The purpose of this update on traditional medicine and complementary medicine (TM/CAM) is to inform healthcare professionals, researchers, funders and policy-makers about developments. The update provides links to new material published or released as well as links to classic resources on traditional, complementary and integrative medicine (IM) as we gather them for the web-site.

1. Policy and Legislation

Progress on the New Zealand Natural Health Products Bill

The bill was introduced in parliament by the Minister of Health in September 2011. After the first reading, it was referred to the Health Committee and submissions were due by 24 February 2012. The Select Committee report was published on 31 October 2012.

A press release from the Minister of Health said:

The Natural Health Products Bill has been reported back to Parliament with the support of all parties on the Health Select Committee. Health Minister Tony Ryall is pleased with progress on the bill, which will provide regulation of commercial natural health products, such as vitamin supplements, Echinacea and fish oil.

“New Zealanders can continue to support and manage their own health as they do now, but the bill will ensure the natural health products they buy are safe, the labels are accurate and the claims the products make, such as ‘will improve your immunity’, are true,” Mr Ryall said. “This low cost, low bureaucracy regulation will give the public greater confidence about the safety and integrity of natural health products.”

Mr Ryall acknowledged the cooperation of the Green Party in the development of the Bill which was reported back unanimously. Green Party Natural Health spokesperson Mojo Mathers said, “The Bill brings in a good balance between light handed regulation and protecting consumers. The schedule of approved pharmacopeia in the Bill will make the process of approving traditional claims very straightforward for many natural health products. “I’m pleased that products prepared as part of traditional medicine practice such as Rongoa are exempted.”

Only commercial products will be affected – people can continue to prepare home remedies. The Government and the Green Party also acknowledged the support of the Labour Party. The detailed regulatory work will be undertaken in consultation with the industry, and public. As part of the memorandum of understanding agreement, the Government has also agreed the Green Party will be involved at every stage of the development of these regulations.

Background from the Ministry of Health:
2. CAMbrella Project Final Reports

European Policy Brief: The Roadmap for European CAM Research

The Roadmap for European CAM Research: An Explanation of the CAMbrella Project and its Key Findings

http://www.cambrella.eu/home.php?il=203&l=deu

“CAMbrella is an EU funded project that looks into the situation of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) in Europe as it presents itself in 2012. The acronym brings together the terms ‘CAM’ and ‘umbrella’ to stress the project’s effort both to harmonize existing knowledge and to determine the knowledge gaps in this field. Both parts come together in recommendations to the European Commission and the European Parliament on the way forward in Europe for research into CAM ...”.

The Roadmap for European CAM research “describes a strategic approach to research for the field of CAM. It is based on past experiences in CAM research and designed to address future European healthcare challenges. It takes the findings of all the CAMbrella work packages into account.

CAMbrella’s vision for 2020 is that an evidence base is established which enables European citizens, healthcare providers and other stakeholders to make informed decisions about CAM. Currently, there is too little general knowledge about the state of CAM in Europe, especially on

- the prevalence of use of CAM
- the needs and attitudes of EU citizens, patients and providers
- regarding CAM
- the types and modes of CAM provision.

Past research with its focus on the underlying mechanisms of CAM hasn’t met the more pressing questions about CAM as possible reasonable treatment options in addition or alternative to routine care protocols. Furthermore, the considerable heterogeneity within CAM in the EU has hampered the development of pan-European research efforts. The challenges now are to:

- address the needs and attitudes of EU citizens, patients and providers
- get essential information about the real situation as regards provision and use of CAM in all countries of Europe
- create a valid knowledge data base on CAM effectiveness, costs and safety
- establish scientific knowledge that enables all stakeholders including citizens, healthcare providers, policy makers and researchers to make informed decisions about CAM.”

