

THE PATTERNS AND ASSOCIATIONS OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE (CAM) USE AMONG PATIENTS WITH CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE (CKD) AND KIDNEY TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS

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OBJECTIVES

CAM use is prevalent and rising among the general population and patients with chronic medical disorders accounting for almost 20% of the drug market turnover in the USA. Some of these practices have been claimed to be useful for treatment of hypertension, diabetes and kidney disease. However some herbal therapies can be harmful to patients with CKD.

Few studies have explored the patterns of CAM use among CKD patients and the rationale for their use as well as their impact on the patients' interaction with modern medicine. Even less is known about the difference in patient attitude towards CAM among various subsets of CKD patients including transplant recipients.

METHODS

We performed a multicentre survey which included a face to face interview with patients with CKD patients on an out-patient basis including those with CKD stages 3-5, CKD patients on hemodialysis and kidney transplant recipients. The survey inquired about epidemiological data, types, sources and patterns of CAM used as well as the effect of CAM use on the patients' interaction with the medical system and therapy.

RESULTS

- Overall, 522 patients (52%) were using CAM (64% of predialysis patients, 33% of dialysis patients and 40.5% of transplant recipients, $p < 0.001$).
- Herbal and natural products were the most commonly used type of CAM (78%), followed by mind and body procedures (21.6%). CAM users were more likely to be males (O.R. 1.4; 95% CI 1.1-1.6); employed (O.R. 1.6; 95% CI 1.2-2); urban residents (O.R. 1.3; 95% CI 1.2-1.5), have higher income (O.R. 2.6; 95% CI 2-3.6) and higher education (O.R. 1.6; 95% CI 1.2-2).
- Seventy nine percent of CAM users did not report their practices to their caregivers mainly because they were not asked, however transplant recipients were more likely to report $p < 0.02$.
- Compliance to medical treatment was affected in 4.2% of users.
- Thirty natural products were identified as well as 4 body and mind procedures. The most commonly used herbs were Nigella sativa, Hibiscus sabdarifa and Cymbopogon proximus. Potentially harmful CAM included intake of liquorice and vinegar.

CONCLUSIONS

Use of traditional medicine is highly prevalent among CKD patients. Some of these practices are potentially harmful and may affect patient compliance to modern medicine. Physicians commonly ignore to inquire about these practices which frequently reflect patient frustration with modern medicine efficacy and/or price.

