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Benefits News







Treatment and Pain Management Beyond Pills

This document is part of the PEBB December Newsletter, Muscle and Bone (Musculoskeletal) Health. To access other resources, visit the [News and Events page](#).

Physical therapy is considered the first line of defense in treating muscle and bone issues. But there are many alternative treatment options, as well. These options can help manage pain and symptoms without relying solely on medication. They can also help address other habits and choices that may be affecting your health.

Alternative therapies and practices for muscle and bone system conditions include:

	<p>Chiropractic care: A chiropractor uses their hands to make joint adjustments and to address misalignments. The goal is to improve alignment, as well as reduce pain and enhance your overall functions. Chiropractors may also use massage, heat, ice, and exercises as part of treatment.</p>
	<p>Acupuncture: This is an ancient Chinese medical technique that involves inserting thin needles into specific points on the body. The technique releases natural pain-relieving chemicals in the body which can help to alleviate pain and improve symptoms.</p>
	<p>Massage therapy: Massage involves kneading, stroking, tapping, and putting pressure on soft tissues like muscles, tendons, ligaments. Ongoing massage therapy can provide relief from pain, improve mobility, and enhance blood flow. It can also improve your immune system.</p>
	<p>Cupping therapy: This is a treatment that some chiropractors and massage therapists offer to reduce inflammation. The cups are placed on the skin and heated or pumped to create a vacuum. This suction pulls the skin and underlying tissue upwards. This draws blood and other fluids to the surface of the skin. This process promotes healing and pain relief.</p>

PEBB plans include chiropractic care, massage therapy, and acupuncture coverage. However, coverage levels vary between plans. Be sure to call your health plan to confirm what services are covered before any visits. The plan representatives can also confirm how much you pay for covered services. If you're enrolled in a Health Care Flexible Spending Account, the account can help you pay for any out-of-pocket expenses with pre-tax dollars. Check this list from ASIFlex, your FSA administrator, to see which medical costs qualify for FSA use.

What is “Eastern Medicine”?

Eastern medicine refers to a system of health care practices that originated in East Asia. It encompasses a wide range of therapies and treatments, such as acupuncture, acupressure, herbal remedies, and more. These are aimed at balancing the flow of “qi” (energy) throughout the body to alleviate pain and promote healing in affected areas.