The policy brief and the “Roadmap” documents have been published. CAMbrella says that “between December 2012 and April 2013 we still will upload reports and documents generated in the work-packages of CAMbrella.” These are expected to contain much useful information on CAM in Europe for researchers, funders and providers.
There were eight work packages:

1) Terminology and definitions of CAM methods
2) Legal status and regulations
3) Needs and attitudes of citizens
4) CAM use – the patients’ perspective
5) CAM use – the providers’ perspective
6) The global perspective
7) The Roadmap for CAM research in Europe
8) Communication and dissemination

These documents will be able to be accessed at:
http://www.camrella.eu/home.php?il=203&l=deu

3. Thesis on Rongoā Māori (traditional Māori healing)

Rongoā Māori (traditional Māori healing) through the eyes of Māori healers: sharing the healing while keeping the tapu

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology at Massey University, Albany, New Zealand by Glenis Mark
http://mro.massey.ac.nz/handle/10179/4064

Abstract:

“This research explores the underlying philosophies of rongoa Maori, the traditional healing system of the indigenous Maori of Aotearoa/New Zealand. The research is set within the context of worldwide traditional healing systems that involves discussion of the embedded nature of indigenous cultural values and beliefs within traditional healing practices. Parallels are drawn between the traditional healing practices of Maori and other indigenous healing traditions.

The research was conducted in adherence to the principles of Kaupapa Maori research to ensure the use of Maori cultural values throughout the research process. Narrative interviews were conducted with seventeen Maori healers about their understandings of rongoa Maori. Data analysis was conducted in a three-step process using an approach created specifically for the research entitled the rourou Maori method of analysis. The analysis was inclusive of the contributions of each individual healer and the researcher to the collective story on rongoa Maori across all participants in the research.

The analysis revealed nine underlying philosophies of rongoa Maori. These showed that rongoa Maori: healing is a continuous process of life; is a co-construction of healing through the healer/client relationship; includes collaborative whakawhanaungatanga (family-like) relationships in healing; involves the synergy of the alliance between people and plants; utilises the tipuna (ancestors) as the wairua (spirits) that conduct the healing; focuses on diagnosing illness through past generations; identifies the power of emotions to create or destroy health, illness and healing; aims to facilitate change for the client; and aspires to heal Maori of colonisation and keep Maori knowledge sovereign.

In this research, Maori healers indicated that aspects of Maori knowledge and wisdom have been purposely kept tapu (sacred). However, there are three major contributions to knowledge about traditional healing systems. First, new insights were presented on rongoa Maori, such as the relationship between healers and plants. Second, the contribution of rongoa Maori to the greater
advancement of Maori tino rangatiratanga was discussed. Third, additional conceptualisations about traditional healing systems, such as aroha (love) in the relationship between the healer and client, were found. Rongoa Maori was shown to share several healing concepts with other traditional healing systems.

4. Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet

http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/

“The Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet is an innovative internet resource that aims to inform practice and policy in Indigenous health by making research and other knowledge readily accessible. In this way, we contribute to 'closing the gap' in health between Indigenous and other Australians.

We are an academic unit of Edith Cowan University (ECU), Western Australia’s oldest tertiary education institution and newest university. ... Our work in the area of translational research with a population health focus – in which we are a world leader – makes research and other information available in a form that has immediate, practical utility for practitioners and policy-makers in the area of Indigenous health, enabling them to make decisions based on the best available evidence.

We also encourage and support information-sharing among practitioners, policy-makers and others working to improve Indigenous health. Our 'yarning places' (electronic networks) allow people with common interests and purposes to share information, knowledge and experience from different states, territories, regions and sectors. Our core functions are made possible by grants (particularly from the Australian Department of Health and Ageing’s Office for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health). Specific research activities are supported by funds from a variety of sources.”

While the Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet deals with health issues for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from largely a western perspective, there are a significant number of links to material on traditional medicines. Use “traditional medicines” in the search facility.

