

REVIEW ARTICLE

Complimentary and Alternative Medicine in Dentistry- A Review

Arungani NS¹, Kalaivani Venkadessan²

ABSTRACT

With increasing patient concern about the side effects of conventional medicines, increased bacteria resistance to antibiotics, and challenges faced by medical personnel in managing chronic disease and its symptoms, it is becoming increasingly important for health professionals to have a thorough understanding of complementary and alternative modalities for treating these chronic ailments. Many of these methods, as well as their therapeutic effects, are well-known worldwide and have been employed since antiquity. Although there are lot of benefits and significance in healthcare, Alternative Medicine cannot be substituted completely for a conventional scientific procedures and treatments. Nonetheless, it can always be used as an adjunct to conventional medical procedures.

Key Words: Medicine, antibiotics, alternative, dentistry

¹Postgraduate, Department of Oral Pathology and Microbiology, Indira Gandhi Institute of Dental Sciences, Pondicherry. Email: arungani.n.s@gmail.com

²Postgraduate, Department of Public Health Dentistry, Saveetha Dental College, Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences, Chennai, India. Email : kalaivani.venki@gmail.com

Corresponding author:

Dr.Arungani N S, Postgraduate, Department of Oral Pathology and Microbiology, Indira Gandhi Institute of Dental Sciences, Pondicherry. Email: arungani.n.s@gmail.com

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INTRODUCTION

With increasing patient concern about the side effects of conventional medicines, increased bacteria resistance to antibiotics, and challenges faced by medical personnel in managing chronic disease and its symptoms, it is becoming increasingly important for health professionals to have a thorough understanding of complementary and alternative modalities for treating these chronic ailments. Many of these methods, as well as their therapeutic effects, are well-known worldwide and have been employed since antiquity^(1,2)

According to the National Institutes of Health's (NIH) National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH), complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) is "a group of diverse medical and health-care systems, practises, and products that are not generally considered part of conventional medicine." We frequently encounter patients who indicate an interest in using mind-body complementary therapies to manage their health problems. Alternative medicine, often known as complementary or integrative medicine, discusses and recommends any available alternative therapy to patients. The term "alternative" implies that it is based on a non-drug method.⁽³⁾

We know that a lot of oral diseases like periodontitis, aphthous ulcers, lichen planus, myositis, etc. manifest due to stress and alternative medicine focuses on counteracting these at a whole body level to help reduce the chances of developing them. Massage therapies, usage of ayurvedic and herbal preparations for the cure of oral diseases have yielded a lot of positive results.

CLASSIFICATION (NATIONAL CENTRE FOR COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE)^(4,5)

Mind-body interventions

- Meditation
- Biofeedback

• Hypnosis

• Yoga

• Imagery

• Creative outlets.

Biologically based practices

• Vitamins

• Herbs,

• Foods

• Special diet

Manipulative and body based practices

• Massage

• Chiropractic care

• Reflexology.

Energy medicine

• Tai Chi

• Reiki

• Therapeutic touch.

Whole medical system

Ayurveda, Chinese and Naturopathic medicine, Homoeopathy, Acupuncture

APPLICATIONS OF DENTISTRY

Mind body interventions

These are predicated on the idea that our minds may influence our bodies. They increase the capacity of the mind to influence physiological function and symptoms. As mind-body interventions in dentistry, a variety of therapies is available. Behavioural therapy, meditation, prayer, mental healing, yoga, and other therapies that involve creative outlets such as art, music, or dance are all examples of cognitive therapy.

• Relaxation is a state of altered consciousness, a slowing of breath and heart rate.

• Meditation is a process of training one's mind to be attentive, to focus in a non-analytical way or an attempt to refrain from rumination.

• Hypnosis is induction of trance states by therapeutic suggestions.

Imagery, autogenic training, aromatherapy, biofeedback, psychotherapy, counselling, yoga, and dance and exercise movements are some of the additional therapies that can be used. ⁽⁴⁾

Yoga for Dental Care

a) Sirhasana helps in stimulates the blood flow to pituitary gland for strengthen the bones and teeth to prevent periodontal problems.

b) Shitali & Shitkar Pranayama in these teeth is occluded during breathing to intermittent force on teeth and correction of alignment of teeth.

c) Sarvangasana helps in stimulate the thyroid gland to increase the blood circulation in the mouth for prevention of dental disorders.

d) Bhujangasana posture is so therapeutic for practicing dental surgeons, as it tones up the whole spine. Thus, yoga is helpful in prevention of dental diseases and maintenance of good oral hygiene. ^(6,7)

