



Centre for Cross-disciplinary Evaluation Studies in Complementary and Alternative Medicine
Center for tværvideenskabelige evalueringstudier 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%

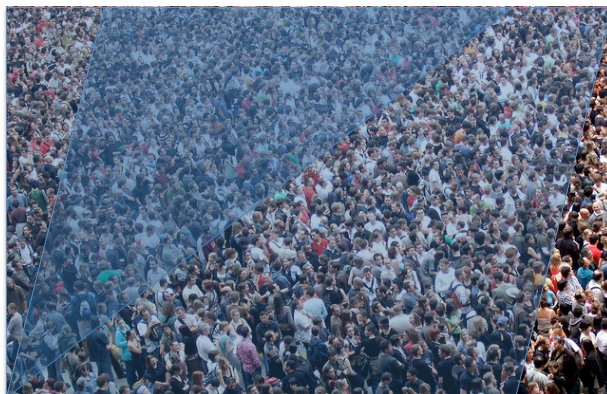


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How many people use CAM?

- ... 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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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



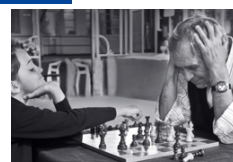
Contro l'insonnia
ora puoi scegliere.
Anche la fitoterapia,
se vuoi.
Chiama l'800 556060

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Servizi Sanitari della Toscana. Cerca le unità



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

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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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