

Public Abstract

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Title:CARE PRACTICES IN COMPLEMENTARY AND ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE IN THAI BREAST
CANCER SURVIVORS

Although use of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) alone or simultaneously with Western medicine is commonplace for Thai breast cancer survivors, only a few studies of this topic were found in the literature. Hampered by this lack of scientific knowledge, nurses are lacking information necessary to meet the care needs of Thai breast cancer survivors. The purpose of the study was to explore perspectives of Thai breast cancer survivors and Thai nurses about care practices in CAM. The study used an ethnonursing method. The purposive sample included seventeen Thai breast cancer survivors and fifteen Thai nurses. The interview guide served as a conversational framework. The transcribed interviews were analyzed using the ethnonursing analysis method. The findings of the study showed that care practices in CAM were seen as: (1) an additional beneficial choice for health; (2) emotional and psychological healing; and (3) a powerful physical healing. Performing care practices in CAM was composed of two phrases: (1) seeking and gathering CAM information and (2) trying out many types of CAM. The influencing factors to selection of CAM were: kinship and social factors, economic factors, and belief factors. Therefore, nurses should be concerned about CAM use in Thai breast cancer survivors because problems such as interaction between CAM and conventional treatment could occur. Open communication about CAM helps ensure that safe and holistic care is provided.