

## Symptomatic treatment

Most treatments in orthodox medicine are deemed successful if they effectively eliminate the symptoms of disease. On the other hand, holistic systems see symptoms as being not the be-all and end-all, but the warning light on your car; if the warning light goes on when you are driving your car, do you stop and disconnect it then drive on, happy that the light is no longer on? If so, you will not then be surprised when some serious problem occurs. Yet we have gone along with the simplistic idea that if a drug has got rid of our symptoms, the problem is gone – even though the drug may cause other conditions, and do nothing to eliminate the cause of the initial problem. Thus iatrogenic disease thrives.

### !!!RED FLAG CONDITIONS!!!

#### (meaning, symptoms never to ignore)

Depending on your level of training, this will be more or less known knowledge for you. Many holistic systems of medicine have complete methods of diagnostic and treatment that do not refer to pathological tissue states at all. However, the holistic therapist or healer needs to be thoroughly aware of those ‘red flag’ conditions for which a person is best referred immediately to their physician. Without this, it might be safer to have the practice of always referring every prospective patient for a medical check-up of symptoms before agreeing to take them on. Sometimes the sledgehammer of orthodox medicine will save a life when an imbalance has moved far into the tissues, or a person does not have the strength or resource to effect changes quickly enough to mobilize their innate healing ability. This does not mean that the person would not also benefit from treatment by a holistic system at the same time, however.

Below is a list of such red flag symptoms and signs – not a comprehensive list, but a beginning. The practitioner is always best to be on the alert to the possibility of serious disease.

- Abnormal bleeding – although by no means always indicative of serious disease, and it is not necessary to whip up fear in your patients about this,<sup>302</sup> bleeding in an unexpected place should always be investigated. This includes bleeding from the vagina which occurs outside the normal menstrual cycle, bleeding from the rectum (unless it is known that the person has haemorrhoids or ‘piles’, which should also be investigated if the bleeding is prolonged or excessive) and blood in the urine, as well as coughing up blood or blood in vomit.
- Stools which look like black coffee grounds – this indicates the presence of partly digested blood from higher up the gut.
- Loss of appetite/increased appetite.
- Sudden weight loss without dieting .
- Weight gain when dieting.

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<sup>302</sup> Unless carrying out ‘emotion testing’ in the way of the five elements! See Appendix A.

- Sudden change in bowel habit – although a person with IBS (irritable bowel syndrome) may have constant changes in bowel habit without any sinister implications, bowel cancer can show itself with a change in bowel habit. Be very suspicious if a person who has usually been regular experiences rapid and lasting changes without there being any major change in their diet.
- Unexplained vomiting.
- Lumps and bumps can be cancer, although not necessarily. Of course, if you agree with Dr Hamer<sup>303</sup> about emotional shock and conflict causing cancer, you might think it not to a person's interest to fall into the hands of the orthodox system! At the same time, let's say the cancer was caused by emotional shock or trauma, unless you can give that person sound advice on how to effectively remedy the situation, telling the person that may be worse than useless. No matter what your thoughts about cause, you would be on very shaky ethical and legal ground if you did not refer someone who had an unidentified lump. It always the person's individual choice to decide what to do, should it be found that cancer is indeed present.
- Difficulty in swallowing which can be (but isn't definitely) caused by a tumour.
- A headache which began gradually and got worse and worse and doesn't go away, or any other kind of pain like this.
- Exhaustion and tiredness which do not very quickly respond to your treatment – common medical causes (excluding overwork, stress, depression and lack of sleep!) include anaemia and under-active thyroid, but more sinister underlying disease is possible.
- Changes in sleeping patterns.
- Interrupted vision of any kind, or pain in, around or behind the eye.
- Persistent cough or breathing difficulties.
- Waking up in the night unable to breath or in paroxysms of coughing, then feeling better for sitting upright (this can be due to heart failure).
- Failure to produce adequate urine.
- Constipation which does not respond to treatment – after not opening the bowels for a week, a person can become very ill.

There are others of course. It is worth repeating here to make sure it sticks that any ill person should be seen by a **fully trained professional** and that signs and symptoms can be easily confused or overlooked. Remember that a little knowledge can be a dangerous thing and don't let your ego get carried away thinking you know more than you really do. At its best orthodox medicine *is* lifesaving.

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<sup>303</sup> <http://www.newmedicine.ca>