

**A study on the use of herbal medicines among HIV-infected patients  
receiving healthcare at Thika level five Hospital**

**By**

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## ABSTRACT

Traditional medicine use has been reported and is common among individuals with moderate and advanced HIV disease. The aim of this study was to assess the use of Traditional Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) for HIV patients.

Using systematic sampling, 90 HIV-positive patients were selected from outpatient departments from Thika level five hospitals and interviewed with a questionnaire.

CAM was commonly used for management of other illnesses in the past years according to the respondents that is 74% but 26% claimed to have never used the herbal in their life time. Majority of the respondent 49% reported to have been using herbal medicines for years, 30% for months while 21% for a couple of weeks. 74.6% of the respondents started using herbal medicines later in the course of HIV/AIDS management while 25.4% introduced herbal medicine immediately after the diagnosis was made. Most respondents 73.1% indicated that dosage form of herbal medicine was in powder/particles form and 29.9% solution form. Herbal therapy was mainly wrapped/ packaged in a newspaper that is 41.8%, 26.9% was packaged in bottles while 31.3% was packed in the polythene bags.

Traditional herbal therapies and CAM are commonly used by HIV treatment outpatients of public health facilities in Thika level five Hospital. Health care providers should routinely screen patients on CAM use when initiating ART and also during follow-up and monitoring keeping in mind that these patients may not fully disclose other therapies.