



## NEWS

### PSMO CAM position paper

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The Philippine Society of Medical Oncology is committed to the optimal care of the Filipino cancer patient. With the proliferation of complementary and alternative medicines (CAMs) the Society is issuing the following statements:

- **Complementary and alternative medicines cannot and should not replace standard of care therapies such as surgery, radiotherapy, systemic/chemotherapy**
- **Only supplements with high level of scientific evidence may be used to complement standard of care therapy**
- **There is a potential for harmful drug interaction between all CAMs and standard of care therapy – patients should always advise their attending physician of all medications that they are taking**

In the Philippines there is a proliferation of herbal preparations available. In some instances certain herbal products advertise that they can control or cure cancer. However, these same medications are also labeled with the statement “No therapeutic value” as mandated by the Philippine FDA for all unsubstantiated drugs. Therefore there is a significant discrepancy between the curative claim and the position of the Philippine FDA. Standard of care therapies have undergone clinical trials and years of testing before they have been approved for treatment by the US FDA, the EMEA and the Philippine FDA.

Certain CAMs have gone the scientific route and executed clinical trials in order to determine their therapeutic value. Of these, only very few supplements have been found to have high level scientific evidence with regards to efficacy and safety.

All CAMs must be fully disclosed by the patient to his physician in order to determine whether these substances can complement the standard of care therapy or adversely affect treatment. Drug interaction effect may range from interfering with the standard of care therapeutic effect to exacerbation of the disease. The use of CAMs must be done with caution and with the full approval of the attending physician.

The common CAMs currently available in the Philippine market are categorized according to the following:

<b>SUPPLEMENTS NOT SUPPORTED BY HIGH-LEVEL SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE</b>	<b>SUPPLEMENTS SUPPORTED BY VERY LIMITED SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE – NOT ENOUGH TO SUGGEST THE USE</b>	<b>SUPPLEMENTS SUPPORTED BY HIGH-LEVEL SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE</b>
Homeopathic products	Transfer Factor	Fish Oil EPA / DHA Vitamin D3
High dose oral vitamins 1. Vitamin C + Collagen 2. High dose oral Vitamin C 3. Oral Stem Cell Enhancers / Fibroblast Growth Factor Enhancers 4. Vitamin A content > 5,000 IU/day 5. Vitamin E during radiotherapy	Malunggay Oil	Medicinal Mushrooms Beta Glucans 1. Coriolus 2. AHCC 3. Astragalus 4. Maitake MD Fraction  Wheat germ extract 1. Avemar 2. IP-6 Inositol Hexaphosphate
Ozone Therapy	Intravenous Hydrogen Peroxide	Bio-available Curcumin
Heavy Metal Chelation Therapy	Mangosteen Extract Pills	Green Tea (95% ECGG)
	Guyabano Extract Pills	Acetogenin Molecules
	Resveratrol / Grape Seed Extract	Bio-available Silymarin Phytosome
		COQ10 & Alpha Lipoic Acid
		American Ginseng, Rhodiola, Ashwagandha
		Calcium Citrate/Carbonate

		Ferrous sulphate/bis-glycinate Vitamin B12
		Whey Protein/L-glutamine Branched Chain Amino Acids
		Polyglycoplex (PGX)

*Source: U.S. National Institute of Health (NIH); National Library of Medicine (PUBMED)*

For detailed criteria on levels of evidence and potential drug interactions, pls. visit the PSMO website [www.psmo.org.ph](http://www.psmo.org.ph)

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With technical contribution from:

Omid Etemadi, MD., FAAIM

Integrative Oncology & Cancer Survivorship Care

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