

**“If you are committed to improving your health and want to include nutritional supplements, consider working with a professional to guide you.”**

By Bobbie Barbrey, RPh, CCN

I have had the privilege of being a pharmacist for over 30 years. During that time I've seen dramatic changes in the landscape of this profession. When I began my career, helping a customer with a question about what over-the-counter product to take was a simple process. While selections were limited, there were some very effective products available to choose from.

Fast forward to today and it is a totally different ballgame. The products available are more sophisticated and powerful, and the conditions they address are more complex than before. At the same time, we are finding that prescription drugs, which used to clear up issues immediately, are not always enough due to the complexity of the conditions. Health is not as simple as it once was and it is no longer a simple task to address the problems that come up.

This changing landscape led me down the path that would become my life's passion, that of health and wellness. While still a pharmacist, I decided to also become a Certified Clinical Nutritionist. I wanted to know why some people got well when others seemed to struggle. This was the beginning of my shift from symptom management to exploring the root cause of the problem. I wanted to know why the symptom was occurring.

About 15 years ago, I opened Medicap Pharmacy in North Raleigh, an independent pharmacy where I would have the freedom and flexibility to offer our clients the latest health information available. Traditional pharmacy offerings such as filling prescriptions and custom compounding will always be the foundation of our business. But my other passion is to help the clients who are interested to find ways to become healthier. It can include their prescription medications, but I can also introduce the possibility of other complementary interventions which may help them on their path to optimal health.

I never imagined 30 years ago that our most popular offering at Medicap Pharmacy would be health and wellness. What sets us apart is my understanding of pharmaceutical drugs and the possible interactions with OTC supplements. If a person who is on many medications goes to a practitioner who



Bobbie Barbrey, RPh, CCN, surrounded by OTC products in Medicap Pharmacy, educating Kristy Chow, an intern from the UNC School of Pharmacy.

## Supporting Health *and Healing*

### AN ECOMMERCE WEBSITE

“Our nutrition customers can now shop for their supplements from the convenience of their home at our new eCommerce website, [Shop.MedicapRaleigh.com](http://Shop.MedicapRaleigh.com),” notes Bobbie Barbrey.

does not understand prescription meds, they may be given advice that is not good for their complex situation. I am well versed in both sides of that equation.

Our OTC services are robust. In addition to nutritional counseling and medication reviews, we offer saliva hormone testing, order standard lab tests, we have a certified compression hosiery fitter on staff, and we recently added 23andMe genetic testing and interpretation. This has been a game changer. Many people have done the 23andMe testing only to be frustrated that they can't interpret the results. We have sophisticated software that can pinpoint where a person is having issues based on genetic mutations or SNPs and what is the best way to remedy that. Knowing what isn't working and why, and adding in the missing pieces can change a person's health. The interpretation is focused on the enzymes that are not working optionally and the nutritional support for these. 23andMe does not include reviewing genetic mutations that identify disease potential.

If someone is interested in pursuing optimal health, I will be right there to guide them. In the individual consults we identify their goals and we design a custom plan to get there. It's easy to get overwhelmed by suggestions from celebrities, well-meaning

friends, and of course, the Internet. We put all that aside and stay focused on what is best for the client. My goal is to determine what went out of balance that led to the health issue, what is the root cause, and how can we get you back on track.

### A PARTNERSHIP

For many people today, the Internet is their primary source of medical information. Search the Internet, satisfy your curiosity, but then come in so that we can both dig deeper. I have many tools in my toolbox to be able to help people achieve high levels of good health. I attend several nutritional conferences each year so I can stay on the cutting edge, providing my clients with the best possible path to health.

What is always reinforced at the conferences I attend is that while there are many over-the-counter options that help promote good health, the food you eat is still the foundation of health. But you'd be surprised how many people genuinely think they are eating a healthy diet yet can't lose weight or are continually in pain. They are often, with the best of intentions, eating foods that contribute to their issues. Every consult I do includes a review of what foods are best to eat and which ones to avoid and why.

In the end, it is the individual working with a knowledgeable guide who is likely to make the best decisions to speed up the healing process. I remind my friends and clients that you can find anything on the Internet. That doesn't mean it's true or accurate. How do you get to the truth? Find a practitioner who will make sure that the information you are taking in has a positive impact overall on your health, and is presented honestly and with integrity.

If you are using OTC supplements, as most of our clients are, be sure that they are professional, quality supplements. How supplements are stored is often as important as what is in them. Buyer beware when purchasing over the Internet. Even supplements can be counterfeited or sold past their expiration date. We deal directly with companies who produce supplements of the highest quality so authenticity is not an issue for us. We have our own eCommerce website at [Shop.MedicapRaleigh.com](http://Shop.MedicapRaleigh.com) for the convenience of our customers. We control the purchase, storage, and shipping of all products so we know that they are safe.

Beginning a nutrition program can be daunting. We are, collectively, often overwhelmed by choices, including choices about how to maintain our health. If you are committed to improving your health and want to include nutritional supplements, consider working with a professional to guide you. I promise you this is better than the too-common practice of randomly using supplements with the dim hope that somehow they will make a difference in your life. Call me at Medicap Pharmacy. Set up an appointment for your custom plan. Let's take an amazing journey of health and healing together. **h&h**

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