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The Association Between Complementary Medicine (CAM) Use and COVID19 Perceptions in Inner-City Kidney Patients

We investigated beliefs about CAM among high-risk kidney patients and associations with attitudes about COVID19 (C19) prevention and treatment.

A telephone survey was conducted in a random convenience sample of 81 patients from CKD(20), Dialysis(21), and Kidney Transplant Clinics(40). Results did not differ between clinics and were analyzed together. Pts were asked questions regarding CAM and C19 and given the MHLC and BMQ surveys.

Mean age was 57.42 ± 13.2 with 37 males (46%) and 44 females (54%). 82% were African American (62), 8% Hispanic (6), 4% (3) White, (5) 6% Other. Those who believed that CAM could cure COVID19 were more likely to agree that hydroxychloroquine is an effective treatment or cure ($r=0.78$, $p=0.003$) and less likely to agree with the statement "I can trust state government guidelines to advise me on how to protect myself from COVID19" ($r=-0.29$, $p=0.032$). Patients who believe CAM can cure C19 were less likely to be willing to get a C19 vaccine ($p=0.008$, $r=-0.41$). Those who believe CAM can cure or prevent catching C19 were more likely to believe vitamins can help prevent it. Those who were more likely to believe CAM can prevent C19 were more likely to respond "not sure" or "yes" to the question, "Is C19 caused by a bacteria?" ($r=0.39$, $p=0.004$). Those who indicated they use CAM scored lower on MHLCDoctors ($r=-0.30$, $p=0.034$) and BMQ-Specific Necessity (-0.31 , $p=0.027$). Those who believe CAM can cure C19 are more likely to believe the US overreports the virus ($r=0.39$, $p=0.004$).

In our population:1. Pts who use CAM were less likely to believe their health depends on doctors and that medicines are necessary for health.2. Pts who believe that CAM can cure C19 were more likely to use vitamins, not want a vaccine, and believe misinformation regarding use of hydroxychloroquine, cause of C19 and that the high reported incidence is due to overreporting.3. Understanding individual pts beliefs about CAM may help us design C19 education programs.