

ESL Health Unit
Unit Five
Taking Medications
Lesson Three:
Alternative Medicine



Reading and Writing Practice
Advanced Beginning

Goals for this lesson:

*Below are some of the goals of this lesson. Which ones are your goals too?
Check (✓) them.*

- Learn about different types of alternative medicines and practices.
- Discuss effective strategies for talking to your doctor about alternative medicine.
- Review how to agree and disagree appropriately in English.

Students
Helping
In the
Naturalization of
Elders

MetLife Foundation



Lesson Three – Alternative Medicine

Reading and Writing Practice

Before You Read!

In this lesson, we will read about and discuss alternative medicines and medical treatments.



Alternative Medicine means using practices and methods that are different from modern ones. Examples of alternative medicine include: acupuncture, Chinese herbal medicine and massage therapy (for descriptions of these alternative medical treatments see the Before You Listen section below).

Questions:

1. Have you ever received any kind of alternative medical treatment? If so describe it.
2. Are alternative medical treatments common in your culture? If yes, please describe.

Vocabulary

*Study these new vocabulary words before you read. Read the sentences and guess the meaning of the **bold** words from context. Discuss the words with your teacher.*

- 1. I was **diagnosed** with cancer 6 months ago. My doctor told me in the clinic.*
- 2. A typical cancer treatment using chemicals and drugs is called **chemotherapy**.*
- 3. After chemotherapy, patients feel sick in the stomach. Doctors say **nausea** is the most common side effect of chemotherapy.*
- 4. In China, patients often use medicine made of plants. **Herbal treatments** are very common.*

Reading Four: Alternative Medicine

This story was generated by the course developer for instructional purposes.

Now read about Ching-Yi and her conflict with traditional Chinese medicine and conventional medicine and answer the questions that follow with your classmates and instructor.

My name is Ching-Yi and I am from Taiwan. About 6 months ago I was **diagnosed** with cancer. My doctor talked to me about treatment. He said, “You need to have surgery and then begin **chemotherapy**.” I told him I wanted to talk to my Chinese doctor about **herbal treatments**. He became upset. He told me that I could get sicker if I used these treatments.

So I talked to my Chinese doctor and he suggested I see someone new, Dr. Yang. I talked to my new doctor about traditional Chinese herbal treatments. She said that herbal treatments can help reduce my **nausea** during my **chemotherapy** treatment. She said I can use herbal treatments, but that I must report everything I take to her. I feel worried about my cancer, but I am glad that I can use both Western and Chinese medicine to help fight it.

1. How did Ching-Yi's first doctor feel about Chinese herbal medicine?
2. How does Dr. Yang feel about Chinese herbal medicine?
3. What do you think about alternative medicine?

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Listening and Speaking Practice

Advanced Beginning

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Lesson Three – Alternative Medicine

Listening and Speaking Practice

Before You Listen!

Study the vocabulary below in the chart. Discuss each type of alternative treatment with your partner.

<p><i>Traditional Chinese Medicine</i></p> <p>This is from China. It comes from the idea that sickness results from the wrong flow of the life force (qi) through the body.</p>	
<p><i>Acupuncture</i></p> <p>Acupuncture stimulates your body. Acupuncturists put very small needles into the skin and tissues underneath.</p>	

Herbal Medicine

Herbal medicines are made from plants. They are used to treat disease and promote health.



Massage Therapy

Massage therapy is about moving our body tissues to help us become healthier and to reduce pain and stress.



Listening Three: Learning about Alternative Treatments

****Note to instructor:** Record this listening passage onto a cassette (if possible with someone to play the second role in the dialogue) and have students listen to the recording to make sure the questions they wrote were correct.

Speaker: Dr. Kim is telling us about alternative treatments today. He will answer any of your questions during his talk.

Dr. Kim: I am going to talk about some alternative medical treatments today. First, let's talk about traditional Chinese medicine. This came from China thousands of years ago. This comes from the belief that illness is caused by the wrong flow of the life force (qi) through the body.

Patient: Dr. Kim, what are some examples of traditional Chinese medicine?

Dr. Kim: Some examples of traditional Chinese medicine are *herbal remedies, massage and acupuncture.*

Patient: Dr. Kim, what is acupuncture?

Dr. Kim: That's a good question. Acupuncture is one of the most accepted alternative medicine methods in the Western world. The idea is to put very small needles into the skin, where the qi, or life force, flows through the body.

Patient: Is acupuncture painful?

Dr. Kim: No, it is not painful.

Patient: Are there other kinds of alternative treatments?

Dr. Kim: Yes. Massage therapy is another treatment. It is about moving body tissues to improve our health. There are many ways to do massage therapy.

Patient: What does this help?

Dr. Kim: Some people believe this therapy helps reduce pain and stress.

Patient: These therapies are really interesting.

Dr. Kim: I agree. If you want to use any alternative treatment, be sure to talk to your doctor about it.

Information in this listening exercise was adapted from the Mayo Clinic

Activity One

Choose whether the following statements are true or false based on the listening:

1. Traditional Chinese medicine came from China hundreds of years ago. T F
2. Herbal remedies and acupuncture are examples of Chinese medicine. T F
3. Acupuncture is accepted in the Western world. T F
4. Acupuncture is painful. T F
5. Massage therapy may help pain and reduce stress. T F

Activity Two:

Listen again and try to fill in the missing words from the following segments from Dr. Kim. When you finish compare answers with your neighbor.

