



Centre for Cross-disciplinary Evaluation Studies in Complementary and Alternative Medicine
Center for tværvideenskabelige evalueringsstudier af komplementær og alternativ behandling

Patients' motivations for and use of CAM

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How many people use CAM?

- A simple question – but difficult to answer!
- Survey data are unreliable....

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How many people use CAM?

- Survey data show usage between 3%

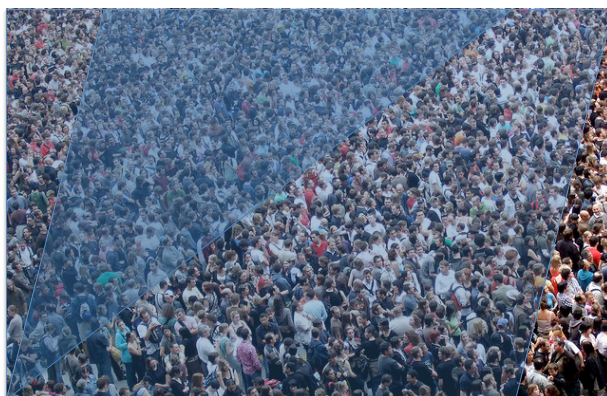


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How many people use CAM?

- ... and 83%



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The problem of definitions...

- What is CAM?
 - What is not CAM?
 - Is 'a cup of herbal tea' CAM?
 - Is acupuncture CAM when provided by my MD?
- Do I use CAM if I eat 'natural' vitamins?
 - Or if I give myself the treat of a monthly massage?



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Across Europe we find a multitude of local definitions, categories, regulations, etc.

- This diversity makes it difficult to establish a clear picture of and compare the use of CAM across Europe
- A comparison of the situation in Denmark and Italy can illustrate the diversity....

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Diversity in definitions and regulations...

- In Denmark:
 - Treatments can legally be provided by non-authorized persons outside the public health care system
 - Such treatments are called 'Alternative treatment'
- In Italy (Tuscany):
 - Only doctors have the legal right to give curative treatments to sick persons
 - If the treatment does not have official recognition, it is called 'non-conventional medicine';
 - If it is recognized officially, it is called 'complementary medicine'

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Some notes on healthcare in Denmark



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Some notes on healthcare in Tuscany



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Two different worlds...

- To navigate in...
- To "be a person" in....
- To interpret and experience the body in...
- To act in...

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Motivations for CAM use in Europe

- Varies according to the local situation of CAM, but.... some general patterns can be found:
 - **To treat chronic diseases (pain, asthma, allergies) – maybe not to cure, but to keep symptoms low**
 - **To treat (repetitive) minor diseases (colds, infections, etc)**
 - **To enhance quality of life and general wellbeing**

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From the web-page of the Tuscan health authorities



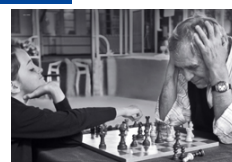
Contro l'insonnia
ora puoi scegliere.
Anche la fitoterapia,
se vuoi.
Chiama l'800 556060

Medicine Complementari
Servizio Sanitario della Toscana. Chiama lo 800 556060



Contro le allergie
ora puoi scegliere.
Anche l'omeopatia,
se vuoi.
Chiama l'800 556060

Medicine Complementari
Servizio Sanitario della Toscana. Chiama lo 800 556060



Contro il mal di testa
ora puoi scegliere.
Anche l'agopuntura,
se vuoi.
Chiama l'800 556060

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Cancer patients in Tuscany and Denmark

- Tuscany:
 - 17 % use some form of CAM
 - They expect and experience CAM to improve physical wellbeing and relieve adverse effects of the chemo
- Denmark:
 - Approx. 50 % use some form of CAM
 - They expect and experience CAM to improve physical and emotional wellbeing, to relieve adverse effects of chemo, and to prevent future cancer

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Patients' assesment of effectiveness

Research that investigate users' subjective experience and evaluation of 'CAM' demonstrates they find CAM to be:

Safe 'non-invasive' and 'non-poluting' treatment for chronic diseases

More whole-person oriented than conventional treatment

Supporting 'things you can do yourself' to improve your health



Able to reduce symptoms, to improve well-being and support quality of life

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Thank you

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