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# The Use Of Complementary Medicines Among Cancer Patients In France The Increasing Role Of Asian Medicines

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An illustration of a mountain range with a warm, colorful sunrise in the background. Several stylized human figures are shown climbing the mountain. One figure stands at the peak with arms raised in triumph. Another figure is climbing a steep slope, and two others are assisting each other up a rocky ledge. The sky is a gradient of blue and orange, with a few birds flying in the distance.

# The Use Of Complementary Medicines Among Cancer Patients In France The Increasing Role Of Asian Medicines

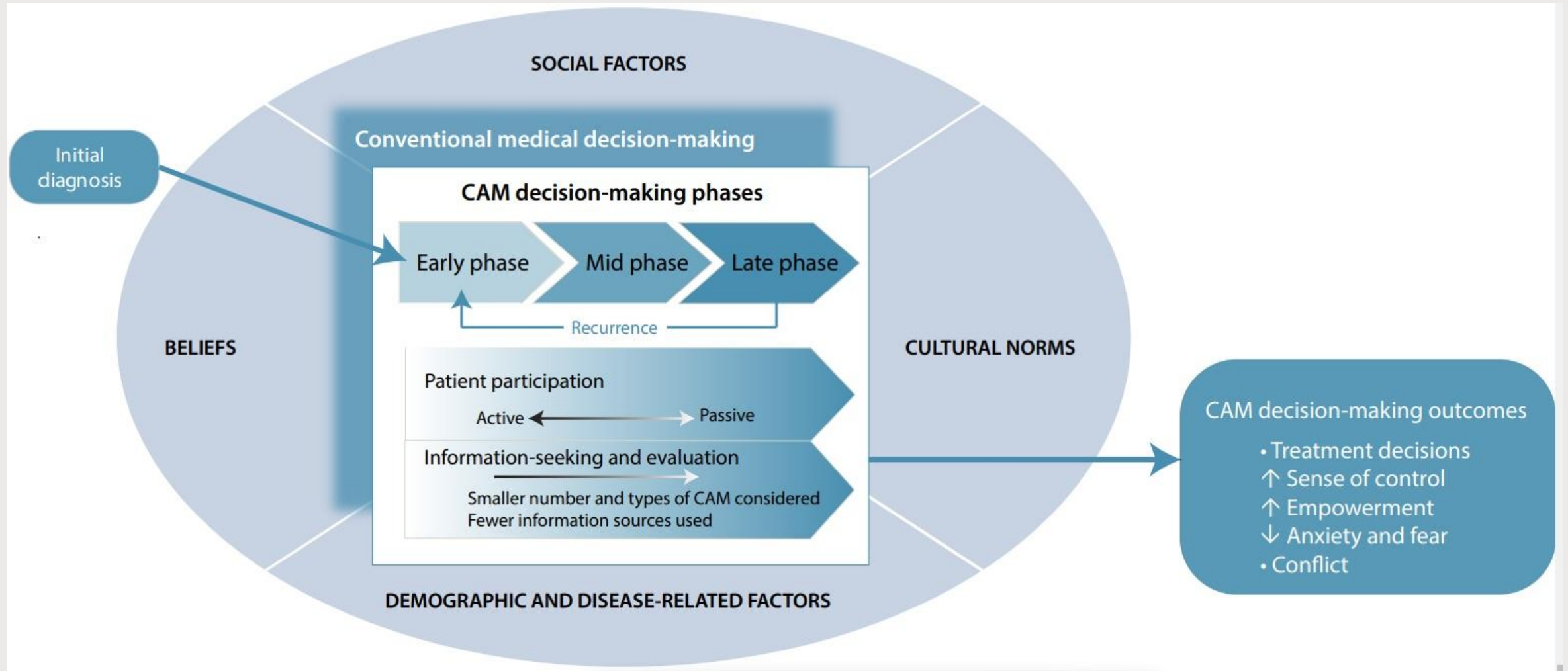
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research unit)

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# The environment of cancer patients



# The Complementary Alternative Medicine (CAM)

unconventional healthcare practices have been identified by the WHO divided into 5 categories :

