

PRACTICE OF USE OF FOOD SUPPLEMENTS IN CANCER PATIENTS

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OBJECTIVES

The use of complementary therapies is significant among cancer patients. The aim of the research was to find out what additional therapies are used by patients diagnosed with cancer. Besides, what kind of factors influence their choice between medicines and how much financial burden this means for them.

METHODS

Quantitative cross-sectional research was performed among non-randomized patients (n=111) in Hungary. We applied a questionnaire survey, groups of questions: sociodemographic data, disease characteristics, dietary supplements used, information shared with physicians, source of information, costs, impact assessment. In addition to the descriptive statistical analysis χ^2 -test, Independent samples t-test, ANOVA were applied (p<0.05) with SPSS software.

RESULTS

The mean age was 49.8 years. 33.4% use high doses of vitamins C and D, herbs that are considered effective. 48.6% inform the treating physician about the preparations used. Economically active people are significantly (p=0.006) less likely to use any additional treatment or consult a naturopath than inactive people. This may be related to the price of the preparations. Avemar is used by 68.5%, Aloe vera 56.8% and 52% use variations of cannabidiol (CBD). Among the reasons for use, the answer “I wanted to try everything that could help” was most often indicated by 74.2% (69 people). 25.2% spend 15.56 USD on different treatments and 27.9% spend more than 77.6 USD on alternative therapies. Those who spend between 15-30 USD per month are significantly (p=0.019) less satisfied (53.1%) with the outcome of treatment (satisfied with 20%). The most important sources of information are the physician (88.3%) and the Internet (55.9%).

CONCLUSIONS

Interviewed mostly started alternative therapies because they wanted to try everything that could help. Traditional treatments are thought to be too “mechanical” or frustrated with traditional treatments. Most of them spend more than 77 USD on alternative treatments in a month.

