

The Challenge of Cancer
Alternative Methods (CAM) in
the World

a study by
Serge Jurasunas

- 2005 -

Throughout the world there is a growing interest in the development of CAM, with many cancer patients now looking to use some kind of CAM. Globally more than a third of all cancer patients in Europe use CAM as revealed by the first study into the use of alternative medicine. However in some countries, such as Italy, there is a large percentage, whereas Greece has very low levels (less than 15 percent) and Portugal has the lowest statistics. In many countries CAM is now utilised more and more by individual doctors, private clinics and some hospitals.

However most people are still either badly or wrongly informed about the benefits that cancer patients can receive from CAM.

Many cancer patients undergoing chemotherapy react negatively when it is suggested by friends or relatives to consult a CAM specialist in order to follow an alternative treatment.

We have examples of some of our cancer patients improving their condition and feeling better who speak to some neighbour or relative, themselves with cancer, who may even have been watching the good condition of our patients yet have totally refused treatments other than chemotherapy because of incorrect ideas or wrong information. Most of the time hospital physicians strongly advise their patients against other unproven therapies. Unfortunately I know several examples where my patients are still alive, but the other neighbour or relative is dead.

Japan, the most advanced country for CAM

In Japan many doctors are using complementary medicine in their clinics to treat cancer ⁽¹⁾ while large hospitals such as the Hotta hospital in Kyoto use some complementary medicine and even special infra-red ray-treated water (with oxide-reductive properties) to energize cancer patients and even treat colon cancer.

Alternatively in many medical clinics, day care patients are given training in breathing, diet and physical and mental health. The diet is based on modern dietetic rules that include eating large amounts of vegetables, whole grains, seaweed, and brown rice to enhance the prophylactic power ⁽²⁾.

The Japanese call this medicine “Ryo-yo” where “Ryo” means a treatment given in the clinic to enhance healing and immunity and “yo” means daily maintenance by the patients themselves ⁽³⁾. Japan has quickly followed the opening of the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (USA) (a separate branch of the National Health Center) that currently receives some 100 million dollars grant annually to investigate CAM. Programs are being developed to investigate various methods and substances through collaboration between medical Universities and individual doctors.

Now, for the first time in Japan in a telephone survey of 1000 people, it was shown that the percentage of persons who had used at least one CAM modality over the previous 12 months was greater than those using conventional western medicine (76,0% as against 65,6%) (Yanrashita H, Tsukayama H., Sugishita C. – Popularity of Complementary and Alternative Medicine in Japan – A telephone survey. Complement Ther Med. 2002 – 18.84.93)

Japan has now opened several Associations of Alternative and Complementary Medicine in order to promote CAM and an International Research Center for Traditional Medicine has even been created, while in 2002 the CAM department was founded in one Japanese National University (Kanazawa University)

If one examines the statistics about the CAM used in Japan and the USA, one realises that Japan is the most advanced country in the world in CAM usage. 65.6% of Japanese adults used CAM compared with only 42,1% in the USA.

In Japan Kampo medicine (herbal medicine) is the most frequently used modality in medical practice but dietary supplements are also widely used by patients without informing their doctors.

In Japan more and more physicians and oncologists are now using CAM and natural compounds to treat their cancer patients. Once I was able to import from Japan a natural compound prepared from a special mixture of equal parts of various mushrooms and herbs (NYT) to use in lung cancer together with chemotherapy. We obtained significant results but unfortunately the natural product has been registered as a “Pharmaceutical drug” only to be used in hospitals but at least Japanese cancer patients are treated with better care and with natural products.

I believe, as here with the example of Japan, that we have shown that the time has come for us to realise that there is a significant difference between what we call “natural medicine” and scientific alternative medicine, that studies the effects of various substances and functional foods having specific medicinal properties in the treatment of cancer.

Although vitamins are among the five most frequently used therapies, according to the responses from nearly 1.000 patients (the first European Survey) ⁽⁴⁾ many people are still suspicious of natural products and their effects on cancer.

Coming from my own observations and many questions asked about toxic effects – Killing molecules to kill the tumor coming from nature have no effect what so ever on the tumor itself. However more people believe that CAM helps the body to fight the disease.

People need to be more open to other varieties of medicine, since mankind comes from or with nature on this planet and human physiology and genes can only accept original foods and not artificial molecules and drugs. Therefore natural molecules and whole foods cannot only help the body to fight but also to cure the disease.

