

## **Impact of eCAM on CAM laboratory of comparative neuroimmunology**

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Time and contributions have moved rapidly since organizing the first International Congress, Complementary and Alternative Medicine, Kanazawa Japan in 2003. There we established the international peer reviewed journal: *Evidence Based Complementary and Alternative Medicine (eCAM)* published quarterly by Oxford University Press. Our journal, truly international with an impressive list of Editorial Board Members, seeks to create dialogue between and across disciplines in order to fully understand CAM and its numerous practices worldwide that include for example acupuncture and moxibustion. Kanazawa was also the site for organizing and editing the Proceedings with Prof. N. Yamaguchi (Biomedical Approaches to Complementary and Alternative Medicine published by Plenum). We strongly believe that *eCAM* will flourish through imagination, scientific rigor and cooperative enthusiasm. The first objective in a serious approach to complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) should be to obtain a broad understanding, with a minimum of detail, of how CAM fits into the pattern of biology—of the way in which the neuroendocrine-immune system evolved, its function and coordination with other body systems, and its development from the embryo onwards. At the same time, such an outline should provide an adequate background for easy application of CAM ideas to the detail of practical CAM work in public health, clinical and medical practice, and yet not stray far away from the very biology that undergirds it. CAM is organismic, inclusive and not reductionist and exclusive. Quality control is important for the safe use of natural products. Our *eCAM* is launched in a desire to ameliorate this situation, by encouraging the publication of original scientific papers based on sound scientific guidelines, but without prejudice against the possible efficacy of these new and ancient treatments. Turning to products from animals, particularly those from the sea, marine natural product bioprospecting has yielded a considerable number of drug candidates. Most of these molecules are still in preclinical or early clinical development. For terrestrial animals, Lombrakinase is a product isolated from earthworms and marketed as a fibrinolytic agent. Propolis from bees and antimicrobial peptides from maggots (fly larvae) are all effective CAM therapies. We must remember that such products are often associated with the immune systems of these creatures and that they evolved millions of years ago—thus their immune systems have been an effective survival strategy. And if it has worked for them, then humans should harness these as new-wave antibiotics or anticancer molecules, just to offer two biomedical (CAM) applications.