

Patient-doc relationship affects alternative med use disclosure

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(HealthDay)—Patient-centered communication with a physician can improve the likelihood of cancer patients disclosing the use of complementary health approaches (CHAs), according to a study published online Nov. 11 in *Cancer*.

Stephanie J. Sohl, Ph.D., from the Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tenn., and colleagues surveyed 623 leukemia, colorectal, and bladder [cancer survivors](#) (two to five years after their diagnosis in 2003 to 2004). Among 196 participants reporting using CHAs, the association between patients' perceptions of their physician's patient-centered [communication](#) (i.e., [information exchange](#), affective behavior, knowledge of patients as persons) and patients' disclosure of CHA use was examined.

The researchers found that 31 percent of the full sample used CHAs, and 47.6 percent of CHA users disclosed their use to their physicians. Even after adjustments for physician, patient, and patient-physician relationship factors, disclosure was significantly associated with patient-centered communication (odds ratio [OR], 1.37). The aspects of patient-centered communication that contributed to this association were perceived physician knowledge of the patient as a person (OR, 1.28) and information exchange (OR, 1.27). Nondisclosure was primarily accounted for by survivors not thinking that it was important to discuss CHAs (67.0 percent). When CHAs were disclosed, a majority of physicians encouraged continued use (64.8 percent).

"Results support the idea that improving the overall patient centeredness of cancer follow-up care and improving the disclosure of CHA use are potentially synergistic clinical goals," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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