**Whole medical systems**

**Biologically based practices**

**Energy therapies**

**Manipulative and body-based therapies**

**Mind-body techniques**

400

80%

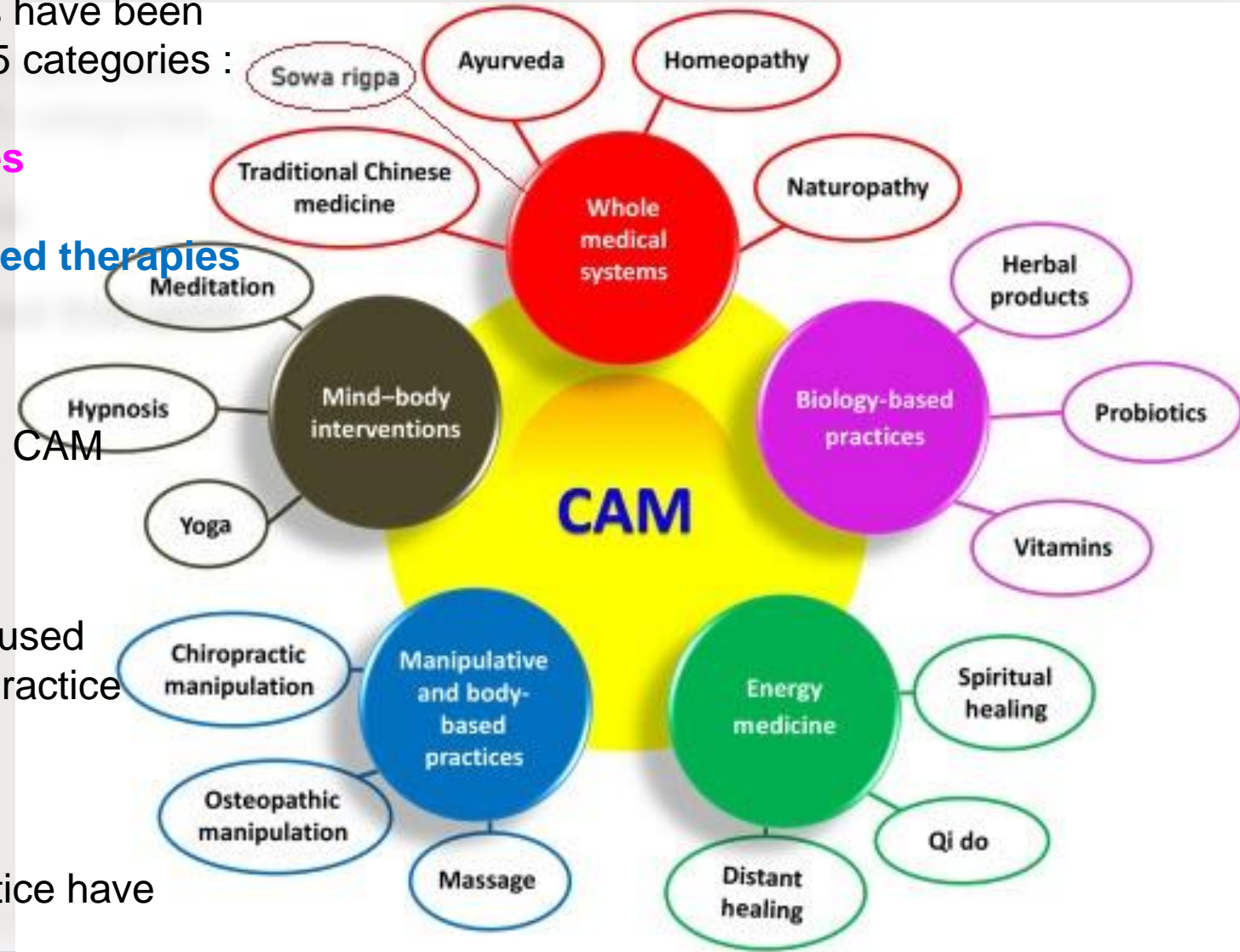
of the world's population uses a CAM

71%

of French people have already used an unconventional healthcare practice

60%

of French people who use an unconventional healthcare practice have cancer



# Reasons given by patients for using CAM

The three reasons given by patients for CAM use were:

- having an expectation of benefits of CAM
- dissatisfaction with conventional medicine
- the perceived safety of CAM

The aim is foremost to feel better with side effects, to relieve symptoms and strengthen the body's ability to manage the disease:

- by reducing nausea, fatigue, pain... due to chemotherapy.
- helping limit burns from radiotherapy
- in the case of hormone therapy used for gynecological cancers, limiting night sweats effective
- hand-foot syndrome by eliminating violent tingling sensations and intense burning of the extremities
- enabling patients to continue their treatment at the maximum dose for as long as possible, and thus not compromise their chances of recovery.

Acupuncture is most wellknown analgesic effect, enhance endogenous endorphins. The Nicolas Commission in 2002 led to the recognition of acupuncture and homeopathy as legal medical practices.

# Who can practice CAM, acupuncture in France ?

The French Medical Council officially recognizes 4 types of CAM, known as "unconventional healthcare practices": **acupuncture, homeopathy, mesotherapy and osteopathy.**

Acupuncture is only reimbursed by the national health insurance scheme for 4 indications :

- nausea and vomiting,
- pain relief,
- anxiety-depression syndrome
- alcohol and smoking cessation.

There are over 3 000 acupuncturists in France, with around 800 practicing acupuncture exclusively.

As far as the medical professions are concerned, there are an estimated 1 632 doctors who practise acupuncture in France, i.e. around 3% of general practitioners in the private sector, and 21% of doctors with special practices (homeopaths, naturopaths, etc).

There are also between 4 000 and 6 000 people in France who "practise acupuncture illegally", without a recognised health diploma.

Some practitioners in France consider that acupuncture is not medicine in the Western sense of the term, but a Chinese practice, and that the illegal practice of medicine does not therefore concern them.


# TCM in France : who can practice what?


	Acupuncturists	Midwives acupuncturists in their field of expertise	Health professionals (physiotherapists, nurses) who practise Chinese medicine	Other practitioners of Chinese medicine
Medical acupuncture (regulated practice reimbursed by social security, requiring a state qualification)	yes	yes	no	no
Traditional acupuncture or moxibustion	yes	yes	yes	yes
TCM (acupuncture or Chinese moxibustion, Chinese dietetics, Chinese massage, qi gong, etc.)	yes	yes	yes	yes


Only doctors, dentists and midwives holding a DU in Chinese medicine are entitled to practise it. Considered a medical procedure, acupuncture is used in oncology to alleviate some of the effects of chemotherapy, including vomiting and the joint pain induced by certain hormone therapies.