5. Macquarie University's Indigenous Bioresources Research Group (IBRG)


“Researchers from Macquarie University's Indigenous Bioresources Research Group (IBRG) have worked closely with the Yaegl people in northern NSW to document their medicinal plant knowledge, and have also begun phase two of their study - examining the chemical and biological properties of the plants. Bioorganic and Medicinal Chemist Associate Professor Joanne Jamie said the research aim was to conserve customary Aboriginal knowledge, and apply this to the discovery of new evidence-based alternative medicines.”

Jamie said: "In Australia we are only now beginning to regard traditional knowledge as a significant medicinal resource - the increase in microbial resistance, emergence of new diseases, side effects of medicines and high cost of drug development have forced us to take a fresh look."

“Central to the success of the bush medicine research is the strong relationship between the researchers and the Elders, which has been forged over many years and has culminated in a collaborative partnership agreement to work together on the study...."
“The Macquarie University study has become a model for collaboration between Australian Aboriginal communities and research scientists. The University has worked closely with the Elders involved to identify ways that their communities can gain real benefit from the partnership - such as creating educational opportunities for Aboriginal high school students. The IBRG’s bush medicine study is funded by a grant from the National Health and Medical Research Council, awarded to the Macquarie University team ...”.

6. Book on Arrernte Traditional Healing

Arelhe-Kenhe Merrethene: Arrernte Traditional Healing

By Veronica Dobson
http://iadpress.com/shop/arrernte-traditional-healing/

This book “is a comprehensive overview of the different methods of healing used by the Arrernte people of Central Australia. ‘Dreaming of the healing power comes from, to your Altyerre Aknganentye or totem and country.’ Starting with the spiritual and cultural basis of Arrernte healing, Veronica explains the source of the Angangkeres’ healing powers and their use of singing and touch. Then follows a comprehensive list of plants, insects and other methods used in traditional healing, with explanations and comprehensive illustrations of how the remedies are prepared.

The author, Veronica Dobson, is a widely respected elder who is also a noted translator, interpreter and teacher of the Arrernte language. She has drawn on her own cultural knowledge and supplemented it by interviewing other elders and senior healers in the Arrernte community. The author shares the various medicinal plants and how they are processed into washes and ointments; the use of hot earth and ashes, and the treatments for various conditions such as toothache, snakebite and flu.”

7. Paper: International Classification of Traditional Medicine

In the ENZCAM newsletter of May 2012 we reported on the inclusion of ICD codes for traditional medicine derived from Chinese medicine in the forthcoming WHO International Classification of Diseases, 11th edition (ICD-11). The academic paper below deals with this topic in greater detail. It also has a useful summary of the WHO’s traditional medicine efforts and the three phases of the oriental traditional medicine project.

International Classification of Traditional Medicine

By William Morris, Stacy Gomes and Marilyn Allen
Global Advances in Health and Medicine, September 2012, Volume 1, Number 4

“The ramifications of the ICD project are far-reaching and complex. At the minimum, there is recognition of TM models. More importantly, given the rate of TM use worldwide, there is a large knowledge gap about the patterns of TM use, which this project would address in part. The development of acupuncture and Oriental medicine disease classification codes has implications for education, research, insurance reimbursement, medical integration, individual practitioners, international recognition, and professional identity.”
8. Conferences

Forthcoming conferences

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<th>Date</th>
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<td>9-13 September 2013</td>
<td>Sancheong, KOREA</td>
<td>8th International Congress on Traditional Asian Medicine</td>
<td><a href="http://www.iastam.org/">http://www.iastam.org/</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>13-16 May 2014</td>
<td>Miami, Florida, USA</td>
<td>International Research Congress on Integrative Medicine and Health (IRCIMH)</td>
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9. Journals

The first time a journal is listed, the contents of that edition will be given in full to give readers a sense of the scope of the publication. For subsequent editions, only some articles may be highlighted. Earlier editions of this newsletter are available from http://www.hsci.canterbury.ac.nz/enzcam/

