



UNC  
KIDNEY CENTER

Podcast Transcript:

Dr. Ron Falk & Dr. Remy Coeytaux

Integrating Traditional and Complementary Medicine

“Are there scientific studies that show integrative medicine is effective?”

Patient                    Are there scientific studies that show integrative medicine is effective?

Dr Coeytaux            There are many scientific studies that show a number of individual complementary or alternative practices that show efficacy. Those can either be efficacy compared head-to-head with conventional practices or as an adjunct to practices.

There aren't many studies that have yet looked at integrative medicine, per se, because that is difficult to define. So I would say absolutely yes, to a large number of modalities for a large number of conditions. It would be specific to each condition or approach.

Patient                    Could you give us an example of a study?

Remy                      For example, my main area of interest is in head aches. That's how I became interested. I'm also an acupuncturist and I trained in that as I was becoming an investigator in looking at headaches—treatment for chronic daily headache—and I became very interested in acupuncture. So that's the area that I do most of my work in—I've completed randomized, clinical trials funded by the NIH, of acupuncture for headache. These are studies that are published in JAMA, BMJ, Annals of Internal Medicine, top peer-reviewed journals, that show very clearly, without any question, that acupuncture is highly effective in the treatment of many different types of headache disorders. That's one example of many, of how a complementary and alternative approach, such as acupuncture, has been very seriously researched and has been published, and shown that there is absolute efficacy for certain conditions.