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## Clinical research on herbs and supplements for cancer: An integrative medicine perspective

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Integrative medicine incorporates herbs and supplements, plus lifestyle interventions such as exercise, biobehavioral and dietary therapies into comprehensive treatment plans alongside conventional treatments, such as chemotherapy for cancer patients. The integrative medicine paradigm is evidence-based, and considers clinical trial data as primary in making treatment decisions, in addition to preclinical and traditional medicine perspectives. Treatment protocols exist that aid us in making decisions about supplementation when clinical trial evidence is less than optimal. However, a surprising number of clinical trials now exist to inform us about the potential usefulness of herbal therapies and other dietary supplements in cancer treatment. This lecture will review trials in 6 areas, as follows: basic nutritional support to normalize parameters such as omega-3 intake; countering biochemical disruptions such as glycemic disorders, excessive oxidation and inflammation; countering disease-specific molecular targets; mitigating disease-related symptoms such as fatigue and weight loss; mitigating treatment-related adverse effects; and enhancing treatment efficacy. We will also examine herbs that have been tested specifically as cancer treatments, such as green tea and curcumin. While many trials have limitations in study design, many examples of natural substances that are promising or already clinically useful in the integrative setting can be cited.

### Biography

Keith I Block, MD, is an internationally recognized expert in integrative oncology. In 1980, he co-founded the Block Center for Integrative Cancer Treatment in Skokie, Illinois, and serves as its Medical and Scientific Director. He is the founding Editor-in-Chief of the peer-reviewed journal, *Integrative Cancer Therapies*. He has served on the National Cancer Institute's Physician Data Query (PDQ) Cancer CAM Editorial Board since 2005. He has more than 90 publications in scientific journals relevant to nutritional and integrative oncology. He is also the author of *Life Over Cancer*, published by Bantam Hardcover Books, in April, 2009.

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