As we enter a new century, we still have a great deal to learn from nature in order to discover the secrets of our body’s biological regulation, to finally discover that the body makes a “whole” of itself and especially why there are diseases like cancer and how to treat them. We will never find an answer in the laboratory despite the decades of investigation and billions of dollars spent. We are just stuck with disease and it is the time for most people and patients to wake up and realise that it is not drugs that can cure cancer but probably a holistic treatment using natural substances, diet, raw foods, vegetable juices and some selected specific non-toxic therapies.

To inform the patients

I have to inform our patients and their relatives seeking some alternative support that here in Portugal and most other countries the truth about cancer treatment is hidden from patients and especially the real efficiency of cytotoxic therapy.

Often the media publishes reports about a “breakthrough” in cancer treatment, a “new miracle remedy”, the cure of cancer is now a reality etc... but later clinical trials and poor results of therapy such as the 5-FU cytotoxic drugs appear as failures. The mass media have continued to report the supposed benefits of chemotherapy. More serious medical ethicists do not censure this false information or divulge in public the failure of scientific protocols.

Is it any wonder, then, that the general public continues to think that great progress is being made, since only positive news about chemotherapy filters down through the mass media? While CAM and most natural compounds continue to be severely criticised, even when they have demonstrated under various scientific tests and experiments their immunological and anticancer properties such as with MGN-3 in the USA. While doctors using CAM are usually designated as quacks or charlatans, at the same time thousands of cancer patients are dying every year (even referred to as victims) from the so-called scientifically proven chemotherapy. When are we going to stop this madness and look at the patient as a human being fighting for his life and not only the tumor that must be killed by any means?

However, not everything is so bad, even if considerable progress needs to be made in most European countries – Germany, Switzerland and Austria are the rare countries equipped with clinics and hospitals using both conventional therapy and CAM, because of their old tradition of folk medicine and the fact that people have a strong attraction for natural medicine.

In fact Germany has a large scientific community in favour of the advancement of complementary medicine in cancer. During the annual alternative cancer Congress in Baden-Baden that attracted specialists from all over the world, both CAM doctors, researchers and scientists from other prominent institutions, state clinics, Universities and hospitals such as the famous Charite hospital in Berlin, all feel comfortable delivering lectures and exchanging ideas. This is something impossible in most countries of the world since Western medicine does not accept other theories.

Also there are some voices coming from state researchers and Universities that put in doubt the value of chemotherapy concerning the life extension or life quality. The latest figures from the cancer registry of the University of Munich show that survival rates have not improved over the past decades. Even the survival rate of breast cancer actually fell over the course of the years.

The famous German magazine Der Spiegel which in Germany – and in fact in Europe - has the highest circulation of over one million copies sold every week, has launched in October 2004 an article highly critical of chemotherapy (and not the first) entitled “Useless poisonous cures” (Giftkur ohne nutzen – www.pilhar.com/news/presse/2004/20041004)

This article clearly showed that for the patients in the advanced stages of the major forms of cancer, chemotherapy has no effect on survival rate and would only reduce quality of life. However, as mentioned in the article, this type of treatment became one of the dogmas in medicine because physicians did not want to admit to their patients that most of the time chemotherapy has no significant ability to extend patient life, since “cure” is not a definition used in oncological books. In fact more and more critics have appeared on the abuse of chemotherapy in advanced cases which in my experience precipitated the death of patients with additional suffering. Unfortunately and sadly I have witnessed the death of middle aged patients with advanced breast cancer who were not mentally prepared to stop chemotherapy and this is the kind of information that should be divulged. More recently I have had a patient aged 36 years who came to see me in a wheelchair with advanced lymphoma and who submitted to the abuse of chemotherapy. A couple of days after the consultation he suddenly died, probably from heart or lung failure.

To be honest this situation could be avoided if the patient had been informed earlier about CAM and unfortunately he came too late.

There are not only critics of the ineffectiveness of chemotherapy, but also of the huge amount of money spent with no appreciable results. In Germany between August 2003 and July 2004, 1,8 billion Euros were spent on cancer drugs, which make it possible to understand the pressure of pharmaceutical labs on the E.C. about the regulation against natural products. During the past decade, many products, substances and especially herbs with anticancer properties have been prohibited. Herbs which have been in use for several centuries to treat disease and cancer are removed from our European patrimony while Japan Kampso medicine is stimulated. We in Europe are simply eliminating our herbal medicines for politics and money.