# Process regarding acupuncture support

 For chemotherapy one session 48 hours before the session (to boost platelets) and one session on the same day or the following day to neutralize the treatment's side effects.

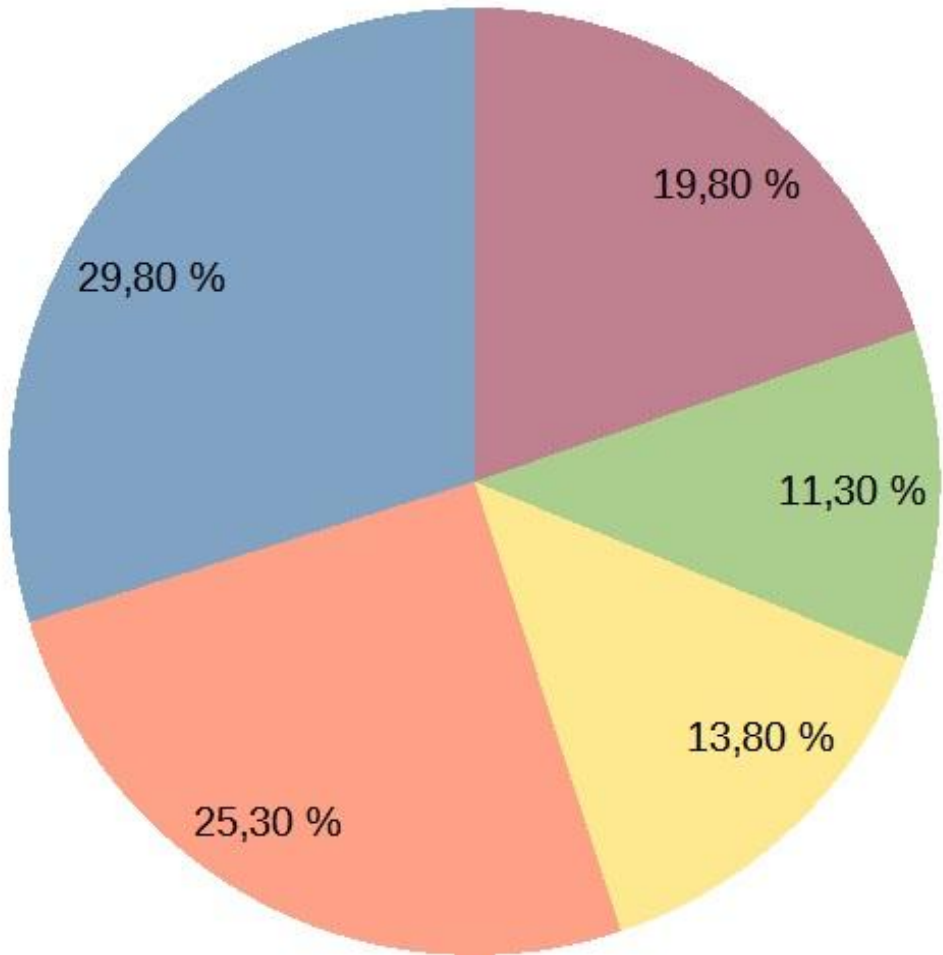
 For radiotherapy, one session a week can be scheduled during radiation to reduce redness and burning.

 During surgery, the optimal timing is to schedule one session 48 hours before surgery to reduce the stress associated with the procedure, and one session on discharge from hospital or clinic to reduce fatigue and aid healing.

 To support the immune system. Regular follow-up over a 4-month period helps to keep people's vital energy flowing.

