

Life in the Age of the Covid19 Pandemic: Integrative Medicine in Prevention and TreatmentJasmina Begic^{*}

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Intrudiction

Be prepared for the coronavirus

With the COVID-19 pandemic, humanity is facing a global health threat for which no specific therapy has yet been scientifically determined.

According to the latest recommendations, the World Health Organization (WHO) gives clear instructions and advice on how to

prepare, how to protect yourself/others, and ready to welcome the coronavirus in the coming autumn and winter months. It is recommended:

1. Be safe: from coronavirus infection
2. Be smart: get informed about it
3. Be Kind: Support each other.



Be **READY** for #coronavirus

WHO is giving advice on how to protect ourselves & others:

Be **SAFE** from coronavirus infection

Be **SMART** & inform yourself about it

Be **KIND** & support one another

Learn more about #COVID19 & share with your loved ones: www.who.int/COVID-19

 UNITED NATIONS  World Health Organization

Pandemic COVID-19

On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the corona virus disease, COVID-19, an urgent public health crisis of international concern. The pandemic was declared on March 11, 2020. Thus, a new virus, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2), which can cause the infectious disease COVID-19, was identified for the first time in December 2019 in Wuhan, China. It has since spread globally, resulting in an ongoing pandemic. As of February 14, 2021, more than 100 million cases of COVID-19 and more than 2 million related deaths have been reported worldwide. During COVID-19, the public has actively sought non-pharmacological approaches to prevent infection. Little is known about the use of traditional, complementary and integrative medicine (TCIM) in the public as preventive measures.

Precisely in Wuhan, under the instructions of President Xi Jinping, giving equal importance to Western and traditional medicine, many local hospitals have established and improved mechanism of cooperation between traditional and modern medicine. According to the opinion of academics and scientists and clinical therapies, medical research institutions have published the main methods of prevention and treatment of COVID-19 and found that the clinical application of integrative medicine protocols has obvious advan-

tages in improving patient symptoms, shortening the course of the disease, delaying the progress of the disease and reducing mortality. Integrative medicine can play an active role in prevention and treatment.

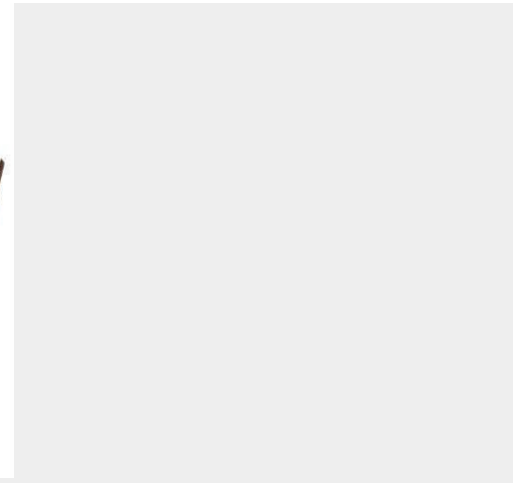
Health for 21, Vjiek: Health for all

According to the definition of the World Health Organization (WHO), “Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not just the absence of disease and infirmity”. Thus, health for the 21st century implies fairness and solidarity, strengthening health through creating an environment that leads to health, social support programs and strengthening the capacities of “vulnerable” groups. By promoting healthy lifestyles with the reduction of risk factors while developing the healthcare system as a financially fair and accessible system with services that meet the needs of users, with the desired effect on health and the development of health policy within the institutions of the health system, recognizing and solving the social, economic and ecological dimensions of health, with the implementation of the EU convention on human rights and patients’ rights in politics and national legislation, improving the prerequisites for health, designing and implementing health policy, programs and services to end users would ensure health for all with cost benefit, i.e. economic treatment and self-sustainability of the health system.



Precisely demographic changes, social differences as well as lifestyle are the cause of chronic diseases that are most often identified as relevant risk factors for the severe course of the disease of COVID-19 in patients in intensive care units (ICU): hypertension (48% of non-survivors vs. 23 % of survivors), diabetes mellitus (31 vs. 14%), coronary heart disease (24 vs. 1%), chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (7 vs. 1%), and renal dysfunction (4 vs. 0%).

The main non-pharmacological interventions, declared by the World Health Organization (WHO), such as maintaining good hygiene and reducing contact, prevented the transmission of the virus, in the fight against COVID-19. However, extended periods of house arrest and social distancing during the COVID-19 pandemic had negative effects on people’s physical and mental health. Several TCIM approaches, including herbs, vitamins, aromatherapy, meditation, and physical activity, have been shown to be beneficial in reducing stress and anxiety and improving immunity, and therefore could potentially increase physical and mental resilience during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Given that a vaccine against SARS-CoV-2 or a specific drug for COVID-19 is not yet available, it makes it necessary to investigate how current preventive and therapeutic gaps could be bridged by complementary and integrative medicine (CIM) interventions. Evidence-based CIM approaches, such as mind-body medicine, nutritional medicine, phytomedicine, could complement and personalize conventional medical strategies as part of overall health care management.