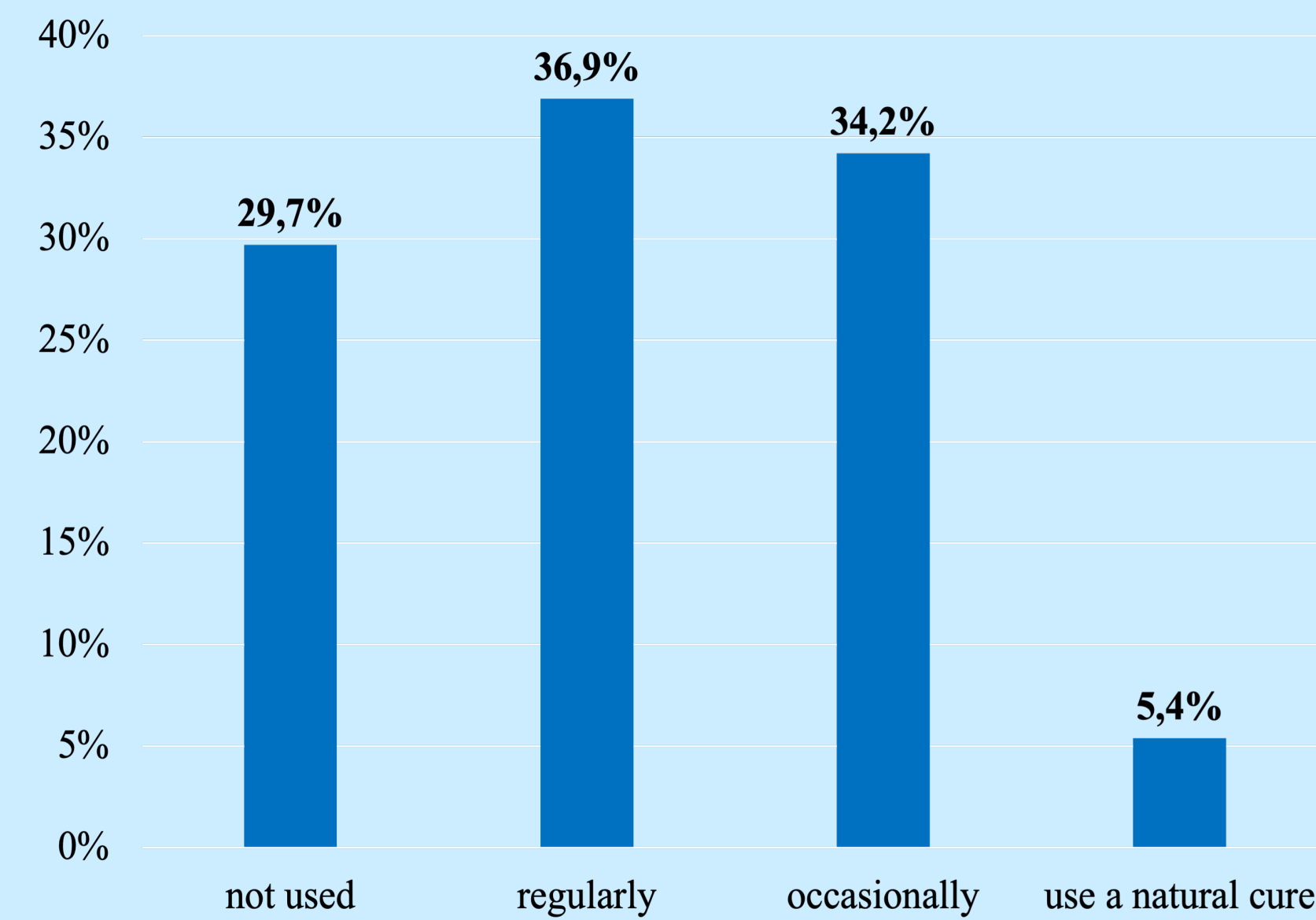


Figure 1.
Distribution of the use of complementary treatment (n=11)

treatment	did not apply n/ (%)	applied but it was ineffective n (/%)	It was partially effective n (/%)	it was more effective n (/%)	it was very effective n (/%)
Avemar	98 (88,28)	3 (2,7)	5 (4,50)	3 (2,7)	2 (1,80)
Revered	111 (100)	0	0	0	0
Culevit	94 (84,68)	2 (1,80)	4 (3,60)	8 (7,20)	3 (2,7)
Artemisia	102 (91,89)	3 (2,7)	4 (3,60)	1 (0,90)	1 (0,90)
Varga medical mushroom	92 (82,88)	9 (8,10)	7 (6,30)	0	3 (2,70)
Beres drops	63 (56,75)	9 (8,10)	25 (22,52)	7 (6,30)	7 (6,30)
Aloe vera	78 (70,27)	10 (9,00)	10 (9,00)	8 (7,20)	5 (4,50)
High dose of vitamin C	49 (44,14)	8 (7,20))	20 (18,01)	17 (15,31)	17 (15,31)
High dose vitamin D	40 (3,03)	7 (6,30)	27 (24,32)	17 (15,31)	20 (18,01)
Trace elements (Se, Cink)	58 (52,25)	5 (4,50)	21 (18,91)	13 (11,71)	14 (12,1)
psychologist	89 (80,18)	5 (4,50)	6 (5,40)	3 (2,70)	8 (7,20)
Natural healing	83 (74,77)	5 (4,50)	11 (9,90)	8 (7,20)	4 (3,0)
traning	67 (60,3)	5 (4,50)	13 (11,71)	8 (7,20)	18 (16,21)
Special diet	72 (64,8)	10 (9,00)	6 (5,40)	8 (7,20)	15 (13,51)

Table 1.
Alternative therapies used and their efficacy according to the respondent (n=111)