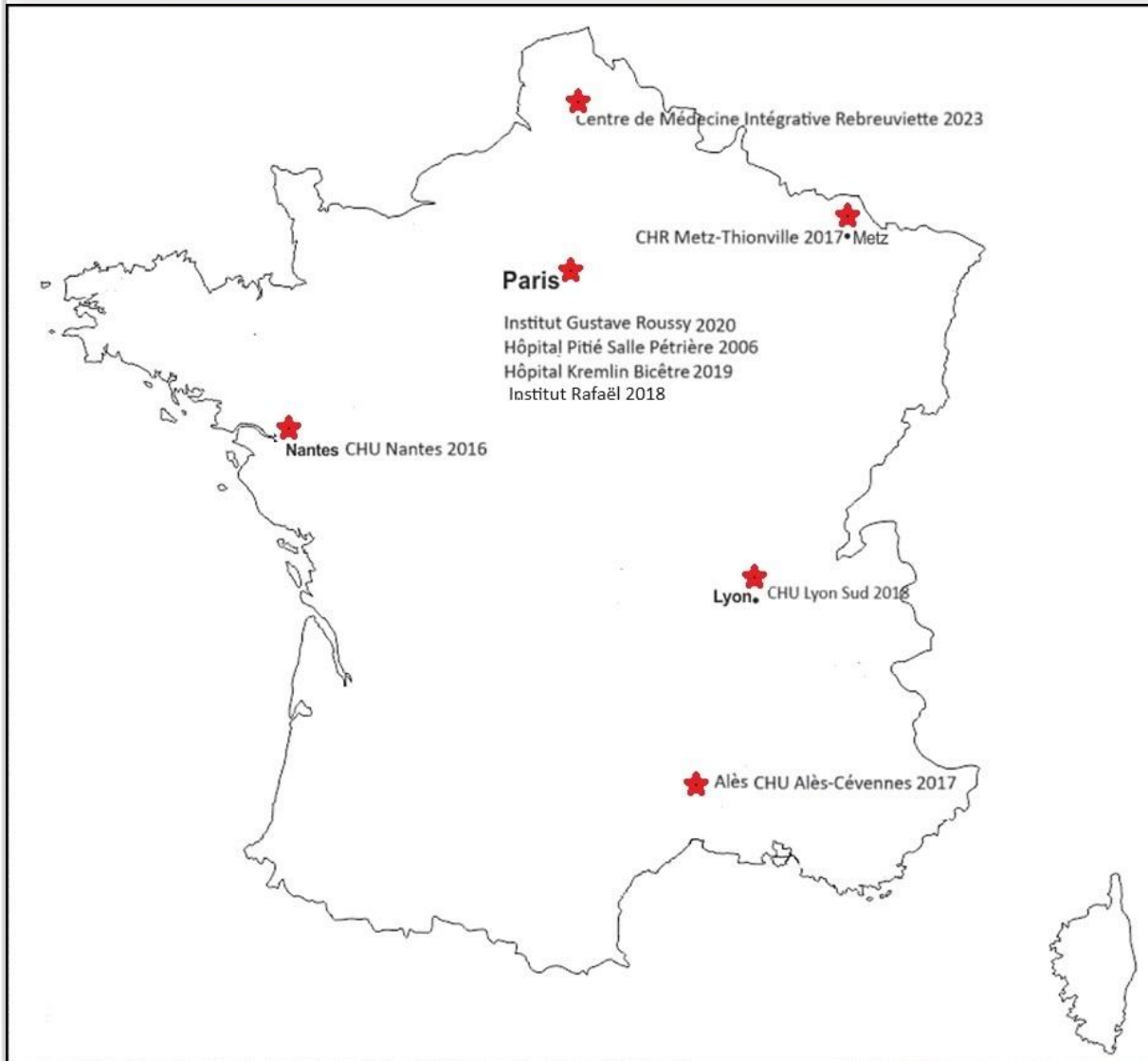
Professor Philippe Jeannin indicates cancer by cancer the points to be pricked by needles  
<https://www.medecin-acupuncteur-paris.com/acupuncture-suites-de-soins-chimiotherapie-en-cancerologie>

# 4 types of patient using acupuncture Patrick Triadou (2005)



- 1 Enthusiastic beginners
- 2 Followers of standard medicine using acupuncture as a complementary therapy
- 3 Patients with psychological suffering using acupuncture as a complementary therapy
- 4 Patients disappointed with conventional standard medicine
- 5 Followers of CAM

# Hospitals with CAM proposals



2006 one University Hospital Center (CHU) Paris  
2016 two University Hospital Center (CHU) Lyon/Nantes  
2017 two University Hospital Center (CHU) Metz/Ales  
2018 one Raphaël Institut Integrative Ealth (IR) Levallois  
2019 one University Hospital Center (CHU) Paris  
2020 one University Hospital Center (CHU) Paris  
2023 one Integrative Medecine Center (CMI) Rebreuviette

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2024 a total of 9 places propose CAM oncology with  
(Naturopathy, Acupuncture, Reflexology, Shiatsu,  
Auriculotherapy, Yoga, Qi gong, Fasting....)

According to AFSOS (French Association of Oncological  
Supportive Care) :

In 2018 15-20% of cancer patients use acupuncture

# The MAC' EVAL study



CAM'Eval study (2018-2023)

Saint Joseph Hospital. Paris

<https://ichgcp.net/fr/clinical-trials-registry/NCT03954509>

Thesis in progress:

- thesis supervisor Las Vergnas O.
- co thesis supervisor Heute J.

Qualitative empirical method :

- Grounded informed methodology (Thorberg)

Mixed analysis :

