A Systematic Overview of Reviews for Complementary and Alternative Therapies in the Treatment of the Fibromyalgia Syndrome.

Objectives. This systematic overview of reviews aimed to summarize evidence and methodological quality from systematic reviews of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) for the fibromyalgia syndrome (FMS). Methods. The PubMed/MEDLINE, Cochrane Library, and Scopus databases were screened from their inception to Sept 2013 to identify systematic reviews and meta-analyses of CAM interventions for FMS. Methodological quality of reviews was rated using the AMSTAR instrument. Results. Altogether 25 systematic reviews were found; they investigated the evidence of CAM in general, exercised-based CAM therapies, manipulative therapies, Mind/Body therapies, acupuncture, hydrotherapy, phytotherapy, and homeopathy. Methodological quality of reviews ranged from lowest to highest possible quality. Consistently positive results were found for tai chi, yoga, meditation and mindfulness-based interventions, hypnosis or guided imagery, electromyogram (EMG) biofeedback, and balneotherapy/hydrotherapy. Inconsistent results concerned qigong, acupuncture, chiropractic interventions, electroencephalogram (EEG) biofeedback, and nutritional supplements. Inconclusive results were found for homeopathy and phytotherapy. Major methodological flaws included missing details on data extraction process, included or
excluded studies, study details, and adaption of conclusions based on quality assessment. Conclusions. Despite a growing body of scientific evidence of CAM therapies for the management of FMS systematic reviews still show methodological flaws limiting definite conclusions about their efficacy and safety.