

Acupuncture

Herbal Medicine

Whole Food Nutrition

Holistic Animal Care

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## **An Explanation to Patients About Arbitration**

On your initial visit you will be asked to sign an Arbitration Form. Unfortunately, if you do not sign the agreement, the services which you have scheduled cannot be performed. Therefore, it is important that you understand what Arbitration means.

Arbitration is an agreement that any dispute arising out of the medical services you receive is to be resolved in binding arbitration rather than a suit in court. Lawsuits are something that no one anticipates and everyone hopes to avoid. Resolving disputes by arbitration is one of the fairest systems for both patients and health practitioners. Arbitration agreements between healthcare providers and their patients have long been recognized and approved by the California courts.

Arbitration agreements change the place where your claim would be presented. You may still call witnesses and present evidence. Each party selects an arbitrator (party arbitrators), who then select a third, neutral arbitrator. These three arbitrators hear the case. These agreements generally limit the legal costs for both patients and their healthcare providers. Further, both parties are spared some of the rigors of trial and the publicity which may accompany judicial proceedings. The goal, of course, is to provide medical care in such a way as to avoid any such dispute. Most problems begin with a lack of communication, therefore, if you have any questions about your care, please ask.

Acupuncturists, have the lowest malpractice insurance in the healthcare industry because the risk of incident and/or injury is so low, however very occasionally things can happen. For the record, after 35 years in practice, I personally have NEVER had a patient try to sue me for wrongdoing.