



Complementary and Alternative Medicine in Oncology

Priv. Doz. Dr. med. Harald Matthes (MD; PhD)
Gemeinschaftskrankenhaus Havelhöhe Berlin
University teaching hospital of Charité
Kladower Damm 221!
14089 Berlin!

Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM)

- ◆ " Common understanding: human being is a whole living system whose self-maintaining capacities be stimulated and supported to maintain health.
- ◆ " Salutogenetic model => stimulation of self regulation processes
- ◆ " Includes: modification of lifestyle, dietary change, bodily treatments, health psychology approaches and the use of naturally sourced, low-risk medicinal products (phytotherapy, homeopathy, anthroposophy) / ‚Asian herbal medicinal products‘
- ◆ " Practised within and outside healthcare systems by MDs and practitioners
- ◆ " Involves active patient involvement

Conventional Medicine

- ◆ "Conventional medicine is based on natural sciences
- ◆ "Natural science describes a (linear) cause and effect correlation
- ◆ "Conventional medicine is reductionist in nature
- ◆ "Illness results from biochemical or localised tissue disruption or specific pathogen; disease is an abnormal entity in the body
- ◆ "Diseases are combated by intervention in a pathological process with the aid of chemical substances (drugs) or surgery
- ◆ "Pathogenetic model of illness => suppression therapy
- ◆ "Progress by research / black box model

Pathogenesis - Salutogenesis

Pathogenesis

- ◆ " Why do people get ill?
- ◆ " Risk factors
- ◆ " Aid by health care systems

Saving from drowning

Salutogenesis

- ◆ " How do people stay healthy?
- ◆ " Protection factors, resources
- ◆ " Empowerment, self-help

Empowerment to swim

Definitions

Conventional therapies

Conventional therapies comprise all methods, regarded as accepted and/or validated (mainstream)

Integrative medicine

Combination of conventional and complementary therapies (WHO: best practice)

Unconventional therapies

Unconventional therapies comprise all methods, regarded as **not** accepted and/or validated

