

Investigating the effectiveness of complementary and alternative treatments for menopause and andropause symptoms

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Background and aim: Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) therapies have been used around the world for thousands of years. Older people are more interested in using CAM to alleviate symptoms of menopause and andropause. Aging is accompanied by a series of signs and symptoms, many of which are almost common among men and women. IN middle-aged men, sudden cessation of gonadal function does not occur, fertility continues until very old ages, but aging in men is associated with a gradual decrease in endocrine and exocrine testicular function. Endocrine function declines steadily with age, and by age 75, mean plasma testosterone levels are only 65% of levels in young adults, which is called andropause in men. Menopause occurs approximately one year after the last menstruation cycle, which stops due to the gradual decrease in ovarian function. The average age of women who enter menopause is 51 years. The quality of life after menopause and andropause changes due to annoying symptoms such as (hot flashes and night sweats, sleep problems, muscle and joint pain, anxiety, depression, decreased libido), symptoms of vulvovaginal atrophy (such as vaginal dryness and dyspareunia).

Material and methods: In this systematic review, online databases (Medline, EMBASE, Scopus, Web of Science, Cochrane Library, CINAHL, CIVILICA and Google Scholar search engine) were searched with keywords complementary and alternative treatments, Menopause, Andropause in the period from 2000 to 2024, we accessed a total of 83 articles, and after screening and removing some of them for some reasons (such as title mismatch and not having access to the full text), we accessed 28 articles.

Results: Kupperman menopausal index is often used to measure the intensity of menopausal symptoms (hot flashes, excessive sweating, sleep disturbances, irritability, depressive mood, attention deficit disorder, joint and bone pain, headache, arrhythmias, paresthesia) assessed on a 1 through 4 scale. Often, the effectiveness of therapy is measured by evaluating the frequency and severity of hot flashes. Pharmacological treatments for these symptoms include hormone replacement therapy, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors and selective serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors. Some herbs' traditional uses also have been noted. Medicinal herbs have the potential to exhibit an important role in the treatment of menopausal symptoms; Herbal products are often used as an alternative to drug therapy. Menopause and andropause symptoms are symptoms that drug treatment may have serious side effects, so many prefer to use herbal products to help with these symptoms. Here we have reviewed medicinal plants and derived products that are limited. Such as black cohosh (*Cimicifuga racemose*) and red clover (*Trifolium pretense*), fenugreek (*Trigonella foenum-graecum*), hops (*Humulus lupulus*). Valerian (*Valeriana officinalis*), soybean (*Glycine max* and *Glycine soja*), chaste tree (*Vitex agnus-castus*) and evening primrose (*Oenothera biennis*) are used for premenstrual syndrome and premenstrual incontinence.

Conclusion: Hot flashes, sleep problems, bipolar disorder, decreased libido, weight gain, and impaired cognitive function are all common symptoms of menopause and andropause. These herbal compounds are considered safe with few or no side effects, and herbal and alternative therapies are often of great value in the management and treatment of symptoms and complications from the adverse effects of hormone therapy.

Keywords: complementary and alternative treatments, Menopause, Andropause