



Title	Complementary and Alternative Therapies for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
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Reference	VA Technology Assessment Program Brief Overview, December, 2010. www.va.gov/VATAP/docs/CAMPSTD2009.pdf

Aim

To update current research on the effectiveness of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) interventions to treat post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) in adults and to guide future CAM research.

Conclusions and results

Nine studies met the inclusion criteria. The evidence was insufficient to draw conclusions regarding the net benefit of CAM treatments as primary therapies for PTSD patients. However, evidence suggests that acupuncture and mantram repetition may have an adjunctive role in treatment.

Recommendations

Patients with PTSD should be aware of the uncertainty regarding the balance of benefits and harms for these four treatments: yoga/yogic breathing, Vipassana meditation, mantram repetition, and acupuncture.

Methods

In December 2010, VATAP searched the literature for articles written in English in the following databases: MEDLINE, EMBASE, and Current Contents via Dialog Information Services®. Keywords for 29 CAM interventions were combined with PTSD and combat terms, eg, “war”, “terror”, and “deployment”.

Further research/reviews required

Eight ongoing clinical trials are investigating CAM for PTSD. More large studies with intention-to-treat analyses are needed for CAM treatments applicable to young combat veterans. Studies need to improve in design (eg, validated outcome measures), conduct (eg, comparing CAM to well-established PTSD treatments) and reporting (eg, systematic documentation of adverse effects and reasons why patients have dropped out of a study). A table lists additional recommendations for future research.