Alternative medicine

Therapies, excluding conventional standard therapies

Complementary medicine

Complementary therapies are used in addition to conventional standard therapies

Complementary and Alternative Medicine

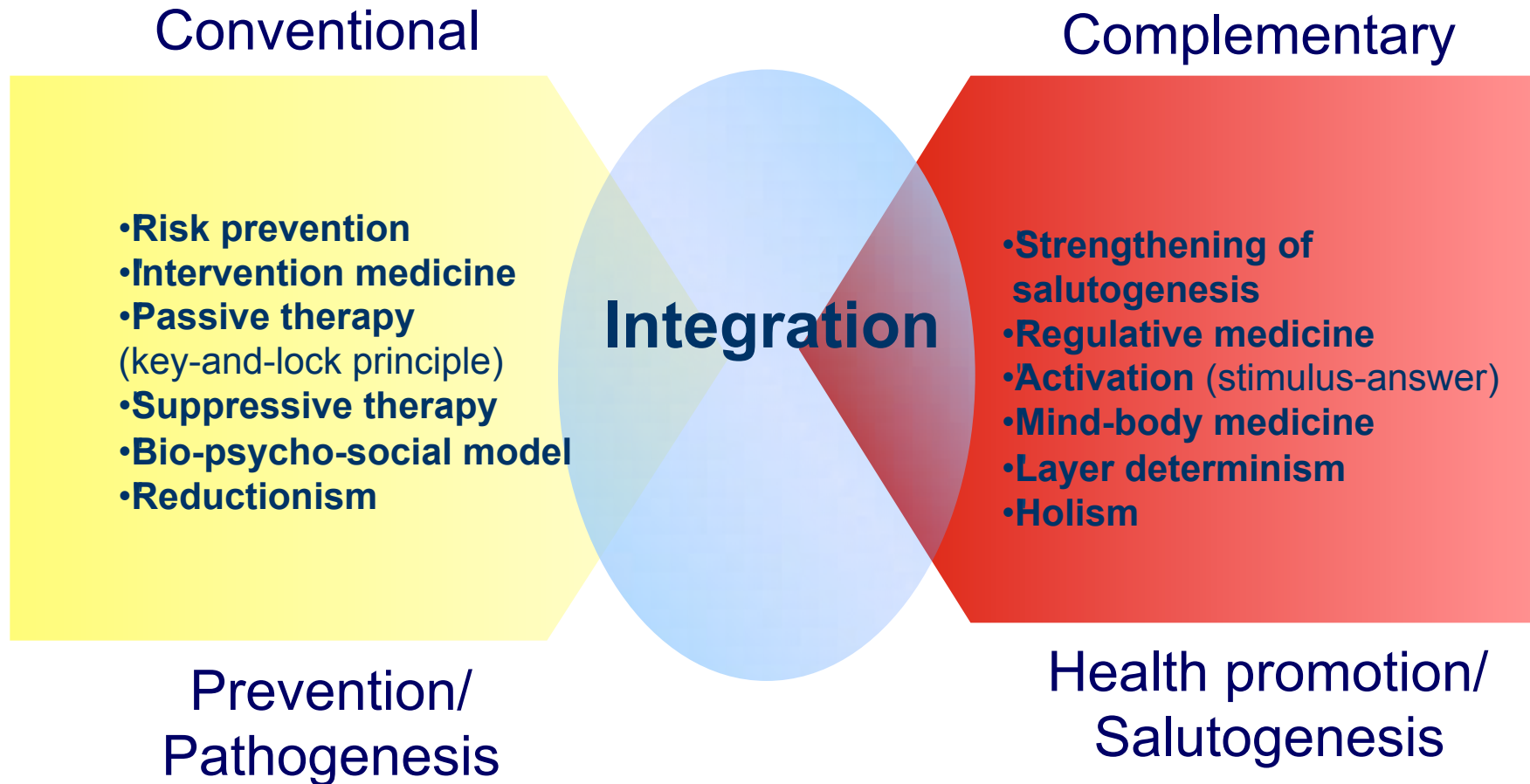
CAM therapies include

- ◆ "acupuncture
- ◆ "anthroposophic medicine
- ◆ "aromatherapy
- ◆ "ayurveda
- ◆ "herbal medicine/phytotherapy
- ◆ "homeopathy
- ◆ "kinesiology
- ◆ "massage
- ◆ "mind-body techniques
- ◆ "naturopathic medicine
- ◆ "qigong
- ◆ "reflexology
- ◆ "Tibetan medicine
- ◆ "traditional Chinese medicine
- ◆ "shiatsu
- ◆ "yoga

Integrative Medicine

- ◆ "Healing-oriented medicine that takes account of the whole person (body, mind, and spirit), including all aspects of lifestyle.
- ◆ "It emphasizes the therapeutic relationship and makes use of all appropriate therapies, both conventional and CAM.
- ◆ "Led by doctors who integrate CAM therapies or techniques into their conventional training
- ◆ "Practised within healthcare systems and institutions by MDs; can involve CAM practitioners working under MD supervision (manual therapists, art therapists etc.)

Integrating CAM and conventional medicine



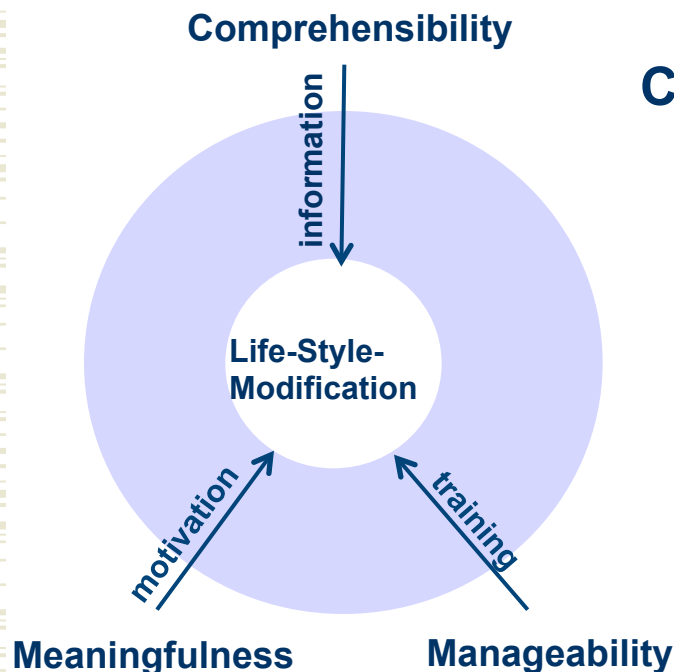
Self regulation and sense of coherence

Salutogenesis / Hygiogenesis

*Not the life circumstances that define happiness,
but the ability of people to deal with them.*

