

CAM is often used for children's chronic remedies for which traditional therapy is not effective ([Huillet, Erdie-Lalena, Norvell, et al, 2011](#)).

The misuse of vitamins as a part of CAM has the potential for placing some children at risk for health problems. [Zuzak, Zuzak-Siegrist, Rist, et al, \(2010\)](#) noted that of persons reportedly using CAM, the most common CAM remedies used in children seen in an emergency department were homeopathy (77%), herbs (64%), and traditional Chinese medicine (13%). A survey in a Women, Infants, and Children clinic found that child herbal use was common, especially among Hispanic children attending the clinic. Some herbs used by the children (ma huang, foxglove, anise tea, and mistletoe) have questionable safety ([Kemper and Gardiner, 2016](#)). A recent study of CAM use in children on a military base found that 23% of parents reported using CAM in their children, with herbal therapy being the most common type of CAM reported; 50% of the parents who used CAM for their children reported the use of vitamins and minerals in amounts that exceeded the RDA ([Huillet, Erdie-Lalena, Norvell, et al, 2011](#)).

There is concern that terms often used to market supplements (such as, megavitamins) may mislead parents regarding the actual benefits (or harm) of such therapies. The intention herein is not to discredit the use of CAM such as vitamin supplements but rather to ensure safety and efficacy in children who may experience inadvertent harm. The use of various herbal therapies, or intake of herbs, is also becoming more popular; many of these have been a part of medicine since early days and are beneficial in some cases. Many mind-body CAM therapies (e.g., guided imagery, distraction) have proved beneficial for children undergoing cancer treatment, but the small sample sizes of the groups being studied may preclude generalization to a larger population group until further studies are undertaken ([Landier and Tse, 2010](#)).

Herbs known to have adverse effects in children include ephedra, comfrey, and pennyroyal; some herbs may not be harmful taken alone but may counteract or potentiate prescription medications when taken together. Parents should be fully informed of the use of herbs to ensure that there is more benefit than potential harm in the ingredients being used. Health care workers also need to be knowledgeable of the benefits or potential harm in herbs to