

The importance of complementary medicine in the multimodal management concept for children with behavioural and developmental disorders

D. Aiello, M. Duetz, E. Giger, R.I. Hassink

Centre of Developmental Advancement and Pediatric Neurorehabilitation of the Wildermeth Trust (C.D.N.), Biel, Switzerland

## INTRODUCTION

The multimodal management concept of C.D.N. consists of a multistep, patient-centred, multidisciplinary and interprofessional approach. It includes psycho-educational and pedagogical interventions, integrative and complementary medicine, specific therapies (e.g. psychotherapy, occupational therapy) and, if necessary, specific medication. In this paper we will focus on complementary therapeutic approaches including omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin and mineral supplements, specific phytotherapy (e.g. rose root, ginkgo) and homeopathy.

## PATIENTS AND METHODS

All patients with behavioural and developmental disorders (mostly with ADHD, ASD, specific developmental disorder of motor function etc.) receive an individual adjusted and symptoms oriented complementary treatment according to their parents' attitudes and beliefs concerning complementary medicine. Every 3-6 months the multidisciplinary therapeutic group records treatment results and adverse effects using standardised assessment such as questionnaires, interviews and in some cases repetition of neuropsychological tests.

## FINDINGS

Ca. 80% of patients show improvement of behavioural, emotional as well as ADHD-related symptoms under individual complementary treatment, with no significant side effects observed. Ca. 20% show insufficient effects under complementary treatment and receive additional prescription drugs as a next and final step in our multimodal management concept. In these cases, we generally observe an excellent medication compliance. Significant side effects of prescription drugs are rarely observed if they are combined with complementary treatment.

## CONCLUSION

Patient-centred complementary treatment in a multimodal management concept for children with behavioural and developmental disorders results in a significant reduction of related symptoms and in an improvement of general health and quality of life in our patients.