

The prevalence of complementary and alternative medicines among allergic rhinitis patients in Malaysia

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Allergic rhinitis (AR) is a common disease in Malaysia with many patients using complementary and alternative medicines (CAM) to alleviate their symptoms. However, there was no prevalence study done for CAM users among the AR patients in Malaysia. Because of the rising interest in CAM in the treatment of AR, we conducted this study to estimate the prevalence of CAM among AR patients in Malaysia and understand the practice of CAM usage among them. **Methods:** A cross-sectional study which included questionnaire-based study and survey that used secondary data, which was information of AR from patient's clinic records. Patients with AR who attended ORL-HNS department in Hospital Universiti Sains Malaysia and Hospital Sultanah Aminah, Malaysia were enrolled after consented, on a first come first serve basis as convenience sampling from July 2020 until February 2021. A pre-tested self-administered, 16-item questionnaire in Bahasa Malaysia was distributed to the participants. The questionnaire consists of a set of 16 questions with subsets to enquire about the sociodemographic data and pattern of usage of CAM and its effectiveness. **Results:** 372 patients were enrolled in this study consisting of 217(58.3%) female and 155(41.7%) male patients. 231(62.1%) participants had used CAM for AR in the past 10 years. A higher proportion of female ($p=0.015$) and those with higher income ($p=0.004$) had used CAM. Among the users, 87.9% found CAM to be effective. No difference were found in terms of age ($p=0.885$) and education level ($p=0.057$) for CAM usage. **Conclusion:** CAM is widely used in Malaysia to alleviate allergic rhinitis symptoms, with a large proportion of users think it is effective. Therefore, more randomized controlled trials and laboratory researches should be done in the future to provide evidence and guidance to integrate CAM into AR management.

Transluminal migration of oesophageal foreign bodies: A series of three patients

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SUMMARY

Inadvertent ingestion of foreign bodies, particularly fish bone are a common complaint in the otolaryngology emergency practices in Southeast Asia. Due to its thin, linear, and sharp pointed end, fish bone have the potential to penetrate through the oesophagus wall, or migrate extraluminally towards the surrounding structures in the neck, resulting in bizarre and lethal complications. We present an unusual case of extraluminal migration of foreign body (FB) and 2 cases of completely embedded FB in the oesophagus wall. We aim to share our experiences in both conservative approach and transcervical approach for these difficult clinical problems. All of them have negative rigid oesophagoscopy findings but possessed the radiological evidence of FB. Computed tomography scan have higher sensitivity and provide good preoperative guidance, it should be done early and performed in the event of negative endoscopic evaluation. Prompt diagnosis and early retrieval of FB can significantly reduce morbidity and mortality.