Biological based practices

It uses substances found in nature like foods, vitamins, dietary supplements and herbal products ⁽⁴⁾

Herbs in dentistry:

In the treatment of serious and purulent gingivitis and mucositis, superficial periodontitis, catarrhal tongue inflammation, toxic oral cavity inflammation, mucosal infections, and problematic post-operative wound healing, herbal compounds are indicated. When an inflammation is induced by a local irritating source, plant chemicals can be a powerful and dominant medicine. Anti-inflammatory, antibacterial, analgesic, astringent, edema-reducing, relaxing, and healing-accelerating effects are the most essential characteristics of herbal medicine⁽⁸⁾

Natural products derived from medicinal plants such as neem, tulsi, amla, dhatura, nimbu, and others have shown to be a rich source of physiologically active molecules, with many of them serving as the foundation for the development of novel pharmaceutical lead chemicals.

Manipulative and body based practices

System of therapies that use either manual manipulation or movement of one or more parts of the body to address structural or systemic imbalances of the bones and joints, the soft tissues, and the circulatory and lymphatic systems.

1. Massage: Manipulation of tissues with hands or special tools.

2. Chiropractic care: A type of manipulation of the joints and skeletal system.

3. Reflexology: Using pressure points in the hands or feet to affect other parts of the body⁽⁹⁾.

Energy medicine

It involves the belief that the body has energy fields that can be used for healing and wellness. Therapists use pressure or move the body by placing their hands in or through these fields.

1. Tai Chi: Involves slow, gentle movements with a focus on the breath and concentration.

2. Reiki: Balancing energy either from a distance or by placing hands on or near the patient

3. Therapeutic touch: Moving hands over energy fields of the body⁽⁹⁾.

Whole medical systems

It includes the use of Ayurvedic, Chinese medicine, Homeopathy and Acupuncture. Vata', 'Pitta' and 'Kapha' molecules are the three biological elements which constitute the cells and tissues of all the living organisms in the universe. In a state of imbalance, the three elements are responsible for disease, or even death.

Chinese medicine is based on Yinyangism the combination of five phases theory with Yin-yang theory which was later absorbed by Daoism. Chinese herbs inhibit proliferation, induce apoptosis, suppress angiogenesis, retard ⁽⁹⁾. ⁽⁹⁾.metastasis and enhance chemotherapy, exhibiting anti-cancer potential⁽¹⁰⁾.

Acupuncture in dentistry

Acupuncture in dentistry may not be used to treat the underlying cause of dental pain, but rather as an aid in achieving anaesthesia during dental treatments and giving pain relief thereafter. It may not be effective in alleviating the pain and suffering associated with TMDs, particularly if they are muscular in nature. Relaxing the lateral pterygoid muscles can aid to lessen TMJ clicking by reducing the anterior displacing force on the meniscus. Acupuncture treatment for patients with trigeminal neuralgia and Bell's palsy has been documented in Chinese literature in various case reports and case series. These acupuncture sites appear to correspond to the nerve branch distribution.

Acupuncture treatment has been shown in observational studies to enhance salivary flow in healthy volunteers, patients with Sjogren's disease, and patients who have had head and neck radiotherapy⁽¹⁰⁾.

Homeopathy

Homeopathy is a type of alternative medicine in which practitioners treat patients with very diluted concoctions that are thought to cause healthy persons to experience symptoms similar to the patient's. The "rule of similars," which literally means "let like be cured by like," is the foundation of homeopathy. In acute cases of periapical and periodontal abscesses, homeopathic remedies such as Belladonna, Hepar sulphuris calcareum, Silica, Myrsilica, and Calendula are commonly utilised. For anxious or fearful patients, gelsenium, aconite, coffee cruda, and chamomile are employed⁽¹¹⁾.

Limitations

Religion, tradition, belief in supernatural forces, pseudoscience, and logical mistakes are generally at the root of it. Its effectiveness is either unproven or disproven, and it usually lacks any scientific proof. The conventional or science-based healthcare system does not include treatments. Alternative medicine research is typically of poor quality and has

methodological flaws. When used in conjunction with other medicines, there may be some negative effects. Treatments last a long time⁽⁷⁾.

CONCLUSION

Although there are lot of benefits and significance in healthcare, Alternative Medicine cannot be substituted completely for a conventional scientific procedures and treatments. Nonetheless, it can always be used as an adjunct to conventional medical procedures.

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