

Acceptance of a Multi-Component Complementary Health Approach for Symptom Management: Qualitative Analysis from Persons Living with Pulmonary Hypertension

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Purpose: This poster presents qualitative data of patients with pulmonary hypertension (PH) about their experience with Complementary Health Approach (CHA) intervention for symptom management. The purpose of the study was to gain insight into patients' acceptability of this CHA practice for disease management. These findings are part of an original study reported the preliminary efficacy of a 6-week Urban Zen Integrative Therapy (UZIT) program in PH-related symptoms reduction and health-related quality of life improvement.¹

Background: Patients living with PH, a progressive and debilitating chronic condition face many challenges in the overall management of the disease. Despite pharmacologic advancement, they continue to struggle with high symptom burden,^{2,3} and psychological distress symptoms such as depression and anxiety.⁴ Many CHAs have shown benefit in symptom alleviation in chronic conditions,⁵⁻⁷ however, have not been formally tested in patients with PH. We sought to understand patients' experience during their participation in the 6-weekly, 60-minute sessions UZIT program intervention.

Methods: Thirteen community-dwelling adults with PH from the Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center outpatient PH clinics received 78 individualized UZIT sessions from May 2017 to April 2018. Trained interventionists delivered UZIT sessions (which included: aromatherapy, gentle-body movement, restorative pose, body-awareness meditation, and Reiki) according to the research protocol.⁸ We analyzed 32 focused interview transcripts obtained from video recording UZIT sessions for thematic content through open coding/ labeling of ideas emerged employing constant comparison.⁹ Participants were asked to address questions: 1) "tell me about your experience" and 2) "what struck you the most about the Intervention?" Twenty-five transcripts (78%) represented semi-structured focused interviews at the end of study visits #3 and #6; seven transcripts (12%) represented unsolicited comments. NVivo12 qualitative data management program was used in this analysis.

Results: Seven major themes (See Table 1) emerged from participants' descriptions of their experience with UZIT and what they determined as remarkable about the intervention. Patients perceived that UZIT is a unique and acceptable CHA that enhanced relaxation during and between the UZIT sessions.

"I have not been this comfortable, this relaxed since I stopped smoking reefer."

"I felt like my mind was working, but my body was just still."

"Oh, it's extremely useful."

"I just appreciate that I can use some of the tools in the hospital while I was there."

"I did not feel like everything was cookie-cutter."

Conclusions: Participants found that 6 weekly, one-on-one UZIT was unique, beneficial, practical, and relaxing. Participants expressed interests in incorporating UZIT into daily home practice as a self-care management technique. Further exploration of home practice perception and adherence is critical in promoting this CHA as a holistic health practice.



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Table 1. Participants' Perceptions about UZIT

Qualitative Themes	Theme Definitions	Participants Count (N = 13)
Relaxation during UZIT	feelings of relaxation during UZIT sessions	●●●●●●●●●●●●●●
In-between State	unusual feeling of not being fully awake but aware of the surroundings	●●●●●●●
Benefits of UZIT	description of the benefits of UZIT intervention	●●●●●●●●●●●●●●
The practicality of UZIT	description of how participants use the UZIT practice outside UZIT sessions	●●●●●●●●●●●●●●
Relaxation outside UZIT	the relaxation state that persisted outside of UZIT sessions	●●●●●●●
The uniqueness of UZIT	description of UZIT as unique compared to other complementary therapies	●●●●●●●●●●●●●●
Balance	a deep state of calmness in the present moment	●●●

Abbreviation: UZIT= Urban Zen Integrative Therapy

