

Complementary and Alternative Medicine use in the Hispanic Community

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Abstract

Background: The use of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) impacts on the primary care provider, since interactions with prescribed medications and safety must be assessed. Several factors specific to the Hispanic population are known to influence their use of medications prior to seeing a health care provider. This study will evaluate the types of CAM used and the reasons for use of CAM in the Hispanic population.

Methods: Spanish and English versions of a questionnaire regarding CAM use were developed. This questionnaire questions about the use of medications not prescribed by a physician, herbal remedies, prayer, meditation, acupuncture, homeopathy and use of “curanderas”. These questionnaires will be administered to self-identified Hispanic individuals presenting to clinics affiliated with the Medical University of South Carolina.

Results: Results will include the prevalence of CAM use, with identification of the most common medical conditions treated with CAM, as well as the types of CAM used.

Reasons for use of CAM will also be presented.

Conclusion: This information may improve our understanding of alternative health care practices in an underserved population, allowing providers to integrate these beliefs/practices into their treatment plans.