Aaron Antonovsky

Life-Style-Modification



Can such skills be trained ?

Definition:

Patient's competence is his ability

- ◆ to respond to the challenges of disease
- ◆ to remember their own as well as external resources
- ◆ to use these resources
- ◆ to consider individual needs
- ◆ to persue own objectives
- ◆ to keep autonomy

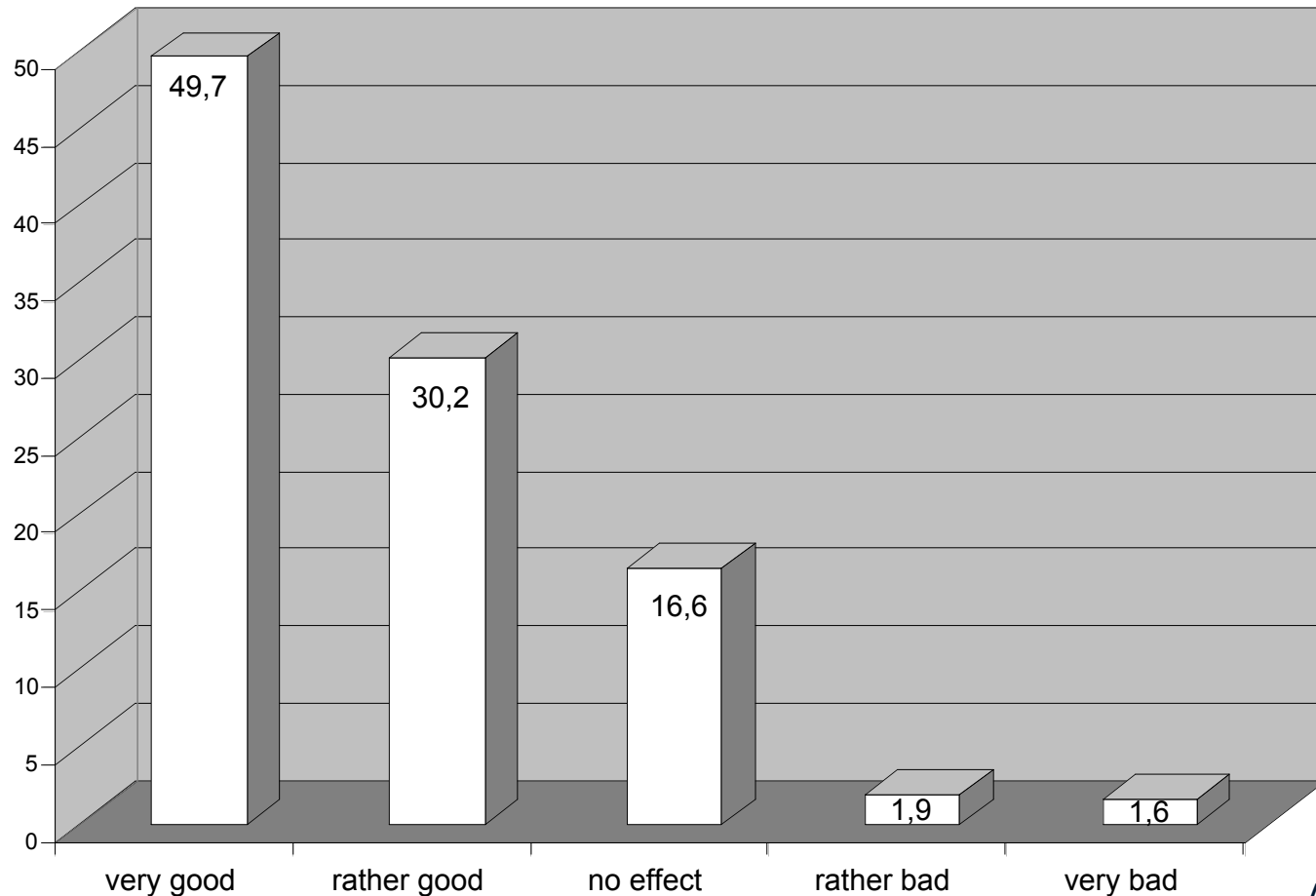
Prevention from a CAM perspective

- ◆ " Prevention is more than early diagnosis or avoiding risk factors; it is about being and staying healthy and keeping disease from developing in the first place, which requires personal responsibility.
- ◆ " This concept of self-care requires a daily conscious focus on one's physical, mental and emotional state and the ability to take corrective action whenever imbalance is sensed.
- ◆ " When one cannot correct the imbalance, one might consult a CAM health professional who helps her/him make the adjustments necessary to decrease the risk of developing chronic illness and to live in optimal health.

CAM use: Germany complete

Patient satisfaction

Subjective effectiveness of complementary therapies



Cancer: two perspectives

- ◆ " Localized disease where newly mutated cancer cells begin to multiply uncontrollably
- ◆ " If primary tumour can be eliminated early by destructive means the patient will be 'cured'.
- ◆ " Treatment is focused on 3 traditional methods – surgery, radiotherapy and chemotherapy, bringing about adverse effects including immunosuppression.



- ◆ " A systemic disease, i.e. of the whole organism.
- ◆ " Need to look for the cause of the 'breakdown of health', resulting from weakness in the immune system, the mental and emotional state of the patient
- ◆ " CAM treatment non-invasive, individualised to support and enhance the body's natural defences against cancer

Organism as whole system

(Whole System Research; Non-Linearity, Complexity)



- 1." The whole (system) is greater than the sum of its parts
- 2." Systems are hierarchically organized and categorized in subsystems
- 3." Systems have characteristics, which can not be detected in the subsystems => System characteristics
- 4." Interactions exist between the elements of one layer (system layer) and between the (hierarchical) layers (complex system theory; non-linearity)
