Team publish in the Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care

January 22 2013

New York University College of Nursing (NYUCN) researchers Michele G. Shedlin, PhD, and Joyce K. Anastasi, PhD, DrNP, FAAN, LAc, published a paper, "Use of Complementary and Alternative Medicines and Supplements by Mexican-Origin Patients in a U.S.–Mexico Border HIV Clinic," in the on-line version of the *Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care*.

Complementary and alternative medicines (CAM) and therapies are often used to improve or maintain overall health and to relieve the side effects of conventional treatments or symptoms associated with chronic illnesses such as HIV infection.

CAM can be categorized into mind body therapies such as yoga and meditation; natural products such as botanicals, vitamins, and minerals; body-based therapies such as massage; and culturally based healing traditions such as Ayurveda, traditional Chinese medicine, and curanderismo or folk healing.

The researchers drew data from a study investigating the influence of institutional and psychosocial factors on adherence to antiretroviral (ARV) medications by Mexican-origin persons living with HIV (PWLH) on the U.S.–Mexico border and seeking treatment at a clinic in El Paso, Texas.

"Seeking access to medical care and/or medicines is a traditional pattern of cross-border movement in both directions on the U.S.–Mexico

border," said Dr. Shedlin. " In fact, most of our study participants had, at some time, sought services and/or lived on both sides of the border."

Among 113 participants, many individuals reported using complementary and alternative medicines (CAM) to support general health and their immune systems and to address symptoms of HIV-related diseases and ARV side effects.

CAM were seen as complementing ARV treatment; however, CAM use was often not reported to health care providers out of concern about disapproval and loss of care privileges. Furthermore, women and men participants reported their willingness to learn about and to try various new strategies and remedies that borrowed from emerging traditions of healing.

"This finding challenges researchers and providers to consider how Hispanic populations, with their CAM use, may exhibit the hybridization of health and healing," said Dr. Anastasi. "Information on CAM use needs to be available to providers to assess the benefits and contraindications of use and to develop realistic and effective care strategies."

Clinical Considerations

- A rich and large repertoire of traditional and emerging practices and natural remedies are used to cope with and alleviate physical and mental health challenges posed by HIV infection.
- CAM health resources are often used in conjunction with, and not instead of, ARV medications.
- Some CAM practices are so commonplace in the lives of Hispanic patients that individuals may not be aware that they fit within the parameters of CAM.

- Health care providers need to learn about the benefits and potential problems related to CAM.
- Health care providers need to teach patients about the importance of reporting CAM use in order to create a truly collaborative and effective health care strategy.

Provided by New York University

Citation: Team publish in the Journal of the Association of Nurses in AIDS Care (2013, January 22) retrieved 25 April 2024 from https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-01-team-publish-journal-association-nurses.html

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.