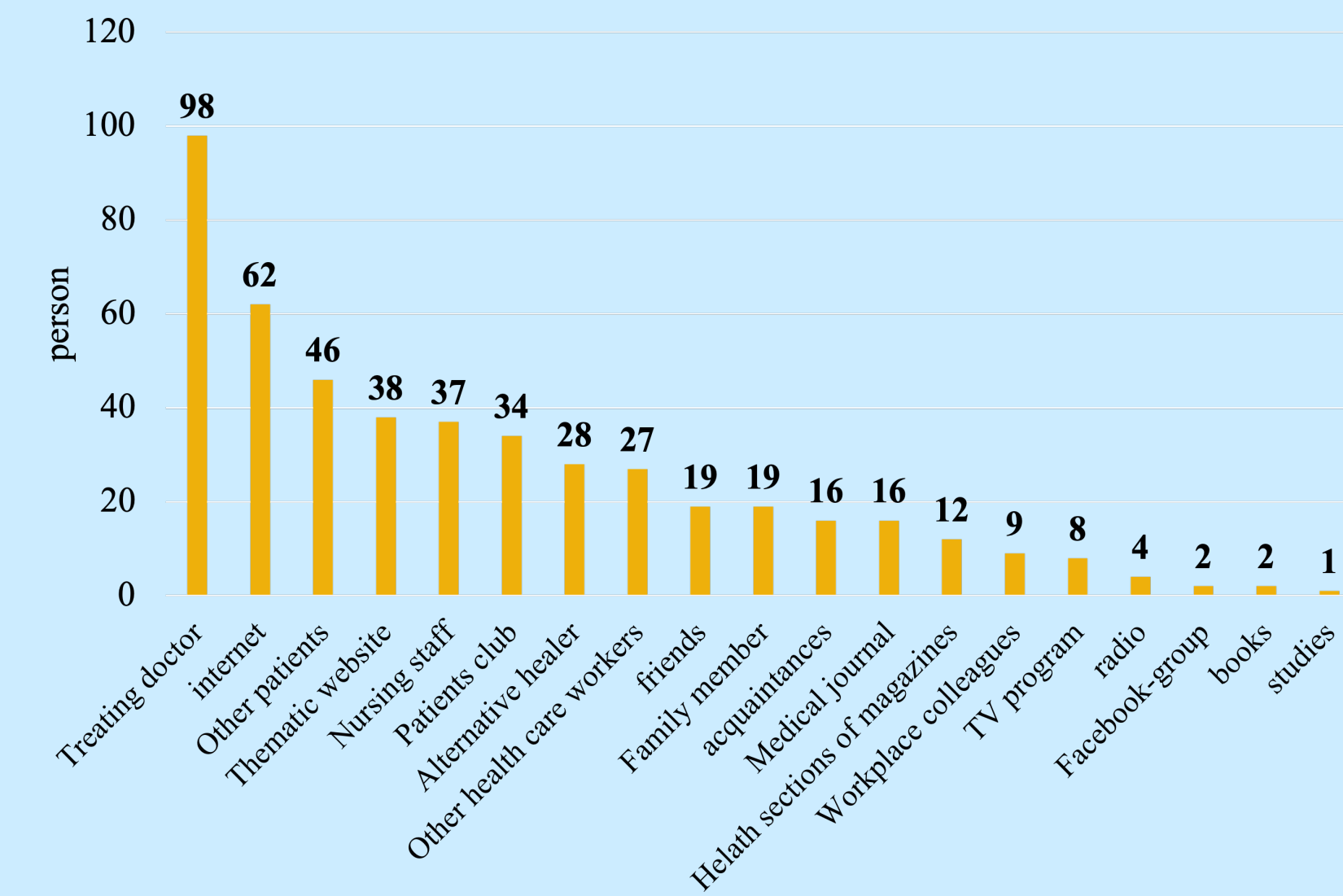


Figure 2.
Distribution of information sources (multiple answer options)

