

## **Determining the Attitudes and Use of Complementary and Alternative Medicine Among Collegiate Athletes**

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### **ABSTRACT**

There are many different approaches to medicine, so it is necessary to expand current knowledge on what patients and clinicians are using. Efforts to expand complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) research will enhance clinicians' perspectives by not only creating an interest in becoming educated on the topic, but also by challenging negative perspectives to become more unbiased. Clinicians should educate themselves and patients in a way that is non-discriminatory. **PURPOSE:** The purpose of this study is to gain insight on what medicinal practices collegiate-level athletes are utilizing in effort to heal themselves, whether that be physically, mentally, or spiritually. **METHODS:** A Qualtrics survey was sent via email to collegiate-level athletes in Texas. All division colleges are welcome to participate. There was a brief explanation in every email describing the purpose of the study and a concise definition of CAM. The data from the survey was reported based on the specified demographics including biological sex, ethnicity, sport played, number of years playing, eligibility classification, and attending college rank. The data was analyzed using mean, median, and mode for all individual questions. An independent samples t-test was utilized to analyze the variance of responses based upon demographic information. **RESULTS:** 41 completed survey responses were recorded with 78% of participants attending a NCAA Division 1 college. 78% of all participants also stated that they had sustained a sports-related injury with 90% stating that an athletic trainer or team physician treated the injury. 39% of participating athletes stated that healthcare personnel suggested CAM to them and 32% were unsure. According to the data analysis ascertained by an independent samples t-test, there was statistical significance between biological sex and if the participant had taken part in CAM, as demonstrated by  $p=0.55$ . 32% of athletes said they had taken part in CAM with 64% of total respondents reporting they were comfortable incorporating this avenue into their treatments. Participants' agreeance when compared to ethnicity was noted to be statistically insignificant as demonstrated by  $p=0.25$  on an independent samples t-test. **CONCLUSION:** According to the statistical analysis, there is limited significance between biological sex or ethnicity in accordance with how answer choices were selected. There was not enough variable data from participants to compare responses regarding sport played, number of years playing, college attended, or eligibility classification. Future research can be conducted to ascertain the involvement of CAM in collegiate athletes care and the impact regarding patient reported outcomes.