

Editorial Article

Herbal Medicines: from Traditional Medicine to Modern Experimental Approaches

Academic writings indicate that the medicinal use of plants dates back to 4000 - 5000 B.C. (1). Utilization of medicinal herbs has indeed a long history not only in human's life, but also in animals and there are some interesting evidences about the animals' self-medication, in both the prevention and treatment of diseases (2-5). The World Health Organization (WHO) has recognized the importance of traditional medicines and created strategies, guidelines and standards for botanical medicines (6, 7). A significant part of those traditional text dealing with medicine, which were appreciated by ancient scientific communities worldwide, such as *The Canon of Medicine* by Persian physician-philosopher Ibn Sina (or Avicenna, 980 to 1032 AD), is allocated to herbal medicines. *The Canon* explores nearly 500 medicinal plants and herbal drugs. It should be noted that this book was used as a medical textbook in Europe until the 17th century AD (8, 9).

Although there are important evidences about using some kinds of experimental approaches in traditional medicine (8), the efficacy of such approaches is in doubt because it is generally agreed that they might have been part of physicians' personal experiences.

Not only the demand for herbal drugs is growing in developing countries, but also there are some evidences that consumers in developed countries are becoming disillusioned with modern healthcare; hence, the demand for traditional alternatives including herbal medicines is increasing in developing countries (10).

On the one hand, the increased interest in herbal medicines throughout the world (10, 11), on the other hand, the need for direct empirical evidence about the effectiveness of herbal medicines in the proper statistical society with the appropriate number and

method, denote the significance of new studies about medicinal plants and publishing their results.

Herbal Medicines Journal (eISSN: 2538-2144) reports valuable research results for researchers all over the world about the effectiveness of herbal medicines in a variety of in-vitro, in-vivo and clinical trial models. A more precise and efficient evaluation of approved commercial herbal medicines in different diseases is also a priority for the journal. The chemical composition analysis of the herbal essential oils or extracts, although not mandatory in all cases, is recommended to be considered alongside the study of the effectiveness of plants. Review articles, concluding the efficacy of specific plants or a variety of efficient plants on a special disease, in particular, are considered by the editorial board and editor. Historical papers about medicinal plants in traditional medicine textbooks and studies about the chemical composition of some important plants may be considered for publication in some cases. Letters to the editor, when containing paramount information useful for the target population, are especially appreciated. Journal officials look forward to valuable articles of professors, researchers, and students about medicinal plants and herbal drugs.

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