



UNC
KIDNEY CENTER

Podcast Transcript:

Dr. Ron Falk & Dr. Remy Coeytaux

Integrating Traditional and Complementary Medicine

“Should patients tell their doctors that they are trying complementary medicine?”

Patient Patients are often reluctant to tell their doctors that they’re doing some of these practices. Is this something that patients should do?

Dr Coeytaux I would say yes. But, it’s difficult for the doctors, it’s difficult for the patient. In my view, a good medical counter with a patient and doctor is one where there’s certainly trust and openness of communication, and as much relevant information as can be shared. But there’s limited time. So any one thing that we do in a patient-doctor encounter is at the expense of something else.

Yes, unqualified, I would say, it’s generally a good idea for the patient and the doctor to have as much general information that is relevant. What one is doing and what one is taking in terms of medicine and herbs, yes I think that’s very relevant because it’s part of what we’re doing and it maybe really interacting or helping and you need to take that into account.

The reason I say “but” and hesitate is that most doctors don’t really know yet what to do with that information. It’s still an area that’s relatively new for many of us—not all of us, there are many physicians who are understanding more and more and are taking the time, but I can’t go to my colleagues and expect them to learn about all of this because not all of us can go and learn about all of these different modalities and herbs.

I have made a point of developing a career in integrative medicine, and I have very little understanding of herbal treatments because I haven’t focused on that. So I would say yes, but we’re not really at a place yet where I don’t know that we can make really good use of that information yet.