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# be WELL

A Newsletter for the Center for Integrative Medicine and Wellness

## DEEP BREATHING:

1. Place the tip of your tongue at the ridge of your upper front teeth
2. Inhale through your nose for a counting silently to four
3. Hold your breath for a count of 7
4. Exhale through your mouth for a count of 8. (Keep your tongue in place)

Repeat four times

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## INTEGRATIVE MEDICINE

**Integrative medicine** is a combination of CAM (complementary and alternative medicine) and conventional medicine. Many integrative providers are using the phrase blended or good medicine. It is an approach that incorporates the best complementary and alternative modalities. It is **inclusive**--conventional medicine is not rejected and alternative medicine is not used unilaterally. It **embraces** a variety of safe, effective and therapeutic options. It is the **art and science** of healing that addresses the whole person, physical, mental and spiritual attributes. There is a **partnership** between the patient and provider. It **focuses** on the least invasive, least toxic and least costly medical care. Individualized diagnosis and treatment is done. There is an **emphasis of maximizing the body's inherent healing ability**. Lastly, integrative medicine **focuses on lifestyle issues**--nutrition, exercise, stress reduction, sleep quality, relationships, quality of life, and the appropriate use of supplements, herbs and vitamins.

## SPIRITUAL MATTERS

### Meditation

Mediation allows you to block out distractions and calm and center your mind. This practice can also energize you. Meditation does not have to be complicated. Choose a warm room and a comfortable place to sit. Focus on your breathing. Don't let your thoughts wander. Aim to meditate for 10 to 15 minutes daily. You may want to use a mantra or prayer as your form of meditation.

## Vitamins and Supplements

According to the National Institutes of Health a supplement is a product that contains vitamins, minerals, herbs, botanicals, amino acids enzymes and or other ingredients to supplement the diet. It is intended to be taken in tablet, capsule, powder, softgel, gelcap or liquid form.

The use of supplements should be individualized and appropriate. Whole foods should be the best source for supplements, however, even with a great eating plan, a good quality multivitamin, multimineral, antioxidant formula is needed to fill in the gaps and to protect the body against toxins in the environment. Vitamin and mineral supplementation should not be a substitute for a good eating plan. Instead there should be a blended approach of appropriate use of supplements and a good diet. When using supplements of any kind it is important to consider the different categories. It is also important to inform your health care provider of supplements you take to prevent the possibility of adverse interactions with prescription medications.

With over 20 years of medical experience as a physician and the last several years as an integrative medicine physician I recommend to patients to consider the many categories of supplementation. They can include: multivitamin/multimineral; antioxidant; calcium and magnesium; vitamin D; omega 3 fatty acids; probiotics; supplements for energy support, mood support and specific ones for any health challenge you may be struggling with. The selection process can be overwhelming and that is why supplement use should be appropriate and individualized.

I have been impressed with a good quality, liquid multivitamin, multimineral, antioxidant preparation called VEMMA (**V**itamins, **E**ssential **M**inerals, **M**angosteen, **A**loe vera). Liquid supplements are better absorbed by the body because large, hard pills may pass through the digestive tract and be excreted intact. When excreted intact through the digestive system benefits are lost.

The number of pills required in a good quality product is sometimes 3 to 4 and compliance decreases when there are a high number of pills to swallow. Many patients are averse to taking pills and often refuse to do so. One can also avoid additives added to pills (to prolong shelf life) by using a liquid preparation. For the average healthy woman a good quality, liquid, multivitamin, multimineral, antioxidant preparation (like VEMMA) that is bundled (as opposed to buying the different components separately) and an appropriate amount of calcium citrate may be all that is needed. It is important to check with your health care provider for guidance as needed. Further information about vitamins and supplements can be found at [medicineandwellness.com](http://medicineandwellness.com).



Mangosteen Fruit  
(a potent antioxidant)

## AVOIDING STRESS

### Helpful Tips

- Avoid refined foods and inflammatory foods such as caffeine, excess alcohol and dairy
- Cut out the whites
- Increase foods that nourish the nervous system (whole grains, fresh vegetables, and foods rich in essential fatty acids-nuts, flax, cold water fish)
- Consume foods high in potassium (avocados, lima beans, salmon, bananas, tomatoes, dried apricots)
- Good quality multivitamin/mineral supplementation
- Make sure it supplies the B vitamins, magnesium, copper, selenium, zinc)
- Calcium 1000mg to 1500mg with magnesium 400mg daily
- Antioxidants
- Consider essential fatty acids (especially if depression is a factor)
- Chamomile
- Passionflower
- St John's wort (if depression an issue)
- Kava kava
- Valerian
- Rescue remedy (good for anticipatory stress)
- Laugh at your stress
- Try an affirmation
- Forgive yourself. Be your own best friend.
- Plan something