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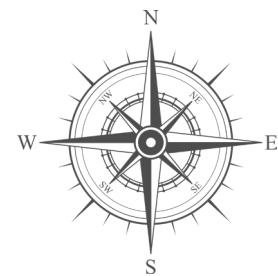
Ethical Standards of International Medicine When Comparing Eastern and Western Medicinal Practices

Joshua Rahmon

International medicine encompasses a diverse range of practices, with both Eastern and Western styles standing as pillars in the medical community. Ethical standards in a global context play an integral role in ensuring the well-being of patients; allowing physicians to maintain the integrity of the medical profession, while supplying care to their diverse community. While both Eastern and Western medicinal practices share fundamental ethical principles, distinctions arise in their approach to many aspects of healthcare.

In Western culture, a large emphasis of patient care is placed on evidence-based practices, often rooted in rigorous scientific methodologies and literature-based diagnoses. Ethical standards in this context prioritize patient autonomy and informed consent. The principle of beneficence and non-maleficence guide Western medical professionals to maximize the benefits of care, whilst minimizing potential harm and adverse side effects. Furthermore, Western medicine places great importance on the principles of justice, striving to ensure equitable access to quality healthcare resources and treatments.

Conversely, Eastern medicinal practices, often rooted in traditions such as Traditional Chinese medicine and Ayurveda (medicine rooted in ancient Indian beliefs) often embrace a holistic perspective. Ethical considerations in these practices may involve balancing the body's energy, and promoting harmony between body, mind, and spirit. Unlike Western medicine, patient involvement in decision making may differ, with familial dynamics, religion, and communal considerations influencing the type of care a patient receives. Critics may argue that some Eastern practices lack empirical evidence, instead relying on anecdotal methods passed on from many generations of "healers."



These topics raise concerns about the efficacy of care received and the safety of the practices being "prescribed." Proponents assert these traditions have withstood the test of time, addressing health concerns in a manner that is viable in the unique community, complementing the holistic well-being of an individual.



A key ethical divergence arises when comparing the approach to individualism versus collectivism. Western medicine tends to prioritize individual autonomy overall, whereas Eastern medicine often integrates communal perspectives, neglecting the personal rights and choices innate to all human beings. Globalization and increased cross-cultural interactions have prompted a growing awareness of the need for ethical convergence in the international medicine community. There have been efforts to integrate the undeniable advantages of both Eastern and Western medicine while simultaneously acknowledging universal ethical principles in all patient-physician interactions. Collaboration and dialogue between physicians from varying backgrounds and formal training levels can foster a mutual understanding and enhance the ethical fabric that must unite all practitioners globally.

The ethical standards of international medicine reflect the antagonistic dissonance between Eastern and Western medicine. While both traditions share core ethical values, variations arise in their emphasis on individualism, evidence-based practice, and holistic beliefs. Finding a balance that respects cultural diversity while maintaining ethical norms is essential for the well-being of all persons seeking medical treatment and the continued advancement of global healthcare.

