

ACUPUNCTURE and CANCER PATIENTS QUALITY of LIFE

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ACUPUNCTURE and CANCER PATIENTS

QUALITY of LIFE

- Cancer represents one of the main cause of death today in Europe.
- Cancer treatment is based on chemotherapy, surgery and radiotherapy.
- Quality of life is a very important challenge in health care today.
- How acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine can improve Cancer patients Quality of life ?

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A sociological survey in France.

Questionnaires were addressed to the associations of Acupuncturists (MD) and Traditional practitioners (not MD) and their patients / Interviews of therapists and patients

Professionals

- Questionnaires analysed : 25 MD and 38 not MD
- Interviews analysed : 9 MD and 15 not MD

Patients

- Questionnaires analysed : 106 MD and 58 not MD
- Interviews analysed : 20 MD and 16 not MD
- Various types of cancer with high number of breast cancer.
- age mean : 55

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	event	%
Balance energies	9	9,7%
Relieve side effects	65	69,9%
Psychological support	18	19,4%
Be prepared to chemotherapy	21	22,6%
Reduce cancer progress	3	3,2%
To get better	15	16,1%
To be cured	1	1,1%
Total	93	

Reasons for cancer patients to consult acupuncturists?

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	event	%
Get better	10	21,3%
Psychological support	14	29,8%
Relieve chemotherapy side effects	29	61,7%
Total	45	

Reasons for cancer patients to consult traditional practitioners?

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Acupuncturists MD

- Most acupuncturists practice only acupuncture
- There is an increase of cancer patients consulting acupuncturists and traditional practitioners
- A few acupuncturists treat many cancer patients
- Most acupuncturist treat a limited number of cancer patients
- Communications between oncologists and acupuncturists are very poor, except personal relationships.

Traditional Practitioners not MD

- Traditional Chinese Materia medica

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	events	%
Relieve chemotherapy and radiotherapy side effects	25	100%
Get better	24	96%
Listen to problems	18	72%
Improve immunity	1	4%
Depression, anxiety, insomnia	1	4%
Explanations	1	4%
Cure disease	0	0%
Questionnaires / Answers	25 / 70	

**What cancer patients require
(according to acupuncturists)?**

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	events	%
Nausea, vomiting	19	82,6%
Psychological disorders	16	69,6%
Asthenia	6	26,1%
Pains	6	26,1%
Digestive disorders	4	26,1%
Hot flash	4	17,4%
Appetite	3	13,0%
Burn (radiotherapy)	2	8,7%
Biological markers	2	8,7%
Answers / questionnaires	63 / 23	

iatrogenic symptoms that acupuncturists believe to be able to fight against

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Cancer patients complaints

- Oncologists are only concerned by cancer and not interested in individual's story
- Discussion with oncologists may be difficult even brutal when acupuncture is mentioned
- Lack of time for explanation and discussion
- Only drugs for side effects
- Non-disclosure of use of complementary medicine = communication gap
- Be afraid of not to be understood and of criticisms

Cancer patients needs : get better, obtain what conventional treatment does not offers

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Acupuncture as a complementary medicine

- Acupuncture consultation planning is organized in function of chemotherapy
- Further research is needed to prove the efficiency of acupuncture
- But many more article are published in scientific literature on acupuncture and cancer defining the domain of effectiveness of acupuncture in the field of cancer
- Oncologist and cancer patients hold discrepant views
- Physicians should ask patients about acupuncture use, discuss possible benefits and advise of potential risks.

Education and communication

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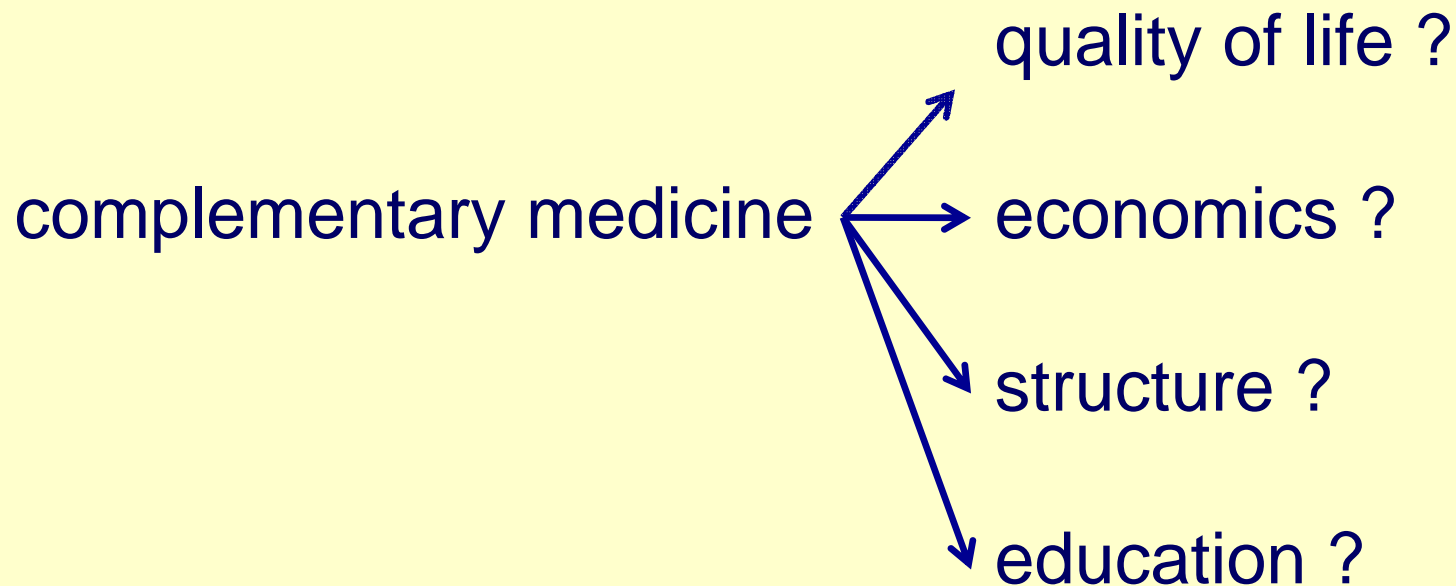
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Conclusions

Integrate acupuncture into conventional cancer care ?



Willingness to combine acupuncture with conventional treatment