

The Prevalence of Complementary and Alternative Medicine Use among Dermatologic Outpatients in Shiraz, Iran

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Abstract

Background: The use of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) has been increasing among patients worldwide. The objective of this study was to assess CAM use and its related factors among Iranian dermatologic outpatients in Shiraz, Iran.

Methods: This cross-sectional study was conducted in Shiraz, Iran. Six hundred dermatologic outpatients were randomly selected. We used a self-structured questionnaire with 14 items to assess CAM use and its related factors among our participants. We used descriptive statistics reported as mean±SD and frequency by Mann-Whitney U test, chi square and binary logistic regression tests for statistical analysis.

Results: Among the 600 participants, 188 (31.3%) had used one of the CAM methods for resolving their dermatologic problems. The most frequent method used was herbal medicine (89.9%). The mean age and years of duration of the skin condition were significantly higher in patients using CAM compared to non-users ($P=0.001$ and 0.037 , respectively). Patients with acne, alopecia, and hair loss significantly used CAM more than other diseases (OR: 2.48, CI 95%: 1.28-4.78) and (OR: 3.19, CI 95%: 1.62–6.27), respectively. There was a significant relationship between education and using CAM ($P<0.001$).

Conclusion: Community member's behavior in CAM use without adequate knowledge may have a noticeable influence on each other. Since it is a prevalent matter, we should think of ways of educating the general population about CAM methods and its potential risks and benefits. We also should encourage our healthcare workers to communicate such materials with their patients.

Keywords • Complementary therapies • Dermatology • Outpatients • Iran • Medicine • Traditional