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Jaswinder Singh

Pharmacotherapeutic Potential of Natural Products in Neurological Disorders

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Introduction to Herbal Medicine

1

1.1 Some Basic Definitions

Complementary/Alternative Medicine (CAM)

Complementary/alternative medicine is defined as systems of medicine having a diverse range of practices concerned with healthcare. These health practices are neither part of a tradition of a particular country nor combined with the major healthcare system.

Traditional Medicine (TM)

Traditional medicine is also known as ethnomedicine or indigenous medicine. Traditional medicine is a medical system largely build on cultural beliefs as well as practices passed down from one generation to another generation.

Medicinal Plant

A medicinal plant is also addressed as a medicinal herb. A medicinal plant includes plant material in crude (rough) form and may include roots or rhizome, stem, leaves, root bark, stem bark, wood, flowers and fruits and seeds. These plant parts may be whole, disunified or in powder (pulver) form.

Herbal Medicine

Herbal medicine is also known as botanical or phytomedicine. Herbal medicine is comprised of herbs, herbal materials, herbal preparations and finished herbal products. Herbal medicines supply active constituents (when used as standardized herbal extract), parts of plants (roots or rhizome, stem, leaves, root bark, stem bark, wood, flowers and fruits and seeds) or a combination of both.