- Iramuteq semantic analysis of verbatims from the corpus of interviews

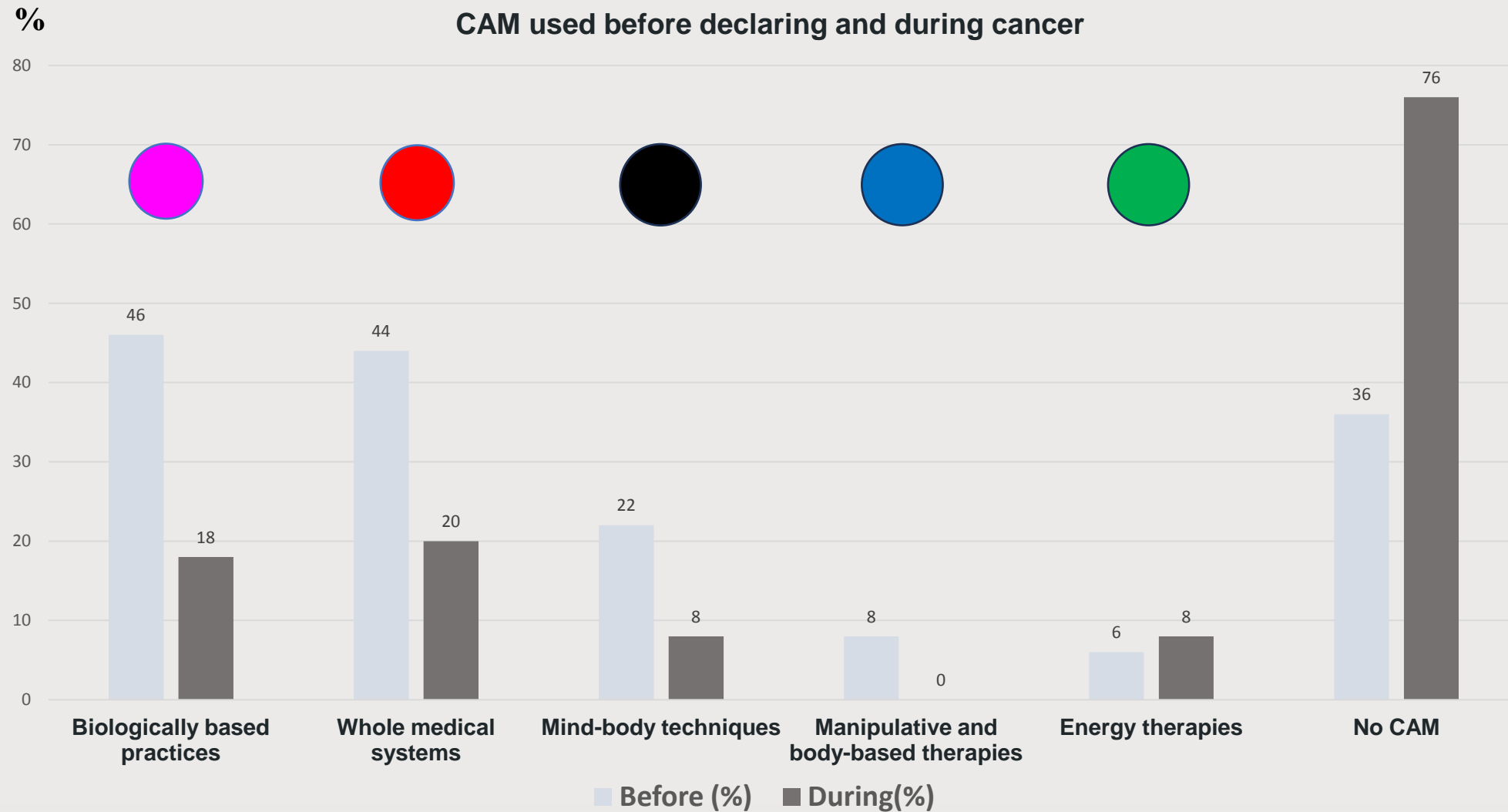
Categories identification, codage with Likert scale

- Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with R

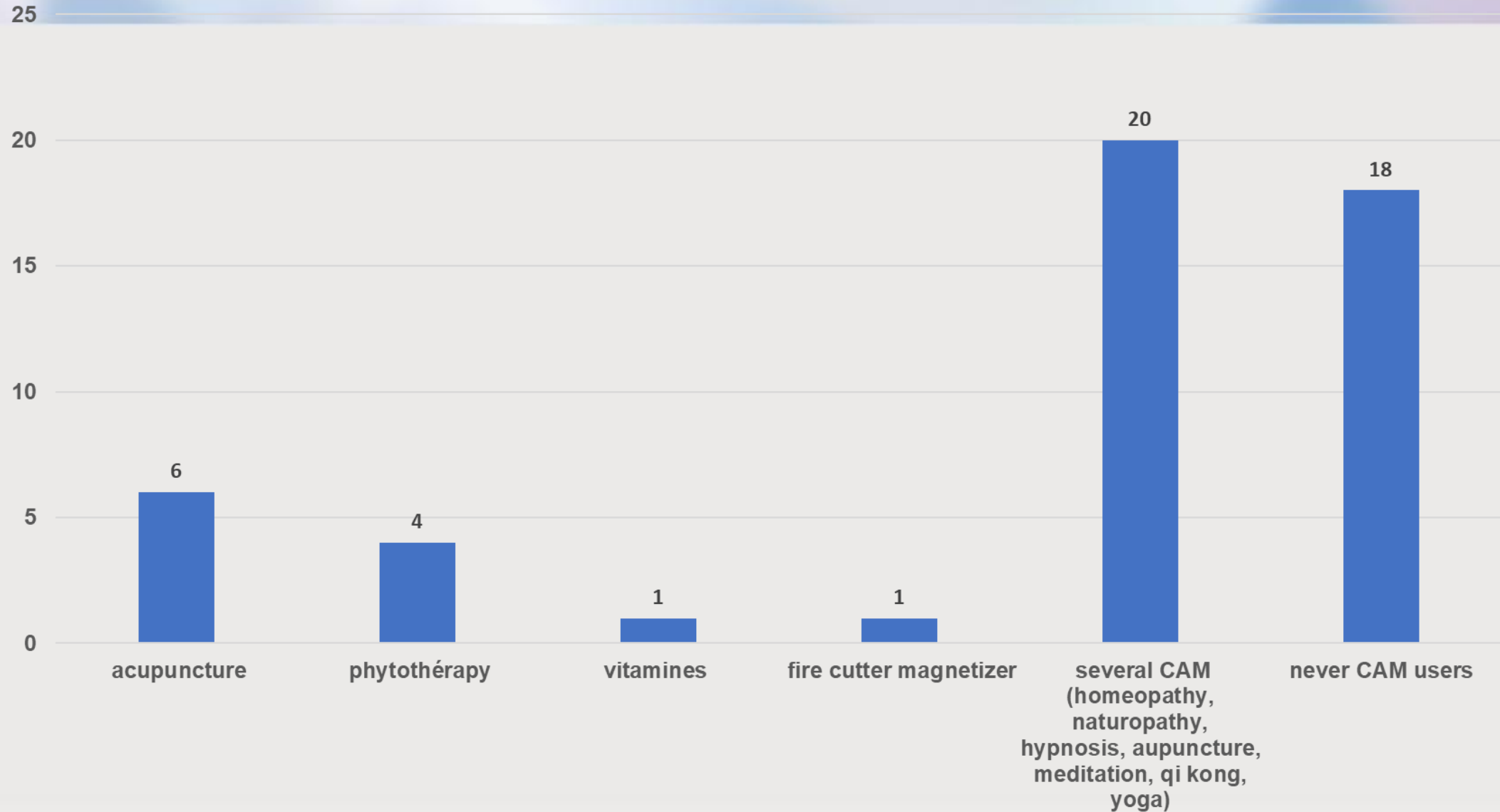
## Characteristics of the cohort

<b>Gender</b>	<b>number (%)</b>	<b>Age</b>	
Masculin	24 (48.0)	Mean	66.4
Féminin	26 (52.0)	Maximum-Minimum	35-86
<b>Age, years</b>		standard deviation	11
>60	36 (72.0)	18-55 ans =	10(20.0)
≤60	14(28.0)	56-65 ans =	7(14.0)
<b>Professional status</b>		66-75 ans =	23(46.0)
retired	32 (64.0)	>75 ans =	10(20.0)
working	18 (26.0)	<b>Time elapsed between diagnosis and interview</b>	
<b>Occupation (executive, non-executive)</b>		Mean	11.38
