

Use of complementary and alternative medicine among women with depression: results of a national survey

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摘要

Abstract

OBJECTIVE: This study examined patterns of and reasons for use of complementary and alternative therapies among women with depression, focusing in particular on three popular types of complementary and alternative therapies—manual therapies (for example, chiropractic treatments, massage, and acupuncture), herbs, and vitamins. **METHODS:** The multiethnic sample consisted of 220 women with depression who were assessed as part of a nationally representative telephone survey of 3,068 women. **RESULTS:** Fifty-four percent of these women with depression reported past-year use of complementary and alternative medicine. African-American women were less likely to use complementary and alternative therapies in general, compared with non-Hispanic white women. Other factors significantly associated with use of complementary and alternative medicine in general included being employed, being single, and having self-perceived poor health. The relationships between the sociodemographic factors and use of each of the three individually examined types of therapies differed from their relationships with use of complementary and alternative medicine in general. Participants' most commonly cited reasons for use of these therapies were wanting treatments to be based on a "natural approach," wanting treatments to be congruent with their own values and beliefs, and past experiences in which conventional medical therapies had caused unpleasant side effects or had seemed ineffective. **CONCLUSIONS:** It is important for mental health and other health professionals to increase their own awareness of the types of complementary and alternative therapies that their patients may be using and to improve communication with their patients about the benefits and potential risks of these therapies.