African Journal of Traditional, Complementary and Alternative medicines (AJTCAM)
[First listed in ENZCAM Newsletter October 2011]
Volume 10, Number 1: 2013 (October 2012)
http://journals.sfu.ca/africanem/index.php/ajtcam

Selected articles:
- Complementary and Alternative Medicine Usage in Cancer Patients in Southeast of Turkey
- Tribal Formulations for Treatment of Pain: A Study of the Bede Community Traditional Medicinal Practitioners of Porabari Village in Dhaka District, Bangladesh
- The Effects of Pranayama, Hatha and Raja Yoga on Physical Pain and the Quality of Life of Women with Multiple Sclerosis

Alternative and Complementary Therapies
[First listed in ENZCAM Newsletter Q1 2011]
Volume 18, Number 5: October 2012
http://online.liebertpub.com/toc/act/18/5
Selected articles:
- Roundoc Rx: Environmental Toxins and Children’s Health: Part 1—Why Children Are at Risk
- Integrative Strategies for Treating Pediatric Asthma
- Neurofeedback Therapy in Clinical Applications and for Cognitive Enhancement
- Neuroimaging and Pain: Matching Brain Function to Targeted Treatments
- Current Concepts in Nutrition: The Science and Art of the Elimination Diet
- Cilantro—Culinary Herb or Miracle Medicinal Plant?
- Medicate and Meditate—A Broader View of Heart Disease: An Interview with Erminia “Mimi” Guarneri, MD, FACC
- Herpes: An Integrative Approach—A Natural Standard Monograph
- Clinical Roundup: Selected Treatment Options for Urticaria

BMC Complementary and Alternative Medicine
[First listed in ENZCAM Newsletter September 2011]
October 2012
http://www.biomedcentral.com/bmccomplementalternmmed/

Selected articles:
- CAM practitioners in the Australian health workforce: an underutilized resource
- A model for homeopathic remedy effects: low dose nanoparticles, allostatic cross-adaptation, and time-dependent sensitization in a complex adaptive system
- Impact of electroacupuncture on quality of life for patients with Relapsing-Remitting Multiple Sclerosis under treatment with immunomodulators: A randomized study
- Current status of Kampo medicine curricula in all Japanese medical schools
- Understanding the role of scientific evidence in consumer evaluation of natural health products for osteoarthritis an application of the means end chain approach
- Effects of comprehensive therapy based on traditional Chinese medicine patterns in stable chronic obstructive pulmonary disease: a four-center, open-label, randomized, controlled study
- Disease severity is associated with the use of complementary medicine to treat or manage type-2 diabetes: data from the 2002 and 2007 National Health Interview Survey
- Pulsatile dry cupping in patients with osteoarthritis of the knee -- a randomized controlled exploratory trial
- Factors affecting pharmacists’ recommendation of complementary medicines -- a qualitative pilot study of Australian pharmacists
- Confidence in the efficacy and safety of dietary supplements among United States active duty army personnel
- Antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities of selected Chinese medicinal plants and their relation with antioxidant content

Complementary Therapies in Clinical Practice
[First listed in ENZCAM Newsletter June 2011]
Volume 18, Number 4: November 2012
http://www.ctcpjournal.com/current

Selected articles:
- Enhanced external counterpulsation: A novel therapy for angina
- Reflexology has an acute (immediate) haemodynamic effect in healthy volunteers: A double-blind randomised controlled trial
Feasibility and effect of chair massage offered to nurses during work hours on stress-related symptoms: A pilot study

Acupuncture and Chinese herbs as treatments for depression: An Australian pilot study

Mindfulness-based stress reduction in breast cancer: A qualitative analysis

The effectiveness of Swedish massage and traditional Thai massage in treating chronic low back pain: A review of the literature

Mindfulness yoga during pregnancy for psychiatrically at-risk women: Preliminary results from a pilot feasibility study

Pilot study of yoga for breast cancer survivors with poor quality of life

Complementary and alternative medicines (CAM) disclosure to the health care providers: A qualitative insight from Malaysian cancer patients

Developing midwifery and complementary medicine collaboration: The potential of interprofessional education?

