



WHAT IS SLOW MEDICINE?

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Ever heard of 'slow food'? It's a movement in which members remember to spend time preparing and consuming and enjoying their food. The goal is to take time and enjoy picking out fresh foods, trying out new recipes, cooking everything by hand at home, and finally sitting down to a thoughtful meal. The slowness and focus are intended to be meditative and, in the end, healing in the largest sense.

So it is with 'slow medicine'. The goal here is to spend time receiving medical care, and to receive it in a warm, engaging, supportive and loving atmosphere. Most practitioners of slow medicine—and that includes acupuncturists like me—work hard to create an oasis of calm and beauty in which to deliver medical care. You should expect to spend at least an hour at each visit with your practitioner and consciously schedule this period of rest into your week. You'll look forward to the visit—for at this visit you meet with someone you like and who likes you, and who has knowledge to share and an ability to listen, and who focuses his or her technical and caring skills on you specifically. All these things together—the atmosphere, the environment, the relationship, and the skills, create healing.

So--if you are tired of waiting long hours in a noisy or ugly waiting room only to spend 10-15 minutes with your health care practitioner, if you find yourself dreading medical visits or irritated after such a visit, if you are sick of filling out endless insurance forms and arguing for reimbursement, or if you are unfulfilled by running to the pharmacy for a prescription, then maybe it's time you tried slow medicine.

And by the way, if you are intrigued by the idea of *slowing down*, check out the book called *In Praise of Slowness*, by Carl Honore, 2004.