



Preface
Complementary Medicine in Urology



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Guest Editor

Welcome to a truly unique issue of *The Urologic Clinics of North America*. First, I would like to thank all of the experts that participated in this project by submitting state of the art and objective articles on a variety of subjects that deal with complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) in urology. Second, I want to thank all members of *The Urologic Clinics* family that assisted in the production of this volume. It should be noted that the CAM articles in this issue are just part one of a two part series. A similar set of reviews on preventive medicine in urology will appear in a future issue of *The Urologic Clinics of North America*.

I would also like to take this opportunity to remember an individual that has accelerated the awareness of this subject in urology. Dr. William Fair was probably best known for contributing an enormous amount of research and education to the field of traditional treatments in urology while he was the Chair of Urology at Memorial Sloan Kettering. However, it is my opinion that he might also be recognized as the "Father of CAM in urology".

I met Dr. Fair four years ago at a large conference for prostate cancer patients. The day before the conference was to begin I asked him if he wanted to have a healthy dinner at a local restaurant and discuss some of his thoughts on CAM. He eagerly agreed and the actual dinner turned out to be a 3-hour state of the art informal and probably unplanned lecture on this new subject. I was the stu-

dent and he was the teacher (of course). Dr. Fair talked about the importance of CAM in medicine, and how it should be given serious consideration as a future potential discipline. He talked about his condition and how he believed he was combining the best of traditional and non-traditional medicine to provide the highest probability of a successful result. However, he also stressed CAM recommendations should be driven by research, research, and more research. It should be treated like any other serious subject in medicine. If the current and future research holds promise than these treatments should be integrated in mainstream medicine. However, if other research methods should determine that other treatments do not impact the quality and/or quantity of a patient's life then these other treatments should not be advocated. Today, these recommendations sound simplistic and make perfect sense, but several years ago I do not believe this was the case. It took an individual of Dr. Fair's stature to take a critical stand on this subject. His overall credibility, reputation, and his own battle with cancer became the impetus for numerous other researchers (such as myself) to begin to believe that a urology department needed to devote some time and resources to CAM on a regular basis. In other words, a medical center that was not evaluating CAM was not contributing completely to the field of medicine. Today, it is unusual to find a urology department or section that is not dedicated to some aspect of

CAM. In fact, it could be argued that urology, more than any other discipline in medicine presently, is leading the way in determining which CAM treatments are effective or ineffective. Dr. Fair was the first chair of the AUA CAM committee. He assembled a group of researchers around the world that continues to meet yearly to decide on the role of various CAM options in urology. He helped to bring one of the first courses on CAM to clinicians who attend the annual AUA meeting. His papers and presentations around the globe have brought a heightened awareness and interest in this subject. The bottom line is that he made a tangible impact that can be felt throughout the urology community today. He was a devoted husband, family man, patient advocate and contributor to the traditional and not so traditional world of medicine. He was not just a mentor/colleague, but a true friend whom I will remember the rest of my life.

Recent events in the world have probably caused most individuals to stop for a moment and reflect on life more than ever before, and ask

the important question “Am I making a difference?” I have and continue to find myself asking this question a great deal of the time. I have observed people from all walks of life asking this question over and over again during the past several months. Conversations and time with colleagues and family seem more pertinent than ever before. Regardless of your individual answer to the above question, I have to smile always when I think of Dr. William Fair because despite not knowing a whole lot about medicine in general at this point in my career I can at least tell you that Dr. Fair definitely made a difference in the lives of countless researchers, clinicians, and patients. He paved the way for future individuals to dedicate their lives to the subject of CAM.

This issue is dedicated to Dr. William Fair, “the father of CAM in urology,” who made our current medical system, the treatments we offer, our future clinicians, patients, and even our little world that much better. Dr. Fair lived a full life and left behind a truly admirable legacy.

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