

ABSTRACT

Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) use is common among patients with chronic diseases in developing countries. The rising use of CAM in the management of diabetes is an emerging public health concern given the potential adverse effects, drug interactions and benefits associated with its use. Herbal medicine, dietary supplements, prayers and relaxation techniques are some of the most frequently used CAM modalities in Kenya. Cited reasons for CAM use as adjuvant therapy include dissatisfaction and inaccessibility of allopathic medicine, and recommendations by family and friends. This article explores the pattern of CAM use in Kenya and other developing countries. It also identifies some constraints to proper CAM control, and offers suggestions on what can be done to ensure safe and regulated CAM use.

KEYWORDS:

CAM, Kenya, Traditional medicine, developing countries, diabetes mellitus, dietary supplements, herbal medicine, integration, regulation