

# The use of oral complementary and alternative medicine among patients with metabolic syndrome in a university primary care clinic

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Oral complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) is widely used among patients with chronic diseases. Oral CAM includes biological-based therapies like herbal and dietary supplements. Its use is rising due to a widespread perception that these products are natural and safe. However, unregulated and unmonitored consumption of oral CAM may cause unwanted side effects. This study aimed to explore the pattern of oral CAM use among metabolic syndrome (MetS) patients in primary care. **Materials and Methods:** A cross-sectional study was conducted at a university primary care clinic from February to April 2021. Patients aged 18 to 70 years old with metabolic syndrome were recruited. Sociodemographic characteristics, clinical characteristics and information on oral CAM use were recorded in a proforma. **Results:** 126 participants were recruited. The mean age of the participants was 57.7 ( $\pm 5.6$ ) years old, and majority were Malay (88.9%). 73 (57.9%) participants were using oral CAM, and 39 (53.4%) used oral CAM as a complementary to their conventional treatment. Of the 73 users, only 15 (20.5%) disclosed to their practitioner. In terms of the type of oral CAM use, 32 (43.8%) used plant-derived crude products such as leaves and roots, whereas 24 (32.9%) used commercially processed products, and 17 (23.3%) used both. **Conclusion:** Oral CAM use was highly prevalent in this primary care clinic, but the disclosure rate of its use to the practitioner was low. There was diverse use of types of oral CAM, which may need proper monitoring. The practitioner needs to inquire about oral CAM use, especially among patients with MetS.

**Keywords:** Oral CAM, metabolic syndrome, primary care

# Audit on uncollected results during electronic health information system downtime in Hospital Sungai Buloh

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## ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** Accurate, fast, and reliable communication of laboratory results to clinicians is a crucial prerequisite for effective and efficient patient care. In Hospital Sungai Buloh, this communication is accomplished through interfaces that link laboratory instruments to the laboratory information system (LIS), then to the electronic Hospital Information System (eHIS). This setup allows immediate transmission of verified laboratory results to all clinicians who have access to the eHIS. However, interfaces and LISs can be unavailable due to planned maintenance or unexpected hardware or software malfunctions. **Materials and Methods:** An audit of recorded eHIS downtime and uncollected result were done based on available records from 2011 till July 2021. **Results:** Majority of electronic health information system downtime in Hospital Sungai Buloh involving laboratory services were unplanned and occurred after office hours ranging from 1 to 336 hours. However, the uncollected results during downtime caused significant wastage of time and cost, approximately RM5435. The number was actually under reported as storage of uncollected results was not properly kept. Poor documentation of the patient's location on PERPAT form is also one of the issues encountered during downtime. **Conclusion:** As for improvement measures, the Pathology Department had started to dispatch all uncollected results to respective ward and clinic pigeon holes in the Management Office from 2020. The Biochemistry and Hematology Unit starts to use middleware during downtime. The IT Department also had outlined the Planned Preventive Maintenance (PPM) for interface PC for analyzers that were integrated with LIS.