The Wellness Family

Dr. Sherri Raley and Dr. Katie Chenkus Keep You Informed

The Allopathic vs Holistic Family

Making the best decisions for your family is becoming more challenging. With access to billions of articles on the internet talking about the different healthcare options available (some written by wise and counseled professionals and others not so much) it can leave a parent's head spinning. Who's right? Who's wrong? What's best and what isn't?

Defining the Difference

Allopathic medicine is defined as "the system of medical practice which treats disease by the use of pharmacological remedies which produce effects different from those produced by the disease under treatment." In other words, allopathic medicine uses chemicals to relieve symptoms. Other definitions also include "physical interventions such as surgery". Again, treating the symptoms not the cause.

The holistic model lifestyle is defined as "a form of healing that considers the whole person – body, mind, spirit and emotions – in the quest for optimal health and wellness". In other words, acupuncturists, homeopaths, naturopaths and chiropractors work to find the root cause of the illness instead of just masking the symptoms.

How We Were Raised

Many decisions are made based upon the familiar; how we were raised may be reflected in how we care for our own families. When our child is showing discomfort from a cold and they have a slight fever, our reactions will vary depending upon whether we were raised in an allopathic or a holistic family.

The allopathic approach will react with worry to any grade of fever, not understanding that an elevated temperature is a sign that the child is healthy and their body is working to fight off whatever is attacking (whether it is bacterial or viral). Once the worry begins then it moves to fear that the fever or illness may cause permanent damage, not recognizing that this rarely actually happens.

This fear of the symptoms leads to over-the-counter chemicals that mask them and may actually make things worse. For instance, Children's Tylenol may reduce the fever but there's a serious danger of overdosing which can be fatal. The reality is that the fever is actually helping the body fight off the illness and reducing the fever interferes with the body's natural ability to heal itself. Perhaps the child has a cold with a runny nose or hacking cough, over-the-counter medications to "treat" these symptoms have *side effects* such as headache, nausea or trouble sleeping (unless it's Benadryl which actually contains a chemical found in over-the-counter sleep aids). However, worse than these side effects, is the fact that these chemicals may impede the body's ability to heal. The runny nose is actually getting the bacteria out of the sinuses; dry up the sinuses and the bacteria may get stuck there and turn a simple cold into a sinus infection. The cough is trying to get the bacteria out of the bronchial tubes; stop the cough and a simple chest cold may become bronchitis.

In addition to the over-the-counter chemicals, allopathic parents will fill their child with Gatorade, other sports drinks or Pedialyte hoping to keep them hydrated when in reality their bodies are working harder to eliminate the chemicals and sugars included in these drinks.

Your chiropractor can help you find other healthcare providers who embrace the holistic lifestyle.

Finally, many parents overreact and take their child to a pediatrician where they may demand, and usually will receive, an antibiotic. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP.org) this overuse of antibiotics is leading to antibiotic-resistant strains of bacteria and other infections.

The Holistic Approach

In comparison, the holistic approach will react with patience to the symptoms presenting. While they don't like to see their child in discomfort, the holistic parent will monitor the fever without interfering, understanding that their child's innate (or inborn) intelligence is at work fighting off the bacteria or virus. Since most colds and associated fevers will resolve themselves in 24-72 hours, this parent will focus on providing as much comfort as possible while they follow the AAP's suggestion to *wait and watch.*

They will keep their child hydrated with healthy fluids and simple broths, and incorporate natural home remedies for comfort that will support the immune system while it does its job. Probably one of the most important steps they will take is to have their child's nervous system checked by their Family Wellness Chiropractor since this system controls the immune system.

Creating Your Integrated Team

What if you decided to move to an Integrated Model of healthcare? If you've recognized for yourself and your family a desire to build a team that allows you to access many healthcare providers, this new model of thinking starts with this thought: "My body has an inborn intelligence to heal itself". Once you recognize it and study natural ways to support it, then you find healthcare providers to support that desire.

Your new holistic team may start with your family wellness chiropractor who recognizes the body's ability to heal itself. The wellness chiropractor naturally fits this team because, if there is interference to your nervous system and you eliminate it with a chiropractic adjustment, this will support your immune response.

Your chiropractor will also recognize the three stressors that may be compromising your family's health: these are physical, chemical and emotional. Their desire as a holistic practitioner is to take an active role in helping you recognize your personal stressors and give you and your family strategies for change.

As your wellness doctor, the chiropractor can also help you select other healthcare providers who embrace the holistic lifestyle.

What if I Can't Find a Holistic Medical Doctor?

Medical doctors who are recognizing and embracing the natural approach are slowly becoming more plentiful. Andrew Weil, Mehmet Oz and Lauren Feder are just a few who are leading this movement but there still might not be allopathic doctors in your community that accept where the future of natural health should be going. In this case there are two things to consider.

First, remember that chiropractic care will help you and your family stay healthy so you'll rarely need an allopathic doctor and, second, you don't have to stay with your current healthcare team. Consider moving to "urgent care" facilities. Many families are making this choice if an emergency occurs or their child is extremely sick as it provides a general physician at hand for the quick test, treatment or referral.

How to Become the Empowered Parent

Lauren Feder, M.D., a medical professional who made holistic choices for her children as a mother and a physician, wrote several books empowering parents to make their own choices regarding the treatment of their kids including *Natural Baby and Childcare: Practical Medical Advice and Holistic Wisdom for Raising Healthy Children from Birth to Adolescence*. In this useful text, she recommends home remedies before over-the-counters or visits to the pediatrician and encourages parents to make the healthy choices for healthy children.

Additional books to help with holistic choices include: *The Well Adjusted Baby* by Jennifer Barham-Floreani, D.C., which offers holistic parenting advice for pregnancy, birth and beyond, *Grow Healthy. Grow Happy. The Whole Baby Guide* by Becky Cannon is a complete resource to help parents raise a holistic child from birth to age three, and *The Holistic Baby Guide: Alternative Care for Common Health Problems* by Randal Neustaedter, O.M.D. provides holistic choices as opposed to harmful chemical products and medications.

Your Journey

The body was created with an inborn intelligence that works to keep us healthy and every system is controlled by one master, the Central Nervous System. Many parents report back that their children have fewer colds, suffer fewer illnesses and are overall healthier children after beginning regular chiropractic care.

If you support the nervous system, the entire body functions better.

Dear Patient,
The doctors of Vitality Chiropractic are dedicated to providing you with the absolute best in family wellness care. So take a moment today to discuss with your Family Wellness Chiropractor any concerns you may have regarding your family's overall health and wellness.

This newsletter is provided to you by:

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