

Prevalence and Correlates of Complementary and Alternative Medicine Use among Diabetic Patients in Lebanon: A Cross-Sectional Study

Authors : Farah Naja, Mohamad Alameddine

Abstract : Background: The difficulty of compliance to therapeutic and lifestyle management of type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) encourages patients to use complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) therapies. Little is known about the prevalence and mode of CAM use among diabetics in the Eastern Mediterranean Region in general and Lebanon in particular. Objective: To assess the prevalence and modes of CAM use among patients with T2DM residing in Beirut, Lebanon. Methods: A cross-sectional survey of T2DM patients was conducted on patients recruited from two major referral centers - a public hospital and a private academic medical center in Beirut. In a face-to-face interview, participants completed a survey questionnaire comprised of three sections: socio-demographic, diabetes characteristics and types and modes of CAM use. Descriptive statistics, univariate and multivariate logistic regression analyses were utilized to assess the prevalence, mode and correlates of CAM use in the study population. The main outcome in this study (CAM use) was defined as using CAM at least once since diagnosis with T2DM. Results: A total of 333 T2DM patients completed the survey (response rate: 94.6%). Prevalence of CAM use in the study population was 38%, 95% CI (33.1-43.5). After adjustment, CAM use was significantly associated with a "married" status, a longer duration of T2DM, the presence of disease complications, and a positive family history of the disease. Folk foods and herbs were the most commonly used CAM followed by natural health products. One in five patients used CAM as an alternative to conventional treatment. Only 7 % of CAM users disclosed the CAM use to their treating physician. Health care practitioners were the least cited (7%) as influencing the choice of CAM among users. Conclusion: The use of CAM therapies among T2DM patients in Lebanon is prevalent. Decision makers and care providers must fully understand the potential risks and benefits of CAM therapies to appropriately advise their patients. Attention must be dedicated to educating T2DM patients on the importance of disclosing CAM use to their physicians especially patients with a family history of diabetes, and those using conventional therapy for a long time.

Keywords : nutritional supplements, type 2 diabetes mellitus, complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), conventional therapy

Conference Title : ICFSN 2014 : International Conference on Food Science and Nutrition

Conference Location : Paris, France

Conference Dates : August 28-29, 2014