

Age-related Differences in the Conventional Health Care-Complementary and Alternative Medicine Link

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Objective: To determine if differences in conventional care among users and nonusers distinct CAM therapies varies by age and ethnicity. **Methods:** The 2002 National Health Interview Survey data with a supplemental section on CAM use were analyzed. **Results:** The odds of reporting each level of conventional care were greater for CAM users than nonusers for each type of CAM. There is consistent evidence that associations between CAM and conventional care use

differ by age but not ethnicity. **Conclusions:** Individuals who use CAM are greater users of conventional care, although these associations hold primarily for young and middle-aged adults. Results suggest that, for most CAM users, these therapies are not being used in place of conventional health care.

Key words: complementary medicine, conventional care, physician visits, age differences, health self management

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