- 5." According to the model of functional causality never only one single element acts directly on an other. It always acts by the network of the whole system on other elements

Cancer patients using CAM

- ◆ " Over one third of cancer patients use some form of CAM, varying among countries from 14.8% to 73.1%.

(Molassiotis A et al, 2005).

- ◆ " CAM use (since cancer diagnosis) in children with cancer ranges from 6% to 91%.

(Bishop FL et al, 2010).

Patients' motivations

Cancer patients use CAM to...

- ◆ increase the body's ability to overcome cancer,
- ◆ improve physical and emotional well-being,
- ◆ help with side effects of conventional treatment,
- ◆ feel more 'in control' of their situation,
- ◆ maintain a positive attitude towards the future
- ◆ adopt and maintain an active coping life-style.

Delivery of CAM cancer care

- ◆ " Hospitals and clinics that run an integrative cancer care service within a conventional medical setting; in particular anthroposophic hospitals have broad experience providing a multi-professional team approach for cancer patients.
- ◆ " CAM therapies used in outpatient settings or private clinics include nutrition, mind–body therapies, psychological therapies, physical and ‘hands-on’ therapies, herbal medicines, acupuncture, anthroposophic medicine and homeopathy.
- ◆ " Parallel to medical settings in private consultations with CAM health professionals.

Complementary therapies in cancer

Evidence of complementary therapies in oncology	Oxford LoE/Gr	AGO
Viscum album L. (mistletoe)	1a B	+/-
Ginseng (cancer associated fatigue)	3b B	+/-
Selen	1b D	-
High dose Vitamin C	1b C	-
Chinese herbal remedies	1b B	+/-
Antioxidants (supplement)	1b B	-
Vitamin E	2b D	-
Acupuncture (reduce vomiting by chemotherapy / pain / fatigue)	1-2b B	+
Qi Gong/Yoga/MBSR (Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction)	2/3b B	+
Proteolytic enzymes adjuvant in chemotherapy	3b B	-
Thymus / spleen extract	4 C	-
Co-enzyme Q 10	4 D	-

Anthroposophic hospitals and clinics

Art therapies, curative eurythmy, physiotherapy, massage, manual therapy



state of the art technologies



Intensive care unit



Endoscopy



Computed tomography



Cardiac catheter laboratory



Bronchoscopy

Mistletoe Therapy (*Viscum album* L.)

