

THE USE OF COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINES AMONG TYPE 2 DIABETES MELLITUS PATIENTS IN HOSPITAL TUANKU FAUZIAH

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Introduction: Diabetes is a disease in which the body does not produce or properly use insulin, a hormone that is needed to convert sugar, starches, and other food into energy needed for daily life. The cause of diabetes is a mystery, although both genetics and environment appear to play roles. Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) is defined as a group of diverse medical and healthcare systems, practices, and products that are not generally considered part of conventional Western medicine. Nowadays, majority of patients use CAM because they need more control on their diabetes. This study aims to understand the prevalence, types, expenditures, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions of CAM use among patients with type 2 diabetes mellitus (T2DM) in this hospital.

Methodology: This is a descriptive, cross-sectional study of 111 T2DM patients at HTF. This study was conducted from February to April 2016. All the patients were interviewed with a questionnaire adapted from a previous study conducted by Siew et al. Data analysis was done using SPSS v.20 to identify predictors of CAM use. **Results:** The prevalence of CAM use was 50.5 percent. Females (67.9%) were the most frequent CAM users compared to males (32.1%). Majority of the users were Malays (98.2%). Dietary supplements (48.2%) were the most widely used, followed by spiritual/religion master therapy (32.1%), massage therapy (17.9%) and reflexology (7.1%). The median of the expenditure on CAM usage was RM0.00 (30.00) per month. Age group of 35-60 years old was 3.21 times more likely to use CAM compared to the other groups (OR 3.21; 95%CI 1.47,7.01; p=0.003). **Discussion/ Conclusion:** The highest prevalence use of CAM usage was among the Malay females. Majority of them used CAM primarily due to recommendations by their friends without disclosing their use towards their respective physicians. Apart from that, most of these patients had been a keen user of herbal supplements as they were more affordable and easily available.