

# Conventional Allopathic vs. “Alternative” Holistic Health Care

Holistic Healthcare – Alison Hazelbaker, Ph.D., IBCLC, FILCA, C.S.T., RCST  
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## Talking Points

Alison Hazelbaker spells out some of the basic philosophical differences between allopathic medicine (conventional, western medicine) and holistic health care.

- ❖ Hazelbaker starts this article with discussion of the use of “alternative” to discuss non-conventional allopathic medicine. She finds this distinction unfair because holistic and traditional approaches to health care have long predated current western medicine.
- ❖ “Practiced in its current form, allopathic medicine remains in its infancy compared to more traditional approaches.” (60) But allopathic medicine holds such political sway in the health care industry, and its philosophy (or lack thereof) dominates our concept of medicine.
- ❖ The four main tenets of allopathic medicine: 1. There is only one cause of disease; 2. The body is a material entity, not unlike a machine; 3. The opposite cures; 4. Only methods found to be effective through rigorous scientific study are appropriate means to a cure. These four tenets represent the “materialist mindset,” that the body is only matter. The heart is a pump, the lungs are bellows, the nervous system is a communications network and the brain is a computer.
- ❖ The two main philosophical differences between allopathic medicine and “alternative” medicine: 1. Allopathic medicine treats disease, not the individual. Alternative medicine addresses the connectedness of the human to its environment; 2. Allopathic medicine focuses on one-cause disease, whereas alternative medicines understand a “multifactorial etiological model of disease.” (60)
- ❖ Allopathic medicine shines in one area – emergency treatment for accidents and injuries, as well as emergency treatment for illness (that often could be prevented). “As a wellness strategy, allopathy has miserably failed and its purveyors have earned themselves a bad reputation as the enemy.”

- ❖ Alternative therapies shine in various areas, including the prevention of emergencies (not due to accident or injury), restoration of health when the body is out of balance, actual cures where none have been found in allopathic circles.
- ❖ “We must put the allopathic model in its proper place as one modality along a continuum of modalities, removing it from its position as the one and only way to a cure. It should be subsumed into a model that is inclusive of all therapies. Then and only then will what we call “alternative” medicine once again take its rightful place in the pantheon of healthcare modalities that support health and render a true cure. “ (61)

### Resources

Full references for each article are available at <http://pathwaystofamilywellness.org/references.html>