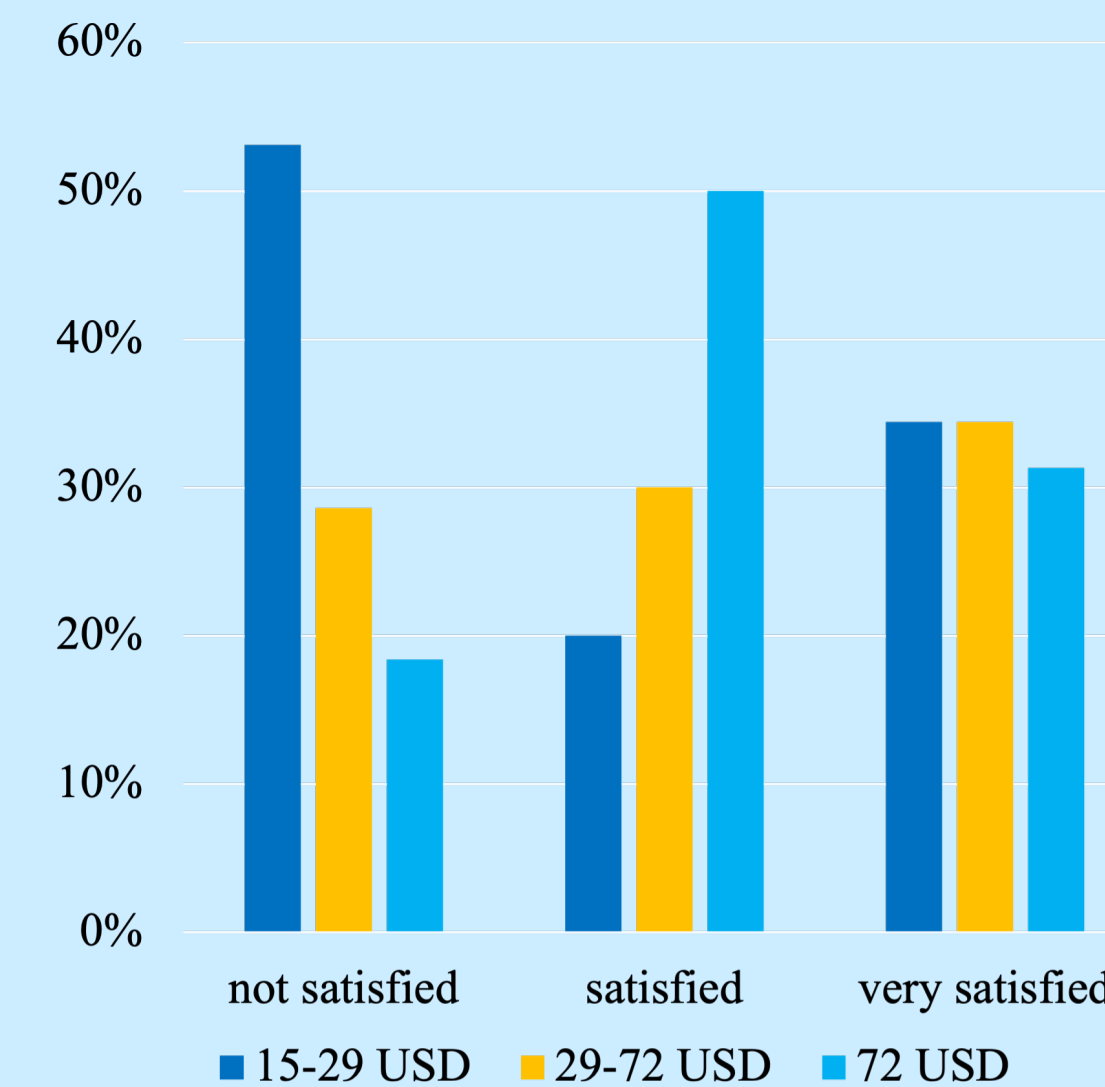


Figure 3.
Satisfaction with treatment based on monthly expenditure (n=111)

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