Complementary And Integrative Medicine (CIM)

The World Health Organization (WHO) emphasizes the role of traditional medicine as of medical heritage “in promoting universal health representation by integrating the services of traditional and complementary medicine in the provision of health services and self-health protection”

There is a significant body of CIM knowledge developed over centuries that has been used to prevent and manage various diseases and is increasingly being used in health systems around the world - including so-called Traditional Medicine Systems (TMS).

Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)

Traditional Chinese Medicine is one of the oldest branches in the history of medicine that originated in China and most of Asia. It combines several different modalities; modern and traditional methods of treatment. It is a combination of the joint application of numerous techniques and theoretical assumptions that have their roots in ancient Chinese philosophy (Taoism), whose basic beliefs date back more than 5,000 years.

Today, more than 25% of the world’s population uses Traditional Chinese Medicine.

According to the well-known Lancet medical journal, in recent years there has been a globalization of the application of Traditional Chinese Medicine in the world.

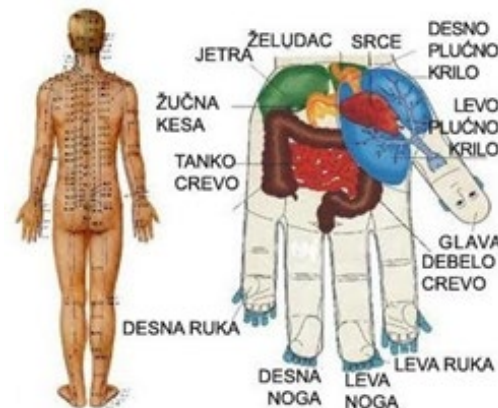
It is based on

1. Holistic approach to the patient
2. Theory of Five Elements: U SIN

3. Concept of opposing forces: YIN AND YANG
4. Qi – Infinite Energy Qi-INFINITE ENERGY
5. Learning about meridians: CIN LO.

It takes into account the physical and psychological well-being of the patient and treats the whole person (Symptom-Syndrome-Disease), not just the disease. Conventional practitioners, practicing integrative medicine, advocate the use of evidence-based lifestyle, complementary and traditional approaches in combination with conventional medicine/Western medicine to provide an integrative approach. Complementary medicine and therapies can include anything from acupuncture, yoga, massage, aromatherapy, herbal medicine, nutrition, exercise, along with many other approaches, tailored to the needs of the individual.

/ Projection Of Internal Organs



The complex interrelationships and importance of the immune system and different conditions and lifestyles, such as exercise, healthy eating, spending time in nature, positive inner attitudes and well-being, are already known and proven. Today’s challenges facing people around the world, such as social distancing and quarantine measures, could use this time to strengthen resilience through simple preventative measures. This is how the CIM measures would be used to improve the quality of life in an extraordinary situation such as the COVID-19 crisis, which causes stress, fear, anxiety and depression among individuals and societies around the world.



COVID-19 and Integrative Medicine and Health - The Role of The Immune System

The World Health Organization (WHO) has said it does not expect a vaccine against the virus to be available for less than 18 months. But that doesn't mean we have to sit quietly until then. The scientific literature shows us that there is a lot of evidence that lifestyle interventions can contribute to improved resistance to viral infections and a reduced risk of severe disease. As we know, Infection is always the result of two factors: exposure infectious agent and a person's immune and defense system. This also applies to the SARS-CoV-2 virus.

Prevention

A new coronavirus called Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus-2 (SARS-CoV-2) can cause the infectious disease COVID-19. The symptoms of COVID-19 differ for each person, from people who have no symptoms to those with fever, cough, sore throat, general weakness, and fatigue and muscle pain. In very severe cases, severe pneumonia, acute respiratory distress syndrome, sepsis and septic shock occur, all of which potentially lead to death. It is true that anyone can be exposed to and become infected with a pathological virus/bacterium, but only a relatively small number of people seriously get sick, a smaller number get complications, and an even smaller number die. Basic requirements for maintaining the immune system and the ability to resist the virus include quality sleep, regular exercise, healthy food and relaxation exercises. This will help reduce the risk of contracting the virus or reduce the severity or duration of the infection.

Adequate San

Good and sufficient sleep is necessary for the proper functioning of the immune system. According to various studies, the recovery of good sleep contributes to the restoration of immune function.

Stress Management

Psychological stress disrupts immune regulation. Activities of relaxation, prayer, mindfulness meditation, exercises and breathing techniques aimed at eliminating/regulating chronic stress

Contribute To Improving The Body's Resistance. Healthy Diet / Nutrition

Nutrient deficiencies make people more susceptible to viruses and bacteria, so it is important to eat nutritious foods that maintain a healthy immune system. This includes eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables, which contain vitamins and antioxidants to promote good health.

Regular Physical Activity

it helps to better maintain the immune system and is associated with reduced mortality and frequency of infections.

References are available at the secretariat.

Note: These recommendations are intended to augment (not replace) public health measures of hand washing, physical distancing, and seeking testing/medical care if someone becomes ill.

