

For Immediate Release

Is Evidence-Based Medicine Sufficient for Complementary and Alternative Medicine Research? The December Special Issue of Integrative Cancer Therapies Explores This Question

Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, and Singapore—January 8, 2007—Evidence-based medicine (EBM), is widely accepted among researchers as the “gold-standard” for scientific approaches. Over the years, EBM has both supported and denied the value of allopathic medicine practices, while having less association with complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) practices. Since most CAM practices are complex and focus on healing rather than cure the question arises as to whether EBM principles are sufficient for making clinical decisions about CAM. That is the focus of this special issue of Integrative Cancer Therapies by SAGE Communications.

“While evidence-based medicine’s emphasis on randomized controlled trials has many benefits, researchers and clinicians have found that this focus may be too limited for complex systems such as complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), and other approaches to healing,” said Wayne B. Jonas, MD, president and chief executive officer of the Samueli Institute and this special issue’s guest editor.

The December special issue of Integrative Cancer Therapies presents articles that explore EBM and alternative strategies to EBM for evaluating CAM and in particular, options for conducting CAM research on cancer. This issue discusses whether clinical research on CAM using randomized placebo-controlled trial designs is the best strategy for making evidence-based decisions in clinical practice, and describes strategies that use “whole systems” and “integrated evaluation models” as potential new standards for research on CAM for cancer.

The second half of this special issue then explores whether basic science adds value to a debate recently resurrected in The Lancet on the value of research on homeopathy. Integrative Cancer Therapies now reports a series of landmark studies on the effects of homeopathy on prostate cancer. These are the first rigorous studies on homeopathy simultaneously using genetic, cellular and whole animal models of cancer. These studies show that rigorous basic science research can be conducted on this controversial CAM practice and that current evidence warrants continued research on this approach for cancer.

About Integrative Cancer Therapies

Written for everyone involved in comprehensive cancer treatment and care—from physicians and other health care professionals to complementary and alternative practitioners to informed patients— Integrative Cancer Therapies focuses on evidence based and scientifically sound understanding of the mechanisms of cancer therapies and the physiology of disease conditions, as well as the psychosocial and spiritual needs of the patient. The journal is edited by Dr. Keith Block, Medical and Scientific Director of the Institute for Integrative Cancer Care. <http://ict.sagepub.com>

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About the Samueli Institute

The Samueli Institute is a non-profit, medical research organization supporting the scientific investigation of healing processes and their application in health and disease. The Institute's mission is to explore the scientific foundations of healing and to apply that understanding in medicine and health care. The Institute is one of an elite group of organizations in the nation with a track record in both complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), healing relationships and military research.

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