

Natural Products and Special Diets: The Perceptions of Female Breast Cancer Patients in Miami

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Breast cancer is a ubiquitous form of cancer that derives from the presence of a plethora of cells in the breast. To escape the invasive and debilitating treatment methods that are associated with the disease, cancer patients have slowly begun to implement complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), particularly natural products and special diets. Unfortunately, the current cancer data will require revision imminently as it is tailored to White, Non-Hispanic populations who are becoming a minority in the U.S. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources [HHR], 2011). Also, there is a lack of research pertaining CAM perceptions. Furthermore, the current study elucidated the perceptions female breast cancer patients attained towards natural products and special diets in Miami. The study narrowed in on the patients' race, ethnicity, education, and income, and the link to CAM utilization. Moreover, the study indirectly explores the modalities' potential as a viable treatment option. A survey method was utilized, and it yielded qualitative data from 77 breast cancer patients in the form of open ended responses, which were later quantified. The results suggest that the patients regard the modalities in a positive light; ultimately, they perceived the modalities as useful and effective in helping the body in many aspects. Also, race, ethnicity, education, and income was tacitly interrelated with CAM use. The current study's findings affect the patients who employ these treatment strategies to alleviate cancer's effects. The findings can also prompt physicians, hospitals and other treatment facilities, and higher entities to handle cancer-rooted medical situations with regards to CAM as a viable treatment suggestion. The current research also paves the way for further oncological research, which is critical as the current knowledge base demands findings.

Keywords: cancer, breast cancer, complementary and alternative medicine, CAM, natural products, special diets, Miami, females, perceptions, race, ethnicity, education