

Reply Letter – Cupping therapy: a final therapeutic step in Persian medicine

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Dear Author,

we really appreciated the comment by Pasalar & Tavakoli¹ to our case report, appeared on the march issue of the journal².

In fact, the details on cupping therapy (CT) and on the exact role of treatments according to the principles of traditional Persian medicine provided by the colleagues¹ reveal both the spread of and our lack of knowledge about complementary and alternative medicine (CAM).

With regard to our case, when the patient presented to our attention, and dermatologic anamnestic data were collected, we firstly tried to precisely understand how and when these practices had been performed, as the clinical features seemed to be due to an irritant/allergic contact dermatitis³. None of the doctors who visited the patient knew the rationale, the medical equipment, the procedures and course(s) of this treatment and the patient also was not particularly aware of what had been practiced. Thus, considering the medical history, which was positive for mycosis fungoides and type II diabetes mellitus, other suspect diagnoses arose².

Although, as Pasalar & Tavakoli¹ correctly stated, dermatology is one of the medical disciplines that makes the most of CAM⁴, and some of potential mechanisms of action with consequent effects may be at least in part realized, a complete knowledge of the principles of CAM applied to other specialties may be lacking, as in our case, and the physician (dermatologist) has to stick to the clinical evidence.

The message on the importance of an accurate knowledge of non-conventional therapies is clear.

The real problem, in my opinion and agreeing with the colleagues, is that CT, as well as other practices of Chinese, or Persian or other traditional medicines, in our country are mostly delivered as a 'fast food alternative medicine' in spite of any principle and order of treatment, in one-word rules, often by not-experienced personnel, with poor communication between practitioners and patients, sometimes with not favorable outcomes.

Conflict of Interest

The Authors declare that they have no conflict of interests.

References

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