Nevertheless, 1.8 billion euros is quite a low sum if we compare it to the USA, a country where cancer has become a real industry with \$37 billion dollars expended annually on direct medical costs for cancer treatment, which do not even cure patients while cancer incidence continues to increase. If we add about the same \$37 billion dollars spent annually for heart disease treatment the most technically developed country in the world spends annually for only 2 diseases, 74 billion dollars. At least we may conclude that in the USA, disease has generated a cancer Industry business and health is no longer a prime national objective.

All these criticisms clearly show that the mind of man is now asking some questions and it is the beginning of a new era against the medical dogmas, since for the first time and particularly in Germany and the USA (Fortune leaf 2004), doubts have arisen in the heads of top journalists and editors working hand in hand with the scientific medical community.

We have been used to periodic predictions of the coming demise of cancer (usually after a large world congress of cancerology in order to justify the expenditure) but by now they have failed to deliver on expectations.

All treatments that patients believe have been disappointing due to the extravagant claims.

Before a historic meeting in the White House, President Nixon (mistaken by the oncologists/researchers) signed a check for 100 million dollars and promised a cure for cancer, in time for the American bicentennial in 1976. If the anniversary produced a spectacular show, unfortunately cancer increased dramatically and the hundreds of thousands of people with new cancer cases treated through surgery, radiation and chemotherapy have failed to stop the progress of the disease. More serious is the fact that no significant improvement in survival can be observed between 1970 and today. (Fortuna, leaf 2004)

The question remains, what more can be done? New types of chemotherapy or radiation, new types of toxic substances to stimulate the immune system?

Probably we have to change our theory concerning the disease itself, breaking the dogmas and adopting a central concept of holistic or "metabolic therapy" to treat and control the whole body and the disease instead of uniquely destroying the tumor. Back in 1986. I engaged myself in a new concept of metabolic therapy for cancer and set up the International Institute of Research on Cancer and Metabolic Therapy and now medical science is moving into this direction though with decades of delay.

For example, Dr. Von Esbenbach from the National Cancer Institute (USA has redefined cancer from the rapidly progressive disease to a "manageable, chronic disease (Ralph Moss – Newsletter 157 – 11/07/04) Wonderful! But again this has for a long time been our own theory and in one of my last lectures delivered in Germany at the International Congress of Deutch Heilpraktikers 2004 I explained that cancer can be controlled and it is not the progressive killing disease that we have believed it to be for the past 4 decades.

Despite the strong criticism expressed by hospital doctors, CAM is now attracting the interest of health authorities such as the National Cancer Institute that for several years have given money for research on methods or natural compounds that can treat cancer without toxicity. For instance Dr. Gonzalez M.D. from New York received a grant of 18 million dollars for experiments on a product made from proteolytic enzymes to treat a large number of pancreatic cancer patients.

In pancreas patients, systemic chemotherapy induces responses in only a few cases and the main clinical benefit of chemotherapy is generally the palliation of pain and cancer is a thromboembolic disease with serious clinical consequences. While administration of cytotoxic and tragelet therapy is associated with a further increase in the evidence of thromboembolic disease.

Now the hypercoagulative state in pancreatic cancer induces directly or indirectly angiogenic effects to hasten tumor expansion. Proteolytic enzymes are used to dissolve the excess of fibrosis and the hypercoagulation and some other effects that cannot be discussed here. But we can understand and this is only one example of the large opening from health authorities to try to use more effective and safer compounds in various types of cancer.

On our side we have enough cases to prove that cancer can be controlled and many times will enter total remission going beyond the 5 and even 10 years survival banner statistics.

And we are speaking of killer cancer with generally poor prognosis and metastatic spread. Recurrences usually blow up after a short time or a few years such as breast cancer with metastasis.

Our breast cancer patients, however, have so far enjoyed seven to ten years without recurrence and we are speaking of new cases. We have cases going back over 20 years but it seems that medical science show little interest in such cases.

More recently a bad gastric cancer case with 18 lymph nodes affected by metastases (bad prognosis) and in a very poor physical condition recovered quickly with our own therapy on side of chemotherapy.

Apparently the hospital doctors could not understand how the patient recovered so well.