- ◆" Mistletoe (*Viscum album* L.) is the most frequently used remedy in oncology in Germany
- ◆" 50,000 pat./year are treated with mistletoe in Germany
- ◆" 50-70% of all patient in oncology use mistletoe (for a period)
- ◆" 1/3 adjuvant, 2/3 palliative stage

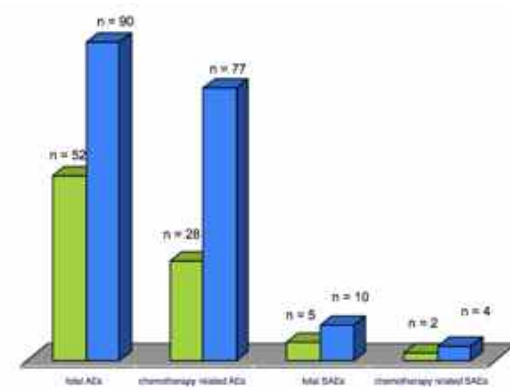
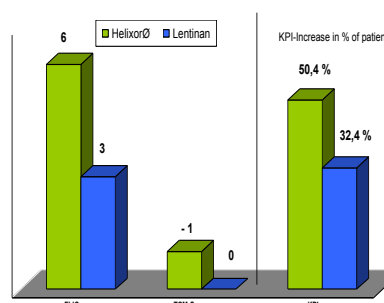
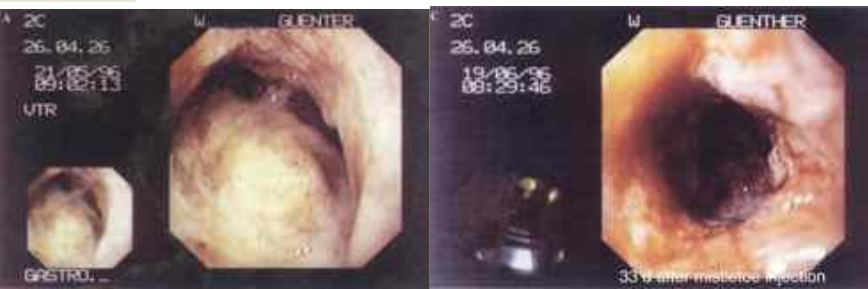
Reasons for mistletoe use in patients opinion:

- ◆" Reduction of side-effects of chemotherapy 85%
- ◆" Stimulation of the immune system 82%
- ◆" Reduction of the relapse rate 70%
- ◆" Alternative to a chemotherapy 35%

Mistletoe therapy and QoL

Scientific evidence demonstrates.....

- ◆ "Beneficial effects of mistletoe extracts in breast and gynaecological cancer (OS and QuoL)
- ◆ "Reduction of side-effects of conventional therapies (chemotherapy, radiation)
- ◆ "Positive effect on Quality of Life (QoL) in many different tumour entities
- ◆ "Improvements mainly in regard to coping, fatigue, sleep, exhaustion, energy, nausea, vomiting, appetite, depression, anxiety, ability to work, and emotional and functional well-being.



Conclusion

- ◆ "Many cancer patients use CAM in addition to conventional cancer treatment
- ◆ "Complementary medicine (CAM) is based on a salutogenetic concept
- ◆ "Pathogenetic and salutogenetic concepts complement one another
- ◆ "Cancer is a disease of the whole system (modern concepts/immunology)
- ◆ "Cancer patients are best served by a combination of conventional medicine and CAM
- ◆ "There is increasing evidence for the effectiveness of CAM in cancer (OS ↑; QoL ↑)
- ◆ "More research and research grants are needed to assess the usefulness of CAM treatment in cancer patients