The International Society for Complementary Medicine Research

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The International Society for Complementary Medicine Research (ISCMR) is a scientific organization of researchers, practitioners and policy makers that fosters complementary and integrative medicine research and provides a platform for knowledge and information exchange to enhance international communication and collaboration. The increase in the prevalence of CAM use over recent years in many countries (table 1), called for an international society to pool common research interests and efforts. ISCMR was established on November 22, 2003 at Exeter's 10th Annual Symposium on Complementary Health Care held in London, UK. Since then it has rapidly grown into one of the main societies in complementary medicine and now has members from 14 different countries. The Society's aims are to:

- facilitate communication and collaboration among researchers and practitioners
- provide access to relevant events, conferences, publications and funding opportunities
- provide access to an international database of ISCMR members
- facilitate collaboration with researchers, societies and professional organizations
- organize an annual complementary medicine research conference

Thus, while other societies represent their specific therapy, the uniqueness here is that a forum is provided for the entire breadth of complementary medicine. This has a number of advantages ranging from easy access to information of members from different areas of complementary medicine to increased possibilities of interdisciplinary research collaboration and enhanced lobbying power. Joint action to put pressure on relevant bodies to increase funding is perhaps the single most important point to secure high-quality future research into evidence-based complementary medicine.

Other benefits to members include reduced conference admissions and reduced subscription fees to journals:

- Research in Complementary and Classical Natural Medicine (Forschende Komplementärmedizin und Klassische Naturheilkunde)
- Focus on Alternative and Complementary Therapies (FACT)
- Evidence-based Complementary and Alternative Medicine (eCAM)
- Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine (JACM)
- Complementary Therapies in Medicine (CTIM)
- Natural Standard Monographs
- Journal of Herbal Pharmacotherapy

Table 1. Recent 1-year prevalence data of CAM use in representative general population samples

First author Reference	Country	Year of publication / sampling	Sample, n	Prevalence, %
Härtel [1]	Germany	2004 / 2002	representative 1,750	62.3
Thomas [2]	United Kingdom	2004 / 2001	representative 1,794	10
Shmueli [3]	Israel	2004 / 2000	representative 2,505	10
Barnes [4]	United States	2004 / 2002	representative 31,044	62 (incl prayer)

For more information please go to www.iscmr.org or contact
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References

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