practice conventional Western, also known as allopathic, medicine. Whenever possible we base our treatment advice on medical evidence that supports its benefits. We also know that sometimes there isn't much evidence one way or the other. In those instances, we make a treatment plan based on our experiences treating other patients and our knowledge of related treatments. In all our treatment decisions, we weigh the risks of harm against the potential for benefit.

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) helps many of our patients and families, in small or large ways, and we try to learn about those treatments and use them when there is proof, they are helpful and safe. Unfortunately, treatments that are not proven helpful and/or safe can harm patients. The harm is either direct, from the treatment itself, or indirect, from not using other, proven helpful treatments.

We are happy to talk with you about CAM treatments when we see your child and to consider all safe options. If we feel there is proof a CAM treatment might help your child, we may refer you to someone who can give that treatment. Some examples of referrals made in the past include chiropractic care for some back pain in older children and teens, self-hypnosis for chronic pain, and acupuncture or acupressure for hard-to-treat muscle pain. However, due to the lack of evidence overall, the variability in treatment approaches and, most importantly, the potential for harm, it is our policy not to give retroactive referrals to CAM providers, including naturopaths and homeopaths.