Technician, superviso	27 (54.0)	Maximum-Minimum	1-48
Clerk, worker	23 (46.0)	<b>Time elapsed between diagnosis and interview</b>	
<b>Studies</b>		≤6	30(60)
higher education	26 (52.0)	>6<12	14(28)
lower education	24 (48.0)	>12	6(12)
<b>Type de Cancer</b>		<b>Length of interviews</b>	<b>minutes</b>
Lungs	28 (56.0)	Mean	36
Breasts	6 (12.0)	Maximum-Minimum	20-90
Digestif	12 (24.0)		
Others	4(08.0)		
<b>Cancer stage</b>			
I-III	421 (92.0)		
IV	36 (7.9%)		
<b>Use of CAM after diagnosis</b>			
yes	14 (28.0)		
no	49 (8.5)		

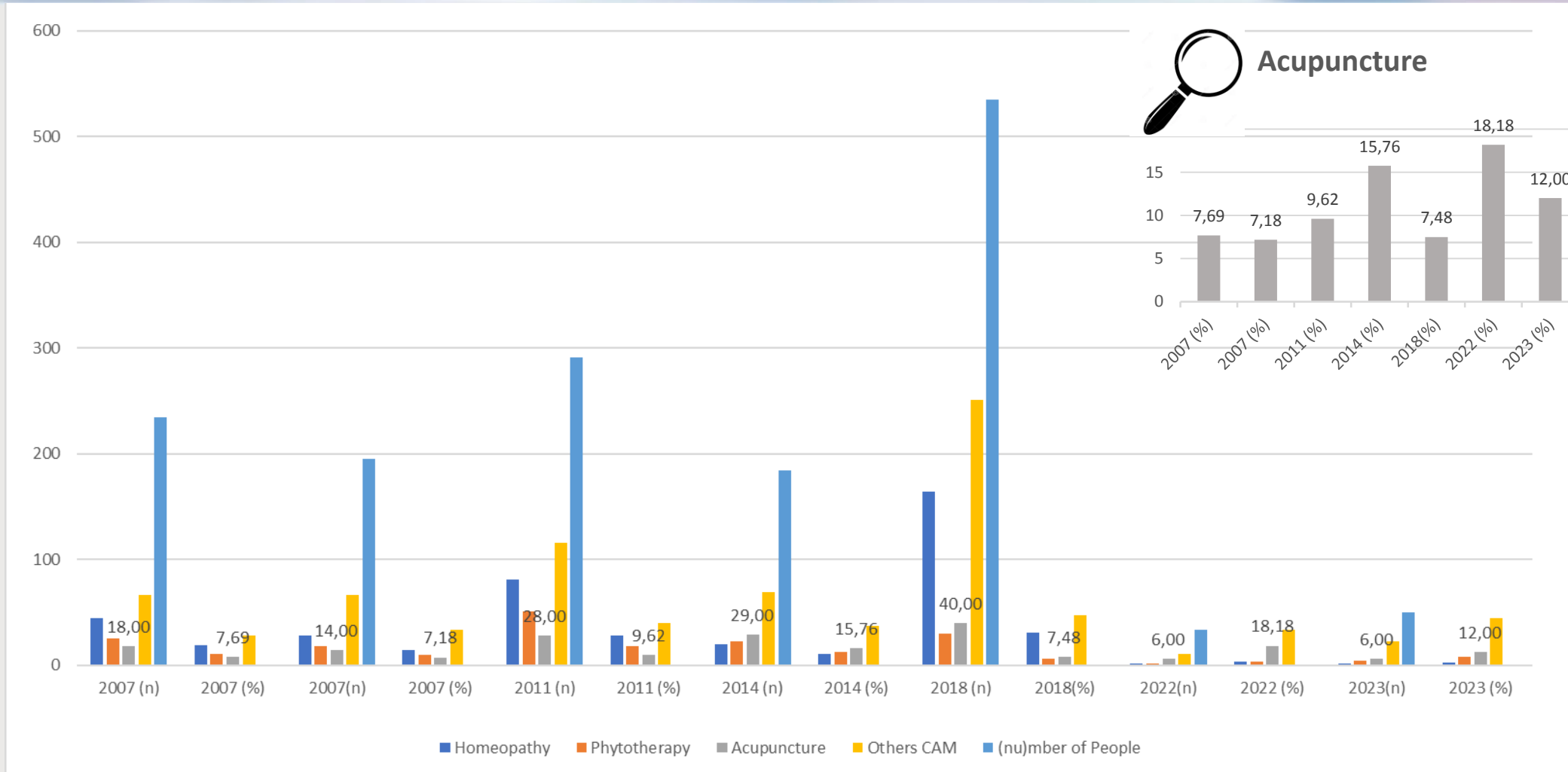
# MAC'EVAL some results (50 interviews)



