

Alternative Medicine for Pediatric Chemotherapy Side Effects

Poster Presentation

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to examine the efficacy of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) on the side effects of chemotherapy in pediatric patients. **Introduction:** It is estimated that 52% to 80% of pediatric patients experience unrelieved oral mucositis due to chemotherapy every year (Khurana, Pandey, Saksena, & Kumar, 2012). There are several side effects of chemotherapy including pain, nausea, vomiting, oral mucositis, fatigue, and anorexia. Occasionally, these effects are unrelieved by traditional pain relievers and antiemetic medication, leaving staff to find alternative routes of treatment (Lewis, Dirksen, Heitkemper, Bucher, & Harding, 2014). CAM is an alternative non pharmacological group of therapies that can be used for various disease states. CAM encompasses a wide range of treatments that usually are not a part of standard care.

Methods: An integrative review of primary research studies on the effect of CAM on chemotherapy side effects among pediatric patients such as oral mucositis, nausea, vomiting, and pain was conducted. Eight studies that were published after 2008 were included in this review.

Conclusion: Complementary and Alternative Therapies may improve quality of life in the pediatric cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy (Thygeson, Hooke, Clapsaddle, Robbins, & Mosquist, 2010). This integrative review shows that the use of CAMs such as yoga, creative arts, vitamin E, computer games, massage, honey and mixture of beeswax, were effective in relieving specific side effects of chemotherapy.