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Improving safety and efficacy of herbal drugs

Mirza R Baig Dubai Pharmacy College, UAE

Herbal drugs are usually mixtures of numerous constituents. The variability of the constituents in herbs or herbal preparations are due to genetic, cultural and environmental factors. Herbal drugs benefit takes into account, when both the drug's ability to produce the desired result (efficacy) and the type and likelihood of adverse effects (safety) is balanced. Minimizing the risk and increasing efficacy depends on the balanced active constituents present in the drug. Scientists isolate many "actives" from an herb and discover how certain active metabolites act in the body, but they're also removing buffering components that aid in absorption. Basically, by isolating one ingredient at the expense of another, they change the natural balance of the herb's components. The biological activity may be the result of the combination of several compounds, the isolation process may lead to its loss or reduction. Generalizations about the efficacy of herbal medicines are clearly not possible. Each herbal medicine should be judged on its own merits; some have been demonstrated to be efficacious for certain indications, others may not be efficacious and by far most of them have not been submitted to extensive clinical testing.

Biography

Mirza R Baig is currently working as a Professor in Clinical Pharmacy at Dubai Pharmacy College. He completed his Bachelor of Pharmacy and Master of Pharmacy from India. He did his PhD in Clinical Pharmacy from University Science Malaysia (USM), Malaysia. He worked in Malaysia, India and has international teaching and research experience of about 16 years. He has published more than 35 research papers and articles in international journals. He is in the editorial board in various international journals, including reviewer for couple of Elsevier journals. He supervised numerous master and PhD students for their research projects. His area of research interest is Pharmacoepidemiology, Drug safety and Efficacy, Drug Utilization Studies, Pharmacovigilance and Public Health.

dr.mirzabaig@dpc.edu

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