Reviewer's report

Title: Complementary and Alternative Medicine Use among Breast Cancer Survivors: The Black Women's Health Study

Version: 1 Date: 8 December 2010

Reviewer: Mary Bennett

Reviewer's report:

No Major Compulsory Revisions

Minor Revisions are below.

CAM usage has been reported to be high among breast cancer survivors,[16-18] with estimates ranging from 36% to 84%[18,19]. CAM use is highest among breast cancer survivors.[20]

The second sentence seems redundant, and I am wondering what they are using as a comparison point - other cancer survivors?

The proposed study aims to determine the prevalence of CAM use in African-American breast cancer survivors and to determine the factors associated with CAM use.

The tense, the study has been conducted.

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on one of the most commonly used CAM modality

subject/verb agreement

Discretionary Revisions

There are limited data available on CAM usage, defined (in this study) as use of herbals, multivitamins, and folic acid, among African American breast cancer survivors

Other studies obviously define CAM as covering a much broader range of modalities. I am wondering why this study used such a limited definition of CAM.

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RESULTS

Among the 998 breast cancer survivors, 681 (68.2%) had used either herbals or vitamin

supplements or both; 53.6% of the women had used vitamin supplements, and 39% had used one or more herbal supplements.

I am wondering how this compared with the remainder of the women in the
original survey? Did the breast cancer survivors use more CAM than other women in the survey who did not have or did not develop breast cancer?

I am also wondering about timing. Did the women have breast cancer first, then start using CAM, or did the CAM use precede the development of breast CA?

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Acceptable

**Statistical review:** No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

I declare that I have no competing interests