Complementary therapies, also referred to as alternative therapies, are healthcare approaches that have a history outside of mainstream Western, or conventional, medicine. They are known as complementary because they are often used alongside standard medical care to further enhance or improve certain health conditions. Some prefer to call them alternative therapies if they are being used in place of conventional medicine.

Complementary therapies can include physical (body) therapies, relaxation techniques, or herbal medicine.¹ Complementary therapies and health approaches generally offer a holistic view, considering the whole person and the connection between mind, body, spirit, and emotion.

¹ Complementary Therapies http://geti.in/1aWu9ZY
Complementary therapies may include or recommend the use of a variety of natural products including herbs, vitamins, and minerals. These products are often sold as dietary supplements that may or may not be approved or regulated by an appropriate government agency. Keep in mind your scope of practice when advising your clients on complementary therapies and recommend they consult their primary care physician before trying them, especially if they have any existing medical conditions. It is important that you and your clients are aware of and understand the various healthcare options that are available, both complementary and conventional.

Use the information in these slides to help answer questions that you or your clients may have, or to point clients in the right direction to a trained practitioner in a specific field. All of these complementary therapies can be practiced in addition to any other medical care that is received. Encourage your clients to keep an open mind to see what may or may not work for them.

REMINDER: Your Scope of Practice document is located in your fundamentals.