Complementary Therapies in Medicine
[First listed in ENZCAM Newsletter May 2011]

Volume 20, Number 5: October 2012
http://www.complementarytherapiesinmedicine.com/issues

Selected articles:

The effect of olive oil on prevention of striae gravidarum: A randomized controlled clinical trial

Back pain amongst mid-age Australian women: A longitudinal analysis of provider use and self-prescribed treatments

Prognosis following the use of complementary and alternative medicine in women diagnosed with breast cancer

Physiological changes in energy healers during self-practice

Faith and use of complementary and alternative medicine among heart attack patients in a secular society

Substitutes or complements? An exploration of the effect of wait times and availability of conventional care on the use of alternative health therapies in Canada

Status of complementary and alternative medicine in the curricula of health colleges in Saudi Arabia

Safety protocols for Gua sha (press-stroking) and Baguan (cupping)

Defining research priorities in complementary medicine in oncology

Acupoint stimulation intervention for people with primary dysmenorrhea: Systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized trials

Costs and consequences of acupuncture as a treatment for chronic pain: A systematic review of economic evaluations conducted alongside randomised controlled trials

The EPMA Journal
[First listed in ENZCAM Newsletter December 2011]

Volume 3, October and November 2012

Articles:

Evidence-based pain management: is the concept of integrative medicine applicable?

Predictive and preventive strategies to advance the treatments of cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases: the Ukrainian context
Opinion controversy to chromium picolinate therapy’s safety and efficacy: ignoring 'anecdotes' of case reports or recognising individual risks and new guidelines urgency to introduce innovation by predictive diagnostics?

- Introduction into PPPM as a new paradigm of public health service: an integrative view
- Traditional, complementary and alternative medical systems and their contribution to personalisation, prediction and prevention in medicine—person-centred medicine

Evidence-Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine (eCAM)
[First listed in ENZCAM Newsletter July 2011]
Published October and November 2012
http://www.hindawi.com/journals/ecam/2012/

Selected articles:
- Iyengar Yoga for Distressed Women: A 3-Armed Randomized Controlled Trial
- The Traditional Chinese Medicine Prescription Pattern of Endometriosis Patients in Taiwan: A Population-Based Study
- Guidelines for Developing Yoga Interventions for Randomized Trials
- Prescription Patterns of Chinese Herbal Products for Osteoporosis in Taiwan: A Population-Based Study
- Changing Academic Medicine: Strategies Used by Academic Leaders of Integrative Medicine—A Qualitative Study
- Utilization of and Attitudes towards Traditional Chinese Medicine Therapies in a Chinese Cancer Hospital: A Survey of Patients and Physicians
- Use of Chinese Medicine and Subsequent Surgery in Women with Uterine Fibroid: A Retrospective Cohort Study
- Vitamin E and Bone Structural Changes: An Evidence-Based Review
- Therapeutic Approaches to Neuroprotective Activity by Complementary and Alternative Medicines
- Yoga & Cancer Interventions: A Review of the Clinical Significance of Patient Reported Outcomes for Cancer Survivors
- Systems Biology of Meridians, Acupoints, and Chinese Herbs in Disease
- Training Self-Administered Acupressure Exercise among Postmenopausal Women with Osteoarthritic Knee Pain: A Feasibility Study and Lessons Learned
- Traditional Medicine in China, Korea, and Japan: A Brief Introduction and Comparison
- A Review of Acupoint Specificity Research in China: Status Quo and Prospects
- Effectiveness of Yoga for Menopausal Symptoms: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials
- Chinese Patent Medicine Liu Wei Di Huang Wan Combined with Antihypertensive Drugs, a New Integrative Medicine Therapy, for the Treatment of Essential Hypertension: A Systematic Review of Randomized Controlled Trials
- Yoga as a Therapeutic Intervention
- Systematic Review of Chinese Traditional Exercise Baduanjin Modulating the Blood Lipid Metabolism
- Chinese Massage Combined with Herbal Ointment for Athletes with Nonspecific Low Back Pain: A Randomized Controlled Trial
- Pomegranate Protection against Cardiovascular Diseases
Explore: The Journal of Science and Healing
[First listed in ENZCAM Newsletter May 2011]
Volume 8, Number 6: November 2012
http://www.explorejournal.com/current

