COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE THERAPY

Definitions

- Proven Treatments
  Refer to evidence-based, conventional, mainstream, or standard medical treatments that have been tested following a strict set of guidelines and found to be safe and effective. These treatments are approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

- Research of Investigational Treatments
  Refers to therapies being studied in a clinical trial. Clinical trials are controlled research projects that determine whether a new treatment is effective and safe for patients.

- Complementary
  Refers to supportive methods that are used to complement, or add to, conventional treatments. Complementary therapies may lessen the side effects of standard treatments or provide mental and physical benefits to the person with cancer. Examples which may reduce stress and nausea include: meditation, peppermint tea, acupuncture, massage and yoga.

- Integrative therapy
  Refers to the combined use of evidence-based proven therapies and complimentary therapies. Integrative therapy is part of many U.S. cancer centers and hospitals.

- Alternative Treatments
  Are unproven, not scientifically tested, or were tested and found to be ineffective. They are used instead of conventional treatments. They may cause the patient to suffer, either from lack of or delay in helpful treatment or because the alternative treatment is actually harmful.

- Quackery
  Refers to the promotion of methods that claim to prevent, diagnose, or cure cancers that are known to be false or that are unproven. They are often based on the use of patient testimonials as evidence of their effectiveness and safety.

Organizations

- Alternative Medicine Homepage
  http://www.pitt.edu/~cbw/altm.html
  A reference site to complementary and alternative medicines (CAM). It provides an organized index for Internet links to related databases, mailing lists, directories, and other resources.

- National Center for Complementary/Alternative Medicine (NCCAM)
  http://nccam.nih.gov
  Toll Free: (888) 644-6226
  NCCAM evaluates alternative medicine practices to determine their effectiveness, to serve as a public information clearinghouse, and to provide a research-training program.

- Cancernet PDQ®
  http://www.cancer.gov/cancerinfo/pdq/cancerdatabase
  Provides recent and accurate cancer information from the National Cancer Institute (NCI), including summaries on complementary and alternative medicine.

- American Cancer Society (ACS)
  http://www.cancer.org
  ACS offers comprehensive, up-to-date cancer information 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. An online daily news magazine provides information on recent news, events and research. A wide variety of educational programs, services, and referrals are offered, as well as information related to complementary and alternative methods.

- NIH Office of Dietary Supplements (ODS)
  http://ods.od.nih.gov
  (301) 435-2920
  This website contains articles from scientific journals, information about dietary supplements, and a search engine for specific vitamins, minerals, and herbal products.

Continued
CFSAN promotes and protects public health interest by ensuring the food is safe, nutritious, and wholesome, and that it is honestly, accurately and informatively labeled. They offer information on dietary supplements.

American Botanical Council (ABC)
http://www.herbalgram.org
(512) 926-4900
ABC publishes a journal called HerbalGram, and they offer an online herb reference.

Canadian Breast Cancer Research Alliance (CBCRI)
http://www.breast.cancer.ca
(416) 596-6598
This website offers extensive reviews of scientifically credible and methodologically rigorous research on several unconventional therapies.

HealthScout
http://www.healthscout.com
HealthScout is a general health website that provides health care news and medical information, including information about complementary and alternative medicine.

National Agricultural Library
http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic
(301) 504-5719
FNIC (Food and Nutrition Information Center) provides information on dietary supplements, including vitamins, minerals, and herbs.

OncoLink
http://www.oncolink.org
OncoLink provides comprehensive cancer education and information about complementary and alternative medicine.

Quackwatch
http://www.quackwatch.com
A nonprofit corporation whose purpose is to combat health-related frauds, myths, fads, and fallacies. This website is a comprehensive source of information regarding fraudulent claims.