

Alternative Medicine

🔮 B2 Level

🔮 Duration: 1 h

1

Warm-up

Exercise 1: Have you heard about alternative medicine? What is it? Have you personally used it?

Exercise 2: Comment on each of these advantages and disadvantages of alternative medicine relying on your knowledge. Do you agree or disagree?

Advantages:

1. Alternative medicine may be more convenient than traditional treatments.
2. Alternative medicine emphasizes the overall general wellness of a person's mind and body, rather than focusing solely on physical symptoms.
3. Alternative medicine promotes long-term health benefits.

Disadvantages:

1. Lack of scientific evidence validating its efficacy.
2. Risk of using unsafe ingredients or incorrect dosages when preparing medications.
3. Not all insurance companies cover these services so out-of-pocket costs are necessary.

2

Vocabulary and Reading

Exercise 3. Before you read an article about alternative medicine, have a look at some vocabulary related to the topic. Match the words with their definitions.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1. failure | a. advice or information that helps you make a decision or understand something better. |
| 2. ginkgo | b. a type of tree with fan-shaped leaves, originally from China. |
| 3. informed | c. not controlled or limited by rules or laws. |
| 4. guidance | d. the ability to produce a desired or intended result. |
| 5. concentration | e. an extra amount of something that is added to something else in order to improve it. |
| 6. unregulated | f. the process of giving all your attention to one particular thing. |
| 7. supplement | g. the lack of success in doing or achieving something. |
| 8. efficacy | h. having knowledge or understanding about something. |

Exercise 4. Scan the text for its main idea. What is it?**Herbals, Yoga, Ginkgo: What Alternative Treatments Help Fight Heart Failure?**

It's tempting to follow the latest trend when it comes to health care, but for patients who live with heart _____, some alternative treatments could have serious consequences.

To address the issue, the American Heart Association (AHA) has published a new scientific statement covering a wide range of alternative therapies and their impact on heart failure. It also offers _____ for health care professionals and recommendations for patients.

"Patients should talk to their health care team first," said Dr. Sheryl Chow, who was part of the AHA's writing group for the statement.

The AHA paper offers guidance on _____ such as CoQ10, vitamin D, _____, devil's claw, fish oil, thiamine, hawthorn, vitamin E, blue cohosh, lily of the valley and aloe vera, while offering additional advice on alcohol, caffeine and grapefruit juice.

"Because these agents are largely _____ by the [U.S. Food and Drug Administration], manufacturers do not need to demonstrate _____ or safety," explained Chow, an associate professor of pharmacy practice and administration at Western University of Health Sciences in Pomona, Calif. "It is important that both health care professionals and consumers are educated about potential efficacy and risk of harm, so that shared and _____ decision-making can occur."

The committee also reviewed yoga and tai chi, commonly suggested for relaxation.

About 6 million Americans aged 20 and up have heart failure, where their heart doesn't pump blood as well as it should. An estimated 30% of these individuals are using an alternative therapy. "Consumers don't realize that the FDA does not regulate purity, quality and strength of OTC over-the-counter herbals and supplements. One product might contain very different _____ and purity than the next, despite having the same label in the pharmacy or health food store," Chow said.

On its list of alternative therapies that may benefit people with heart failure, the AHA said omega-3 fatty acids — also known as fish oil — have the strongest evidence of clinical benefit for people with heart failure. These may be used in moderation after talking with a doctor, the AHA statement said. They shouldn't be used in doses of 4 grams or more because they may increase an irregular heart rhythm at higher doses.

Yoga and tai chi also have benefits, potentially improving a person's tolerance for exercise, plus quality of life, while decreasing blood pressure. Despite the fact that low blood levels of vitamin D have been associated with worse heart failure outcomes, taking this supplement may be harmful if a person is also taking certain heart failure medications. Supplements of the root of a flowering plant called blue cohosh may cause a fast heart rate, high blood pressure, chest pain and increase blood sugar levels, the statement warned.

Studies on other therapies including thiamine, alcohol, vitamin E, CoQ10 and hawthorn have mixed findings. More research and controlled trials are needed to better understand the risks and benefits, Chow said.

Although this scientific statement is focused on heart failure patients, Chow said, the guidance is equally important for people with other health issues.

Exercise 5. Fill in the gaps in the text with the vocabulary below. Use each word once.

Failure
Ginkgo
Informed
Guidance
Concentration
Unregulated
Supplements
Efficacy

Exercise 6. Detailed reading: Are these statements True or False?

1. The American Heart Association has published a new scientific statement about the impact of alternative therapies on heart failure.
2. The FDA regulates the purity, quality and strength of over-the-counter herbals and supplements.
3. Omega-3 fatty acids have the strongest evidence of clinical benefit for people with heart failure.
4. Yoga and tai chi can improve a person's tolerance for exercise and decrease blood pressure.
5. Taking vitamin D supplements may be beneficial if a person is taking certain heart failure medications.
6. The guidance in the AHA statement is only applicable to heart failure patients.

3**Speaking****Exercise 7. After reading the text, answer these questions:**

1. Is alternative medicine regulated in any way?
2. Are there any potential benefits to using alternative medicine?
3. What should people consider before trying an alternative treatment?

4**Homework**

Exercise 8. Choose one essay topic from the list and write a 250-word essay expressing your opinion.

1. What are the potential risks of using alternative medicine? Give your opinion.
2. Is utilizing alternative medicine a cost-effective way to treat various illnesses? Give your opinion.
3. What are some of the biggest challenges to using alternative medicine instead of traditional medical treatments?
4. What are the legal implications of using alternative medicine as a medical treatment?

Process and correct answers

Exercise 1. Have you heard about alternative medicine? What is it? Have you personally used it?

I came up with these questions myself.

Exercise 2. Comment on each of these advantages and disadvantages of alternative medicine relying on your knowledge. Do you agree or disagree?

I used the "Create a list of advantages and disadvantages" tool to create this exercise and chose the points that I liked the most to include in my lesson.

Exercise 3. Before you read an article about alternative medicine, have a look at some vocabulary related to the topic. Match the words with their definitions.

I found an article online and used the "Fill in the gap" tool to exclude some key vocabulary from the text.

I pasted the gapped text into my worksheet and used the excluded words to create the matching exercise. I simply copied them into the "Create a matching exercise word-definition" tool.



Correct answers:

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| a. Guidance | e. Supplement |
| b. Ginkgo | f. Concentration |
| c. Unregulated | g. Failure |
| d. Efficacy | h. Informed |

Exercise 4. Scan the text for its main idea. What is it?

I used the same text that I had in the output from the "Fill in the gap" tool.

Exercise 5. Fill in the gaps in the text with the vocabulary below. Use each word once.

The "Fill in the gap" tool that I used before provided me with 2 lists of words - one list for the student (mixed order) that I added to my worksheet and the other list (correct order) for me to use as correct answers.



Correct answers:

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| 1. Failure | 5. Unregulated |
| 2. Guidance | 6. Efficacy |
| 3. Supplements | 7. Concentration |
| 4. Ginkgo | |



Exercise 6. Detailed reading: Are these statements True or False?

I used the "Create True/False statements" tool and chose the statements that I liked the most.

Correct answers:

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. True | 4. True |
| 2. False | 5. False |
| 3. True | 6. False |

Exercise 7. After reading the text, answer these questions:

The questions were provided by the "Find discussion questions" tool after I pasted the topic "alternative medicine". I chose the ones that I liked.

Exercise 8. Choose one essay topic from the list and write a 250-word essay expressing your opinion.

I used the "Create a list of essay topics" tool to provide my students with homework. I typed in "alternative medicine" in the "Subject" field.