Selected articles:
- Meaning as a Healing Agent
- Nonlocality, Near-Death Experiences, and the Challenge of Consciousness
- Thought Field Therapy (TFT) as a Treatment for Anxiety Symptoms: A Randomized Controlled Trial
- Entangled in the Womb? A Pilot Study on the Possible Physiological Connectedness Between Identical Twins with Different Embryonic Backgrounds
- Patients Seek Integrative Medicine for Preventive Approach to Optimize Health
- Energy Therapies: Focus on Spirituality
- Medical and Psychology Students’ Knowledge of and Attitudes Towards Mindfulness as a Clinical Intervention
- Interprofessional Student Education: Exchange Program Between Albert Einstein College of Medicine and Pacific College of Oriental Medicine

Journal of Evidence-Based Complementary & Alternative Medicine
[First listed in ENZCAM Newsletter April 2011]
Volume 17, Number 3: October 2012
http://chp.sagepub.com/content/17/3.toc?etoc

Selected articles:
- Effect of Serum Vitamin D Levels on Cardiovascular Mortality and Cardiovascular Disease Risk
- Spiritual Well-Being May Buffer Psychological Distress in Patients With Implantable Cardioverter Defibrillators
- Yoga as an Alternative and Complementary Treatment for Hypertensive Patients: A Systematic Review
- The Effect of Regular Exercise and Yoga on Health-Related Quality of Life Among Ovarian Cancer Survivors
- Effects of Reiki, Yoga, or Meditation on the Physical and Psychological Symptoms of Chemotherapy-Induced Peripheral Neuropathy: A Randomized Pilot Study
- Yoga as an Alternative and Complementary Treatment for Asthma: A Systematic Review
- Racial and Ethnic Profiles of Complementary and Alternative Medicine Use Among Young Adults in the United States: Findings From the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health
- The Importance of Complementary and Alternative Medicine Education in Medical School
- The Free Radical Theory of Aging and Antioxidant Supplements: A Systematic Review

Journal of Medicinal Food
[First listed in ENZCAM Newsletter Q1 2011]
Volume 15, Number 11: November 2012
http://online.liebertpub.com/toc/jmf/15/11
Selected articles:
- Anti-Inflammatory Activity of Sulfur-Containing Compounds from Garlic
- Anti-Inflammatory and Anti-Ulcer Activities of Carvacrol, a Monoterpene Present in the Essential Oil of Oregano
- A Meta-Analysis of Clinical Improvements of General Well-Being by a Standardized Lycium barbarum
- Effects of Ecklonia cava Polyphenol in Individuals with Hypercholesterolemia: A Pilot Study

The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine
[First listed in ENZCAM Newsletter Q1 2011]
Volume 18, Number 10: October 2012
http://online.liebertpub.com/toc/acm/18/10

Selected articles:
- On Contradictions Between Chinese and Tibetan Pulse Diagnosis
- Adverse Events Following Acupuncture: A Systematic Review of the Chinese Literature for the Years 1956–2010
- The Effects of Yoga on Physical Functioning and Health Related Quality of Life in Older Adults: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis
- Can Acupuncture Affect the Circadian Rhythm of Blood Pressure? A Randomized, Double-Blind, Controlled Trial
- Aromatherapy and Massage Intrapartum Service Impact on Use of Analgesia and Anesthesia in Women in Labor: A Retrospective Case Note Analysis
- An Integrative Medicine Approach to Asthma: Who Responds?
- The Effect of Interactive Neurostimulation Therapy on Myofascial Trigger Points Associated with Mechanical Neck Pain: A Preliminary Randomized, Sham-Controlled Trial
- Rehabilitation of Stroke Patients Using Yamamoto New Scalp Acupuncture: A Pilot Study
- Evaluation of the Effect of Progressive Relaxation Exercises on Fatigue and Sleep Quality in Patients with Multiple Sclerosis

