

TRADITIONAL OR ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE?

Modern hospitals are very proud of their technical equipment, shining laboratories and operating theatres. They achieve wonderful results with drugs, radiation and surgery, but on the other hand more and more patients are disappointed by traditional western medicine and turn to alternative treatment: acupuncture, acupressure, homeopathy, herbalism, osteopathy and all kinds of energy healing. Also in Slovenia there are some people who criticise traditional medicine together with the pharmaceutical industry and believe only in the more natural treatment of alternative medicine. Others, however, don't trust alternative healing and think it is just a way how some people make money by cheating desperate people.

Alternative medicine is also called holistic medicine because it looks at the whole person, not like traditional medicine which treats patients as a series of isolated parts like a mechanic repairing a car. If you have a headache for example, the traditional doctor will say: «Take an aspirin!». For alternative medicine symptoms are not so important. It looks for the cause of an illness and takes into account not only symptoms but also age, habits, diet, emotions and the whole lifestyle of an individual person. It is based on the belief that most illnesses nowadays are caused by stress and unhealthy lifestyle. We work too much, too fast and live under a constant pressure and worry. We never find time to relax, to have a rest, to do exercise or to cultivate friendly and loving relationships with other people. We eat less and less fresh food.

Our supermarkets are packed with processed food full of preservatives and harmful chemicals. Addiction to alcohol, cigarettes and all sorts of drugs is increasing all the time. No wonder there are so many people suffering from all kinds of health problems looking for help. Many patients find the alternative approach much friendlier because they are treated as human beings with more understanding, while doctors in medical centres don't have time to listen to them. Alternative medicine also tries to prevent illness because prevention is better than cure. If you don't feel well it is better to do something or to change your lifestyle before you fall seriously ill.

In conclusion I would like to say that traditional medicine and alternative forms of treatment have both their advantages and disadvantages. In some cases one will help in some cases the other. They will certainly produce the best results if they work hand in hand. Both have things to offer in their own areas. Of course people will still call an ambulance in cases of accidents and all kinds of emergencies even if they trust nature more than chemistry.