Segment One

I am going to talk about some medical treatments today. First, let's talk about traditional Chinese medicine. This came from China _____ of years ago. This comes from the belief that _____ is caused by the wrong flow of the life force (qi) through the body.

Segment Two

That's a good question. Acupuncture is one of the most _____ alternative medicine methods in the Western world. The _____ here is to put very small needles into the _____, where the qi, or life force, flows through the body.

Activity Three:

Practice the dialogue with a partner. Take turns being Dr. Kim and the patient.

Talk About It!

Read through the following Health Watch box before you begin.

Health Watch: Talking with Your Doctor About Alternative Methods

The following are some things you can do if you talk with your doctor about alternative medicine.

- Let your doctor know that you are thinking about an alternative treatment.
- Gather information before your discussion. Look for information from reliable sources on the benefits and risks of the alternative treatment.
- Ask your doctor if your alternative treatment will interfere with your regular medical treatment.
- Make a list of questions and bring it along with any information you want to talk about.

Adapted from information from the American Cancer Society

Let's review how to agree and disagree appropriately when discussing your opinion in English.

Here are some phrases to use to agree and disagree in English. Practice saying these phrases with your teacher.

Agreeing

I agree with you.

Exactly.

You're right.

That's a good point.

Absolutely.

I know exactly what you mean.

Disagreeing

I'm sorry, but I don't agree.

Well, you have a point there, but...

Actually, I don't think so. I think...

Maybe, but I don't think that...

I'm not sure I agree.

I see what you mean, but

Activity One:

Look at this sample dialogue and underline the phrases of agreeing and disagreeing. The first one has been done for you. Then practice the dialogue with a partner.

Sylvie: What do you think about acupuncture, Juan?

Juan: Acupuncture? I think it is a waste of time and money!

Sylvie: I'm not sure I agree. My doctor told me that it can help me reduce my pain.

Juan: Maybe, but I don't think that it is worth the money. Doesn't it cost \$50 for one hour? I can buy a bottle of aspirin for \$2 - two dollars.

Sylvie: I see what you mean. Acupuncture is definitely more expensive than taking a painkiller. They say it lasts longer than medicine, and actually cures the cause of the pain.

Juan: That's a good point. Maybe it isn't a total waste. If you try it, let me know how it goes!

Activity Two:

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Respond to the following sentences using one of the phrases you learned above.

1. Western doctors don't care about their patients. They just care about money!

2. Alternative medicine is a waste of time.

3. People who use acupuncture are crazy.

4. Western medicine works better than traditional Chinese medicine.

5. Alternative medicine can help you heal faster.

Activity Three:

Work with a partner to role-play the following situation (take turns playing the different roles). As you do, be sure to use appropriate phrases as you agree/disagree with each other.

Situation One:

Roles:

Doctor Martinez: Marcia wants to stop taking her pills and start taking herbal remedies. You do not agree with her.

Marcia: You do not like taking drugs. You want to stop taking your blood pressure pills. You want to begin taking Chinese herbal remedies. You also want to start doing acupuncture. You believe this will make you feel better.

Situation:

Doctor Martinez: Marcia, how are you feeling? How is that new blood pressure medicine working?

Marcia: Actually, I want to stop taking my medicine.

Play out the rest of the conversation...

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Real Practice!

Questions to ask at your first doctor visit

The first doctor visit is very important. You will want to ask some questions at the first doctor visit. Practice this dialogue with a partner. Underline each question the patient asks. Then role-play with your partner.

Acupuncture Visit

Doctor: Nice to meet you. How are you feeling?

Patient: Well, not very well. I am having a lot of headaches. My sister
told me that acupuncture might help me.

Dr. Kim: Yes, it has helped many people with headaches.

Patient: Dr. Kim, what are the risks of this therapy?

Dr. Kim: There are no risks. But you may feel a little uncomfortable.

Patient: Does it hurt?

Dr. Kim: Not really. You have to lie very still or it may hurt a bit.

Patient: How long will I need to get treatment?

Dr. Kim: We usually do acupuncture treatments for 8 weeks. Then we will see how you are feeling. We can decide then if you want to continue.

Patient: Do you think this therapy will really help me?

Dr. Kim: Yes, I believe it can be very helpful. Many patients feel better after acupuncture.

Patient: How long have you been practicing?

Dr. Kim: I have been here at the hospital for 12 years.

Patient: How much does it cost?

Dr. Kim: It is \$50 per visit.

Patient: Will my insurance pay for it?

Dr. Kim: I'm sorry, but usually insurance doesn't pay for this.

Patient: Thank you for answering all of my questions. I need to think about it.

*A Thematic Unit for Intermediate Level ESL Teachers
Advanced Beginning Level, Unit Five: Taking Medications
Lesson Three: Alternative Medicine*

Checklist for Learning

Vocabulary Log:

In the space below, write down all of the new words you learned during this lesson that you want to remember. Try to separate your list of words into nouns (person, place or thing), adjectives (describing words) and verbs (action words). For extra practice use them in sentences of your own.

New words I learned during this lesson:

Nouns:

Adjectives:

Verbs:

What can you do?

Below are some of the language goals you worked on during this lesson. Check (✓) what you learned from this lesson. Add more ideas if you wish.

I learned to...

- Know the warning signs of poor nutritional health and what you can do to improve your diet.
- Understand the difference between count and non-count nouns
- Be able to use the phrase “used to”
- _____