

Prevalence and Determinants of the Use of CAM and Its Association with Quality of Life in a Sample of Lebanese Breast Cancer Patients: A Cross Sectional Study

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Abstract : The objective of this study is to assess the prevalence and determinants of CAM use among breast cancer patients in Beirut, Lebanon. A secondary objective is to evaluate the association between CAM use and quality of life (QOL). A cross-sectional survey was conducted on 180 breast cancer patients recruited from two major referral centers in Beirut. In a face to face interview, participants completed a questionnaire comprised of three sections: socio-demographic and lifestyle characteristics, breast cancer condition, and CAM use. The assessment of QOL was carried using the FACT-B Arabic version. Prevalence of CAM use since diagnosis was 40%. CAM use was negatively associated with age, treatment at a philanthropic hospital and positively associated with having an advanced stage of disease. The most commonly used CAM was 'Special food' followed by 'Herbal teas'. Only 4% of CAM users cited health care professionals as influencing their choice of CAM. One in four patients disclosed CAM use to their treating physician. There was no significant association between CAM use and QOL. The use of CAM therapies among breast cancer patients is prevalent in Lebanon. Efforts should be dedicated at educating physicians to discuss CAM use with their patients and advising patients to disclose of their use with their physicians.

Keywords : breast cancer, complementary and alternative medicine, Lebanon, quality of life

Conference Title : ICO 2015 : International Conference on Obesity

Conference Location : London, United Kingdom

Conference Dates : May 25-26, 2015