Treatment

During the Covid 19 Pandemic, in order to increase and maintain resistance to infectious diseases, EU modalities as part of Integrative Medicine and Health can play an important role because they mobilize and stimulate people's self-regulatory abilities, increasing their resistance, the immune system and increasing the possibility of self-healing. Greater resistance leads to rapid and sustained recovery from infections and reduced susceptibility to future infections.

Global report of the World Health Organization (WHO) Traditional and complementary medicine 2019

The report shows that 170 or 88% of all member states of the World Health Organization (WHO) recognize the use of TCM. A consistent trend of growth in the number of member states that officially engage with TCM to make the most of its potential contribution to health and well-being. However, compared to other continents, the European region lags far behind when it comes to national policies and programs, laws or regulations, let alone national research institutes for TCM.

Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus,
Director General of the World Health Organization (WHO)

“Traditional and complementary medicine (TCM) is an important and often underestimated health resource with many applications, especially in the prevention and management of lifestyle-related chronic diseases, and in meeting the health needs of the aging population. Many countries are seeking to expand coverage of basic health services at a time when consumer expectations for care are rising, costs are rising, and most budgets are stagnant or shrinking. Given the unique health challenges of the 21st century, interest in TCM is reviving”. In an ideal world, traditional medicine would be an option offered by a well-functioning people-centered health system that balances curative services with preventive care.

Manifesto - Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) for a healthier Europe

It is of great importance that the future political leaders of the EU in the European Parliament, the Commission and the Council are aware of the importance of including CAM in the legislative body 2019-2024.

The current health situation in Europe

“EU healthcare systems face numerous challenges, such as population aging, resistance to antimicrobials, non-communicable diseases and high healthcare costs. CAM can make a significant contribution to solving these health policy issues, as CAM treatments are more tailored to the individual needs of patients and complement conventional medicine to improve treatment outcomes. Moreover, CAM modalities can often be used as a first option in the treatment of many conditions, reducing the use of usually expensive ones conventional medicines, which would still remain as needed if necessary. CAM modalities can help prevent long-term dependence on conventional drugs and reduce the enormous burden of mortality and morbidity caused by the adverse effects of conventional drugs.”

Complementary And Alternative Medicine In Fbih

Through almost ten years of cooperation between the NGO, the Association for Wounds in Bosnia and Herzegovina (URuBiH) and the Chinese partner-hospital Xi Yuan CACMS (China Academy of China Medicine Science) from Beijing (Xi Yuan Hospital), implementing a five-year project in the field of healthcare entitled “Implementation of traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) in healthcare and inpatient facilities in Bosnia and Herzegovina and the countries of the Western Balkans”.

“Center of Integrative Medicine BJ”

Multi-year cooperation between the Association and Xi Yuan Hospital resulted in a Memorandum of Cooperation signed on November 7, 2014. in the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the People’s Republic of China between the Association and Xi Yuan Hospital CACMS. According to the content of the Memorandum, the “Center of Integrative Medicine BJ” is established as the basis of an international/regional center for Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) in Sarajevo, as well as the promotion of the center’s activities among the members of the Balkan Wound Association (founded in 2014), in which the Bosnian-Herzegovinian associ-

ation performs secretarial functions. and managerial functions. In addition to Bosnia and Herzegovina, members of the Balkan Wound Management Association are Turkey, Serbia, Slovenia, Croatia, Greece, Kosovo, Bulgaria, Romania and Macedonia.

This part of the content of the Memorandum that we are citing represents the basis for expanding the scope of cooperation according to the content (communication with the Academy, the general sponsor of the Xi Yuan Hospital, Xi Yuan Hospital, aims at education, research activities related to the Covid 19 Pandemic, the implementation of integrative medicine. an approach that implies the application of Western and traditional Chinese medicine), as well as geographically and demographically - includes the possibility of providing services and scientific cooperation on the application of TCM by dermatologists to the population with dermatoses (psoriasis, eczema) as well as treatment in the field of chronic wounds in the mentioned countries of the region. Provision of health services to citizens in during the Covid 19 Pandemic, namely: 1. Prevention of risk factors 2. Treatment of patients 3. Treatment of patients with Post-Covid Syndrome, integrative medicine techniques (acupuncture, massage, hyperpolarized light).



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Complementary and alternative medicine therapies and COVID-19: a systematic review

Four databases (Web of Science, PubMed, Scopus and EMBASE) were searched from database inception to July 16, 2020. Keywords included complementary and alternative medicine therapies and coronavirus. Of the 1137 studies searched, 14 studies conducted on 972 patients with COVID-19 entered the final phase of the systematic review. The results showed that different CAM interventions (acupuncture, traditional Chinese medicine [TCM], relaxation, Qigong) significantly improved various psychological symptoms (depression, anxiety, stress, sleep quality, negative emotions, quality of life) and physical symptoms (inflammatory factors, physical activity, chest pain and respiratory function) in patients with COVID-19. The results showed that different CAM

interventions have a positive effect on improving different dimensions of the coronavirus disease, but since it exists few studies in this regard, further studies using different CAM approaches are recommended.

References

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