

Editorial

## Highlights of Complementary and Alternative Medicine in Nervous System Conditions: An Interview with Dr. James David Adams, Jr.

James David Adams, Jr. \*

School of Pharmacy, University of Southern California, Los Angeles, USA; E-Mail: jadams@usc.edu

\* **Correspondence:** James David Adams, Jr. ; E-Mail: jadams@usc.edu

**Academic Editor:** James David Adams, Jr.

**Special Issue:** [Complementary and Alternative Medicine in Nervous System Conditions](#)

*OBM Integrative and Complementary Medicine*  
2019, volume 4, issue 2  
doi:10.21926/obm.icm.1902032

**Received:** May 17, 2019  
**Accepted:** May 17, 2019  
**Published:** May 24, 2019

**1. *What is the importance of Complementary and Alternative Medicine in community settings? Currently, there are many scholars who have reservations about this subject. As an expert in this field for over 20 years, could you please introduce the topic of “Complementary and Alternative Medicine in Nervous System Conditions”?***

**Dr. Adams:** The peripheral and central nervous systems are involved in many conditions, such as pain, hypertension, stroke and neurodegenerative diseases. Standard medicine does not adequately treat many of these conditions. Traditional medicine can offer complementary and alternative treatments that may be helpful.

Pain is usually treated with dangerous oral medications such as nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and opioids. These drugs have major adverse reactions and kill many patients. Acupuncture and other skin centered therapies are more effective at treating pain, with fewer adverse reactions.

Hypertension is, in part, caused by excessive sympathetic activity that can be blocked with sympathetic antagonists. These drugs all have major adverse reactions and do not cure



© 2019 by the author. This is an open access article distributed under the conditions of the [Creative Commons by Attribution License](#), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium or format, provided the original work is correctly cited.

hypertension. Patients must stay on these drugs for the rest of their lives, like an addiction. The chances of patients suffering drug toxicity are probably 100% over their lifetimes. Traditional medicine offers the concept of balance that can help prevent and cure hypertension through avoiding toxic lifestyles.

Stroke results in paralysis of the limbs in many patients. Standard medicine is inadequate at helping with stroke recovery and paralysis. Traditional medicine offers medicines and physical therapy techniques that can greatly aid stroke patients.

The current book will help expose the standard healthcare community to traditional medicines that can be helpful in treating nervous system conditions. Patient centered healthcare should emphasize prevention through avoiding toxic lifestyles and avoiding the use of standard drugs as much as possible.

**2. *What is the relationship between medicinal plants and “Complementary and Alternative Medicine in Nervous System Conditions”? Are medicinal plants important for this topic?***

**Dr. Adams:** The most important aspect of alternative medicine is prevention. Standard medicine is very poor at helping patients alter their toxic lifestyles and live healthy lifestyles. Simply by getting rid of toxic lifestyles a number of diseases can be prevented or delayed including heart disease, type 2 diabetes, arthritis and perhaps Alzheimer’s disease and Parkinson’s disease.

Plant medicines are very important in helping patients find safer and less expensive ways to treat themselves and support healthy lifestyles. Topical plant medicines can be potent pain relievers that are more rapid acting and safer than oral medicines. These topical plant medicines inhibit pain by interacting with skin sensory neurons and are also anti-inflammatory by inhibiting neurogenic inflammation. In other words, by treating pain in the skin, the sensory neurons cease to secrete inflammatory proteins that promote inflammation throughout the body.

**3. *Have you ever been treated with Complementary and Alternative Medicine? Can you share your feelings about the research in this field over recent years?***

**Dr. Adams:** Most of my personal healthcare comes from prevention and plant medicines. I live a balanced lifestyle that involves keeping myself thin and strong. I run an hour every day. I keep my body fat content at about 4% of my body weight. When I contract a cold or flu, I use California plant medicines, such as elderberry *Sambucus nigra*, to treat myself for free. When I am in pain, I use sagebrush *Artemisia californica* liniment to treat myself for free. When I have skin problems, I use a balm made from chamise *Adenostoma fasciculatum* to treat myself for free.

I am one of a few Scientists engaged in research on California plant medicines. There is no funding to work on this subject. The FDA does not allow clinical trials of California plant medicines because of fears that these medicines are not safe. Both of the clinical trials that I proposed to the FDA were rejected based on safety issues. The medicines I had proposed to use are traditional California Indian medicines that have been used for many centuries and are known to be safe. I have treated hundreds of patients with these medicines with very few safety issues.

**4. *What are the current challenges in this area? Is it possible to allay public concerns about complementary and alternative medicine? Are there any other indications, where you could confirm its effectiveness?***

**Dr. Adams:** Healthcare professionals and the public are taught that complementary and alternative medicine is either fraud or dangerous, in other words not effective or not safe. There is a very strong belief among many people that plant medicines are all placebos. This implies that if a patient does not believe in a plant medicine (placebo), it will not work. I have offered to treat many pain patients with topical plant medicines and have been refused. These patients believe that plant medicines are ineffective placebos. However, those patients who actually try the medicines find rapid, powerful pain relief with anti-inflammatory effects.

In order to allay public concerns about these medicines, I teach the public in lectures and on hikes. Those people who make the medicines themselves for free and try them, teach their friends. This is a long, slow process. I must contend with television shows and press articles that insist plant medicines are placebos.

There are many effective plant medicines. Tea and coffee are plant medicines that are used daily by millions of people to stay alert. Chocolate is an effective medicine for the heart, especially in patients who are magnesium deficient. Many prescription drugs come from plants including scopolamine, digoxin, many antibiotics and many anti-cancer agents. Marijuana is a very effective drug for several conditions.

**5. *What are the future aspects of this research field, or do you have any suggestions for future work of researchers in this field? Will you encourage more researchers to participate in research in the field of complementary medicine?***

**Dr. Adams:** Cancer therapy and antibiotic therapy are very involved in plant medicines. There is even one medicine, paclitaxel, which originally came from a California plant. Currently, since there is no funding for plant medicines, Scientists are encouraged to be closed minded about the subject. Scientists are directed by funding availability to work on other areas. Science must be approached with an open mind. We are currently in a situation where many thousands of people die in the USA every year from oral pain killers. This is caused entirely by the closed minded approach that teaches there is no other way to treat pain other than oral medications. An open minded approach to topical pain relievers, acupuncture and other topical therapies can save the lives of thousands of people every year.

**6. *Were there any particular studies that impressed you or inspired you, or interesting things that have happened in your research, would you like to share with us?***

**Dr. Adams:** The people of the USA have decided to allow the use of medical marijuana in many parts of the country. This has been a real benefit to many people suffering from epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, anxiety, cancer pain and nausea, chronic fatigue syndrome, traumatic brain injury and other conditions. Marijuana had been banned in the USA due to the perception that it was from either Mexico or India and was not fit for Americans. This closed minded approach has been replaced with a more open minded attitude. Americans now should learn the proper use of medical marijuana, which is sometimes topical use.

**7. *What distinguishes this special issue from others in the field, why should researchers subscribe this special issue book?***

**Dr. Adams:** This book provides a unique, open minded approach. The chapters have not been chosen based on the availability of research funding for the topics. This provides a different and perhaps ground breaking approach to therapeutics.



Enjoy *OBM Integrative and Complementary Medicine* by:

1. [Submitting a manuscript](#)
2. [Joining in volunteer reviewer bank](#)
3. [Joining Editorial Board](#)
4. [Guest editing a special issue](#)

For more details, please visit:

<http://www.lidsen.com/journals/icm>