

Traditional and complementary medicine usage among cancer patients in Ministry of Health hospitals Malaysia: A descriptive study

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Cancer patients tend to seek a quick alternative solution such as traditional and complementary medicine (T&CM). Consistent information on the frequency and patterns of T&CM use in cancer patients is critical for continuing education and regulation in the T&CM field. This study aimed to determine the T&CM usage among cancer patients in Malaysia. **Materials and Methods:** This cross-sectional study was conducted by using a validated questionnaire adapted from the Malaysian Breast Cancer Survivorship Cohort study. Data on demographics and clinical characteristics were obtained from latest medical record. Subjects were followed-up after a month to collect anthropometric data and nutritional intake. **Results:** This study recruited 382 subjects with median age of 51.38±11.73 years with 34.8% of subjects were T&CM users. Majority of T&CM users were female 81.2%; Malay (89.5%) with secondary education (57.1%). Breast cancer patients were the most frequent users of T&CM and 50.4% users presented with comorbidities and 38.3% were already at Stage 4. Ethnicity ($p<0.001$), type of cancer ($p=0.04$), working status ($p=0.015$), and family history ($p=0.012$) were all associated with T&CM use. Ethnicity showed significant negative effect on the T&CM use (OR:-1.140, $p<0.001$). There were significant changes in overall BMI ($p<0.001$) from pre-diagnosed to the follow-up session among study subjects but no significant differences in mean weight, BMI, energy intake, and protein intake between T&CM users and non-users at pre-diagnosis, first visit, and follow-up session. **Conclusion:** Many patients have reported their hesitation to seek traditional therapy after diagnosed with cancer, citing fear of side effects as the primary reason for the delay. Malay female has the strongest traditional beliefs as herbal medicines consumption are based on experience, observation and rituals derived from social religious beliefs. Patient education is critical, and clinicians should be knowledgeable on the use and safety of traditional and complementary medicine.

Keywords: Traditional and complementary medicine, T&CM, alternative medicine, cancer

The epidemiology of surgically managed brain tumours in Selangor

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: This descriptive study reviewed the epidemiology of operated brain tumours in public hospitals in the state of Selangor from January 2018 till December 2019. **Materials and Methods:** A total of 185 brain tumour patients with confirmed tissue diagnosis were included. The data was analysed using SPSS to acquire value and comparison. **Results:** The crude incidence of operated brain tumour cases in Selangor was 1.42 per 100,000 population/year. Adult-type diffuse gliomas were the most common brain tumour (n: 52, 28.1%) and followed by meningiomas (n=49, 26.5%). The majority of brain tumours occurred in 55-59 (n=28, 15.1%) age group followed by 45-49 (n=22, 11.9%) age group. Females were 1.4 times more likely to have a brain tumour, whereby 58.4% of females were involved. Brain metastases were noted in 4.86% of patients and most commonly were secondary to breast carcinoma (22.2%). Subgroup analysis of the paediatric age group revealed that ependymomal tumours were the most common brain tumour (37%). **Conclusion:** Further data collection is needed for subsequent data analysis and projection for the allocation for healthcare resources.

Keywords: Brain Tumour, Selangor, Operated, Surgical Intervention, Adult, Paediatrics