# MAC'EVAL some results



# CAM users studies among cancer patients in France



Simon et col.2007

Träger et col.2007

Morandini 2011

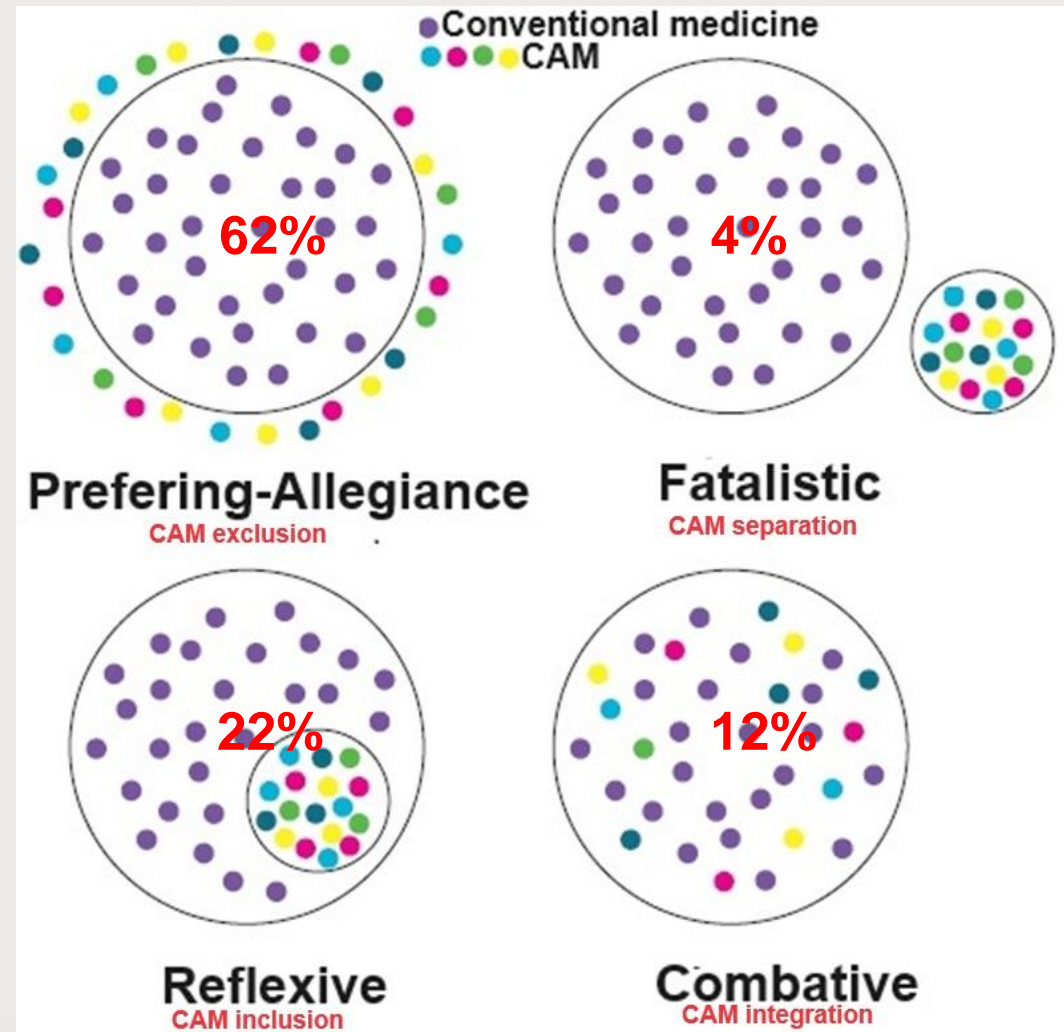
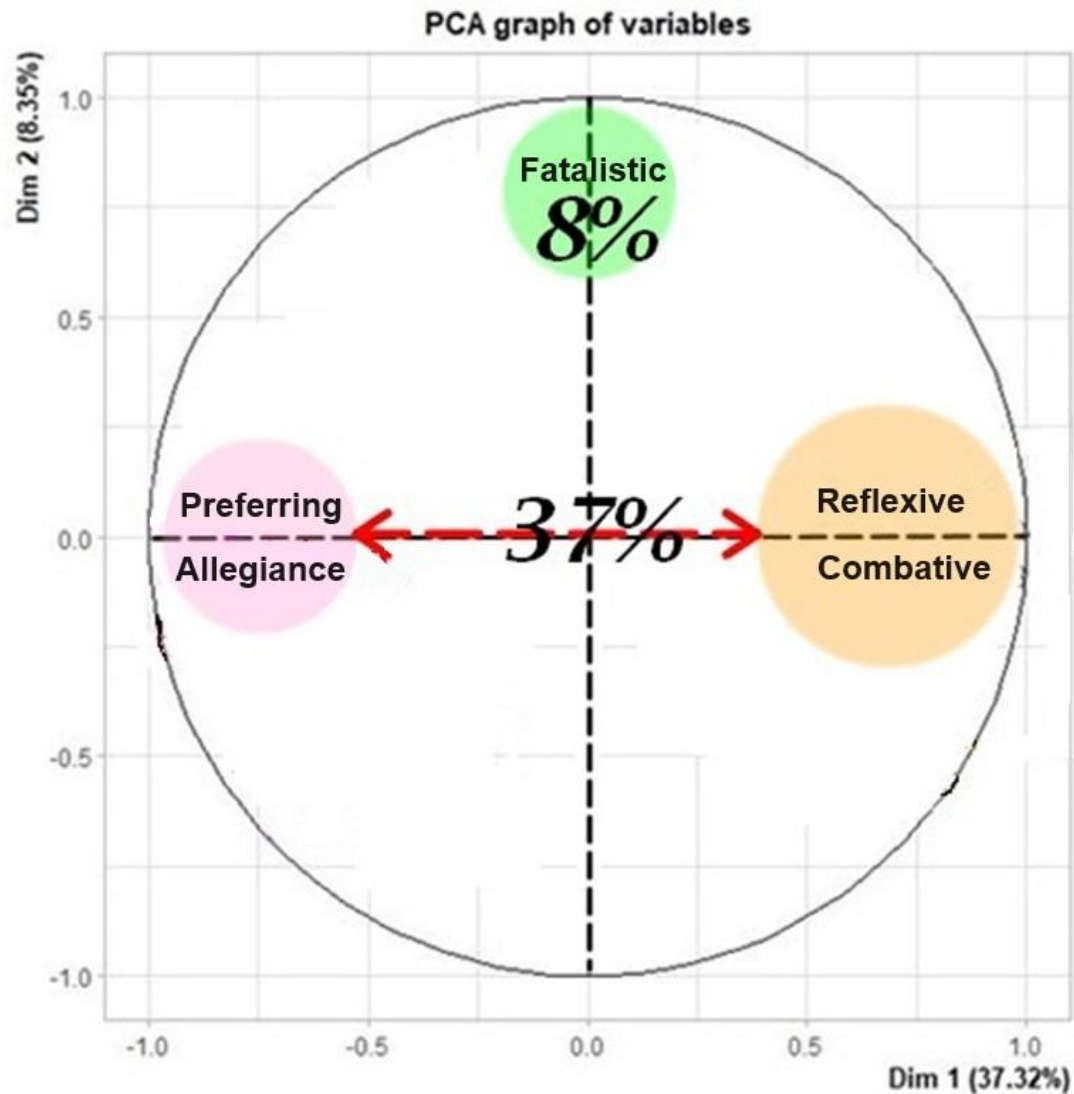
Saghatchian et col. 2014

Legrand 2018

Serrier 2022

Ricono et col.2023

# MAC'EVAL Patient attitudes about treatment





# Conclusion

- The use of CAM mobilizes beliefs, emotions and agentivity linked to the different stages of the disease. The transparency nature of exchanges in the management of side-effects, can lead to the co-construction of supportive care and towards an integrative medicine that humanizes care and recognizes patients' experiences and choices.
- Using CAM and medical pluralism stimulates patients' reflexivity, from seeking information about their disease, to questioning the medical team, to choosing supportive care, sharing experiences with groups of patients, enabling them to do their part and question the meaning they want to give to their agentivity and their resistance to evil.
- There is a common denominator to all these CAM, which is the approach to the individual as a whole and as a subject-actor in his or her own life, are seen elsewhere.
- TCM is one of comprehensive global health system that includes acupuncture, mind-body techniques such as qi gong and tai-chi-chuan, nutrition, herbal medicine and energetic massage. It is a highly personalised therapeutic approach (the practitioner adapts his treatment according to the patient in front of him).
- More and more patients, often because they have developed a distrust of drugs, are turning to CAM and seem satisfied.

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