

Conclusions

- Men and older patients expressed weaker beliefs in acupuncture effects than other patients. Thus, in clinical settings, older men might need more encouragement regarding positive expected outcomes of the acupuncture treatment than younger women.
- The high interest and beliefs in acupuncture effects indicate that acupuncture should be available for patients with cancer, for side effects where acupuncture has proven effects.



Figure 1. WOMEN EXPRESSED A STRONGER BELIEF IN ACUPUNCTURE EFFECTS THAN MEN

Aim

The aim of this study was to investigate the use of acupuncture, interest, and belief in acupuncture effects among patients undergoing cancer therapy.

Method and materials

The study participants cross-sectionally during radiotherapy answered a questionnaire regarding their use of, interest and belief in acupuncture treatment.

Results

Of 507 included patients, n=457 (48% men, mean age 65 years, 37% had breast cancer, 32% had prostate cancer) answered the questionnaire.

Four (1%) patients used acupuncture during their cancer therapy, while 368 (83%) expressed an interest in receiving acupuncture.

Of the 457 patients, 289 (63%) believed acupuncture to be effective for at least one of 17 requested symptoms, most commonly pain (56% of the patients) and muscle tension (40%). They believed acupuncture to be effective for mean value 3 of 17 requested symptoms.

Women ($p<0.001$), and patients 41-65 years ($p<0.001$), expressed a stronger belief in acupuncture effects than others.

Table 1. USE OF ACUPUNCTURE AND BELIEF IN ACUPUNCTURE EFFECTS

Variable	Patients
Use of acupuncture during cancer treatment, n (%)	n=444
Yes	4 (1)
No	440 (99)
Belief in acupuncture effects on at least one symptom, n (%)	n=457
Yes	289 (63)
No	168 (37)
Belief in acupuncture effects, number of symptoms ^a , m ± SD range	n=457 2.94 ± 3.65 0-17

Number (n) and proportion (%) of participants are presented. m = mean, SD = standard deviation.
aof maximum 17 different symptoms.

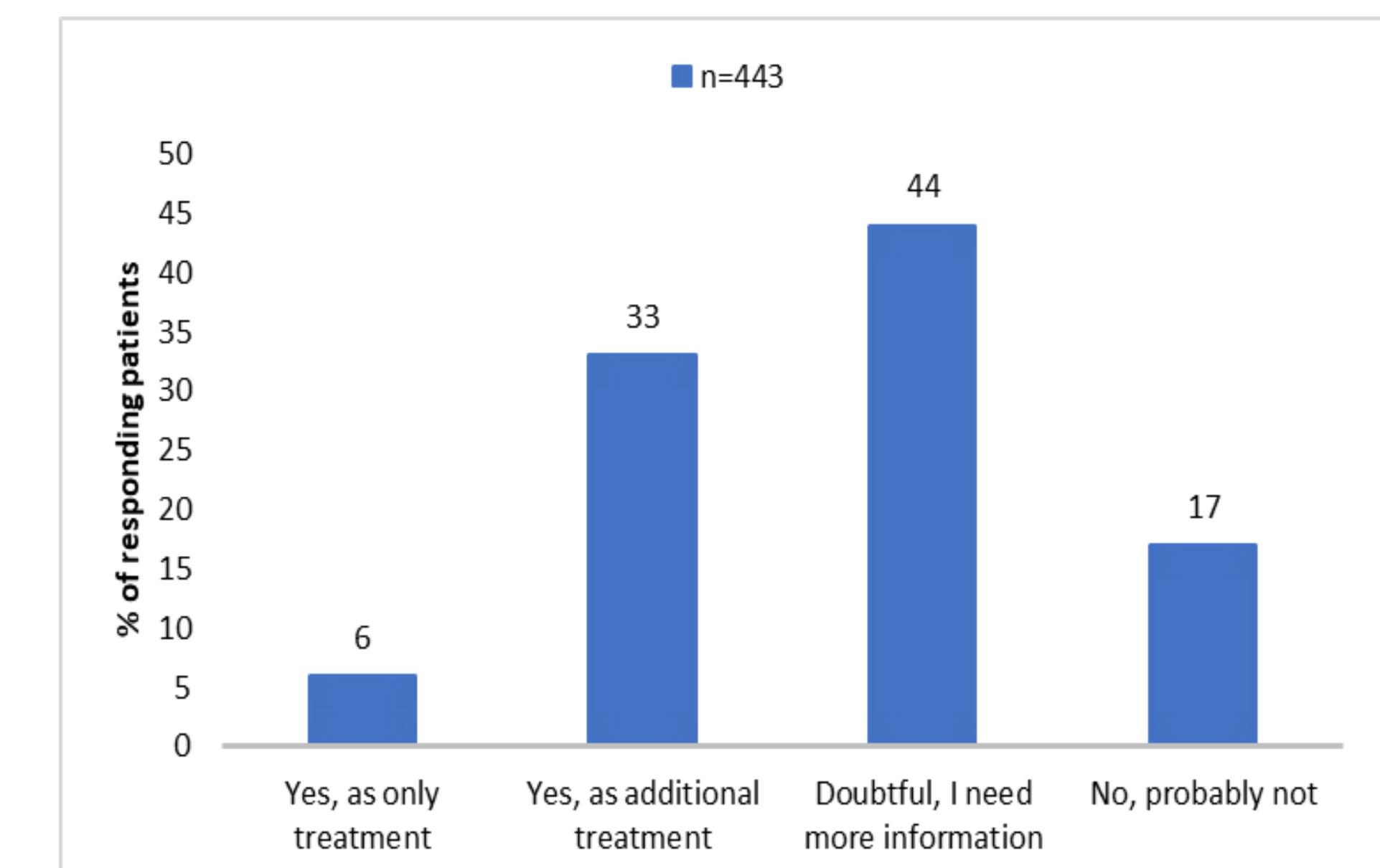


Figure 2. PATIENTS' INTEREST IN RECEIVING ACUPUNCTURE



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