One other case was a stage IV inoperable lung tumor of 3 cm diameter. The patient started on chemotherapy together with our own therapy that included the low molecular antioxidant compound Anoxe with SOD-like activity as prooxidant to activate the apoptosis pathway and tumor cell destruction, together with liquid cartilage extract against angiogenesis.

After 3 months the tumor reduced to $\frac{3}{4}$ of the volume and doctors were astonished since they never believed that chemotherapy could reduce such a size in only 3 months. After 6 months the tumor was totally eliminated and they introduced the hypothesis of a wrong diagnosis which after looking at the first MRI left no doubt about the tumor.

Unfortunately, the patient didn't inform the doctors about what he was doing, which is too bad but probably they would have reacted negatively since they just reject totally the value of natural compounds and generally speaking about CAM.

This is typical of results and information which are not allowed by the media for publication. At least it should create doubt and raise questions since the evidence cannot be denied.

The reason this information is inaccessible to the public and patients is most difficult to explain.

However the search for information through the Internet is now progressing despite the fact that only the English language is available.

In the USA there are quite a number of Associations and Foundations that link with CAM and probably the first one was the "Cancer Control Society" launched 35 years ago by Betty Morales which I know very well and where I delivered a lecture on cancer in 1974.

Many of these associations are working with teams of medical doctors and researchers and their main goal is to inform the public about CAM available in USA or elsewhere in the world, including where to find the best clinic or most experienced doctors.

Unfortunately many inexperienced doctors may treat cancer without proper training which is unacceptable and even in some countries like Ireland and Portugal experienced doctors in CAM are almost non-existent and a major problem for patients looking for a reliable doctor properly trained in CAM.

One very serious organization in the USA is the National Foundation of Alternative Medicine that even works with Columbia University to submit the best "cancer cases" obtained from doctors treating their patients with CAM and showing after five years a total remission.

The NFAM provides the list of the best doctors, clinics or institutes available in your own country or near by.

To check on my own Institute and methods my cancer patients click on National Foundation for Alternative Medicine (NFAM clinic number 200029)

You may ask yourself how or why my Institute should appear on the website of the NFAM.

They don't do this just because you might have sent a letter explaining what you do. Things are most difficult since the NFAM will send a medically trained doctor in CAM (from Columbia University) to visit you, see how you are working and check on a number of acceptable clinical cases that can be submitted as "best cancer cases" winning approval by the National Institute of Cancer.

In other words, you need to show cancer cases that are usually incurable by conventional therapy or to extend their life behind the official barrier for such lung, multiple myeloma or pancreas cancer, or you can show cases of tumors resistant to chemo/radiation which had been reduced by CAM.

Every case need hospital proof, blood analysis, tumor markers, CAT-scans etc...

You need to be able to show some evidence of what has been done with cancer cases that usually respond poorly to chemotherapy such as the lung cancer case that I described before. For instance I have now been treating for the past 6 years a case of multiple myeloma with only a 2-3 years maximum perspective life expectancy without a bone marrow transplant.

This is considered by the National Institute of cancer (USA) as a best cancer case since the man should have died about 3 years ago.

Again this is the kind of information that needs to be circulated in our countries of Europe and Portugal to public and patients that often do not know what to do and most of the time are wrongly informed about CAM. If we subscribe to a strong doubt about chemotherapy which is a historical step, the German magazine "Der Spiegel" offers no other suggestion. But while alternative medicine, naturopathy and health magazines are well developed in Germany other countries provide absolutely no information.

About 30 years ago the World Congress of Cancerology was organized in Pekin Chinese Republic of China, and Western doctors were astonished to see how traditional Chinese medicine was used for cancer patients in hospitals. Let me remind you that today in China in hospitals cancer patients can choose between the two medicines: Western medicine or TCM and this in a dictatorial communist country whereas in contrast we live in a democratic free country with no freedom of choice.

After the Congress, long articles were published in many European magazine under titles such as.

Chemotherapy + Traditional Chinese Medicine = the cure of cancer

Where are we today?

References:

1. Complementary and Alternative Medicine: Japanese Perspective
Vol.1 , Issue 2 – Oxford University Press 2004.
2. Effect of Long-term Administration of Immunomodulatory Foods on cancer patients completing conventional treatments.
Tsunekawa Gastrointestinal clinic.
3. Clinical Pharmacology and Therapy – Vol 14/No 3/May 2004
4. Survey from the European Oncology Nursing Society I clinics in 14 countries.

For more information on cancer treatment contact

www.sergejurasunas.com