

**Practice of Complementary and Alternative Medicine
in Present Korea**

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The history of Korean medicine consists already of two streams, Western medicine and Oriental Medicine. Recently a new stream, 'Complementary and Alternative Medicine' (CAM) is becoming a prominent practice in both the medical field and even in the general public. There is keen competition in mass media reporting CAM as a feature article and there is a special medical institute actively studying in this field among medical doctors.

The medical society in Korea does not readily delve into CAM deeply and seriously. However, the medical society does carefully investigate and monitor this new rising medical field. Though the medical field in Korea has a strong foundation rooted in Oriental medicine, the concept and practice of CAM is still vague and obscure in Korea. Medical doctors who are concerned in CAM also have such a conflict. Furthermore, it is a serious concern that indiscreet use, misuse and even abuse of CAM by non-medical professionals may cause harm to innocent people.

The appearance of CAM inevitably has caused complications not only in the present medical practice but in society as well. Such complications occur not only in Korea but also as a global phenomenon. According to the WHO research material, only 30-40% of the world medical practice follow conventional western medicine, and the rest is dependent on complementary and alternative medicine. In the United States one out of three seek CAM and it is similar in Korea. Further on, I will discuss the scientific and clinical concept of CAM, analyze the present practice of CAM in Korea, and forecast the future for CAM in Korea.