# CAM Cancer summary
# Template with main guidelines

Abstract | What is it? | Does it work? | Is it safe? | References | Evidence tables

## Abstract

Summarise your findings in a way that will enable healthcare professionals to make unbiased and informed decisions. Although CAM Cancer summaries are written for healthcare professionals, do consider how the summary will be understood and interpreted by lay persons.

Structure the abstract as follows and summarise each point with 1-2 sentences:

- What is the commonly used name for the CAM modality you are describing (if it is a herbal remedy, please mention the *Latin* name, as well as any used common name where this is available) and what does the CAM method entail?
- What are the claimed effects of the therapy? Make sure to state that these claims are made by the provider and should not be taken at face value.
- What research evidence is available? Please copy over the summary bullet point list from the "Does it work section".
- What are the main safety issues?

## What is it?

In this section, please provide a description of the CAM treatment. Please limit this section to a maximum of two pages. Please always reference your sources.

Natural products: (herbal) supplements, dietary approaches

- Description, background and characterisation of the plant
- Ingredients and quality issues
- Alleged indication
- Application and dosage
- Mechanism of action
- Legal issues and costs

Therapies

- Description
- Background and prevalence
- Alleged indications
- Application and providers
- Mechanisms of action
- Legal issues and costs

# Does it work?

In this section, please critically appraise and summarise the clinical evidence from the articles identified through the literature search.

The section consists of two main parts 1) a summary of the available evidence and 2) a description of included studies (see the manual). Please first write the "Description of included studies" section according to the guidelines below before writing the summary.

## Summary

Once the "Description of included studies section" is completed, please provide a summary consisting of a brief description of the body of evidence available (how many systematic reviews or randomised controlled trials are available; quality of this evidence) and a bullet point list summarizing the main findings per symptom/outcome (1-2 sentences per outcome). This summary will go at the beginning of the "Does it work" section and will also be copied into the abstract. Please see below for an example.

## Description of included studies

Please use the main headings "Antitumour treatment", "Supportive care", "Prevention". Under these main headings, please start by summarizing the evidence according to symptoms/ indications/ treatment outcomes using these outcomes as subheadings (e.g. pain, anxiety, survival). Start with systematic reviews with or without meta-analyses followed by clinical trials **not** included in the reviews. Please include PICO (participants, interventions, controls, outcomes) to describe the studies, a brief quality assessment and the main findings. If you include five or more studies, please also complete a table (see below Evidence tables).

### Methodological aspects

Summarize evidence from the following study types:

- systematic reviews (SRs), meta-analyses
- (randomised) controlled clinical trials (RCTs, CCTs)

Only include the following study types if no SRs or RCTs/CCTs are available; please clearly describe them as such and discuss their limitations:

- narrative reviews (only if no SRs or RCTs/CCTs are available)
- uncontrolled clinical trials – only if no or very few controlled trials are available
- case series/studies – only if no trials available.

Results of pre-clinical trials and basic research should be included under "Mechanisms of action".

There is no need to summarize individual trials if a SR is available. In such cases, only trials published after the SR or outside the scope of the SR should be added to the summarised results.

If several SRs are available, please use the most recent authoritative SR, e.g. a Cochrane review as well as any subsequent SRs or SRs focussing on other outcomes/with a different scope. Consider including SRs published in the last 5 years only. If in doubt, please contact the Scientific Coordinator.

Evidence: What is the level of evidence?

- (Several, most rigorous etc) studies suggest (demonstrate, show etc) therapy x to be effective for condition y [the most positive result]
- No trial data are available [inconclusive because of lack of evidence]
- The data from the (most relevant, rigorous etc) trials are contradictory [inconclusive because of lack of agreement]
- The data from the (most relevant, rigorous etc) trials are of very low methodological quality [inconclusive because of lack of methodological rigour]
- Several, most rigorous etc studies suggest therapy x to be not effective (better than placebo) for condition y [the most negative result]

Quality/risk of bias:

- Please describe the quality/risk of bias/certainty of the evidence.
- What methodological limitations of the underlying clinical research might affect practical decisions about healthcare?
- Which other information should be considered by someone making a decision (current practice, compliance etc.)?

## Is it safe?

For this paragraph please summarise what you have found with regards to safety/applicability of the CAM modality. Please consider/include the following issues:

- Adverse reactions/effects
- Contraindications
- Interactions
- Warnings

## References

The summary should contain a maximum of 50 references. Please use the author-date system.

## Evidence tables

Summaries including five or more SRs or RCTs/CCTs should present study details in a table using the CAM Cancer template rather than describing them in full in the text.

Table 1: Systematic reviews of [treatment name] for cancer

Table 2: Controlled clinical trials[treatment name] for cancer