Volume 18, Number 11: November 2012
http://online.liebertpub.com/toc/acm/18/11

Selected articles:
- Use of Complementary and Alternative Medicine in Residential Aged Care
- Effects of Yoga on Psychologic Function and Quality of Life in Women with Breast Cancer: A Meta-Analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials
- Black Pepper Essential Oil to Enhance Intravenous Catheter Insertion in Patients With Poor Vein Visibility: A Controlled Study
- The Challenges of Establishing an Integrative Medicine Primary Care Clinic in Sydney, Australia
- Complementary and Alternative Medicine Use in Radiotherapy: What Are Patients Using?
- Acupuncture for Irritable Bowel Syndrome: Diagnosis and Treatment of Patients in a Pragmatic Trial
- Use of Complementary and Alternative Medicine by Patients with Cancer in Saudi Arabia
- Safety and Tolerability of Panax ginseng Root Extract: A Randomized, Placebo-Controlled, Clinical Trial in Healthy Korean Volunteers
10. Clinical Integration of TM/CAM

NCCAM Clinical Digest
Produced by the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) in the USA.

October 2012: St. John’s Wort and Depression

http://nccam.nih.gov/health/providers/digest/depression

St. John’s wort, a plant that grows in the wild, has been used for centuries for mental health conditions and is widely prescribed for depression in Europe. There is public interest in the United States as well, and many people come to NCCAM’s Web site seeking information on St. John’s wort for depression, consistently making it one of the top five search terms every month. However, current evidence for using St. John’s wort for depression is not conclusive, and the herb can have serious side effects. It is also important to note that in the United States, the Food and Drug Administration has not approved its use as an over-the-counter or prescription medicine for depression.

This issue provides information on what the science says about St. John’s wort for depression, including scientific evidence, side effects and cautions, and tips for talking with your patients.

November 2012: Omega-3 Supplements for Heart Disease

http://nccam.nih.gov/health/providers/digest/omega3

According to the 2007 National Health Interview Survey, which included a comprehensive survey on the use of complementary health practices by Americans, fish oil/omega-3/DHA supplements are the natural product (excluding vitamins and minerals) most commonly taken by adults, and the second most commonly taken by children.

There has been a substantial amount of research on omega-3 supplements and heart disease. Experts agree that fish rich in omega-3 fatty acids should be included in a heart-healthy diet. However, omega-3s in supplement form have not been shown to protect against heart disease.

Omega-3s are being extensively studied for other conditions, such as rheumatoid arthritis and cognitive decline. Current evidence-based information is available from NCCAM at http://nccam.nih.gov/health/omega3

This issue provides information on omega-3 supplements for heart disease, including what the science says, safety information, and tips for talking with your patients.

Produced for ENZCAM by
Heather McLeod and Ray Kirk

4 December 2012
ENZCAM is based within the Health Sciences Centre, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand. The Centre was established in 2005 with the aim to research the efficacy and safety of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM), with a particular focus on CAM in the New Zealand setting. The centre acts as a focal point to develop novel research ideas in the field of CAM and foster partnerships with researchers both within New Zealand and overseas.

http://www.hsci.canterbury.ac.nz/enzcam/

As the purpose of this series is to put in the public domain material and evidence that will progress the integration of complementary medicine into health systems, we would be delighted if you make use of it in other research and publications. All material produced for ENZCAM and made available on the web-site may be freely used, provided the source is acknowledged. The material is produced under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-Share Alike licence.

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