



Clinical Pharmacognosy Series

PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE OF BOTANICALS AS AN INTEGRATIVE THERAPY



Edited by
Anne Hume
Katherine Kelly Orr



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Principles and Practice of Botanicals as an Integrative Therapy



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Clinical Pharmacognosy Series

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Botanical medicines are rapidly increasing in global recognition with significant public health and economic implications. For instance, in developing countries, a vast majority of the indigenous populations use medicinal plants as a major form of healthcare. Also, in industrialized nations, including Europe and North America, consumers are increasingly using herbs and botanical dietary supplements as part of integrative health and complementary and alternative therapies. Moreover, the paradigm shifts occurring in modern medicine, from mono-drug to multi-drug and poly-pharmaceutical therapies, has led to renewed interest in botanical medicines and botanical drugs.

Natural Products and Cardiovascular Health

Catherina C. Caballero George

Aromatherapy: Basic Mechanisms and Evidence-Based Clinical Use

Giacinto Bagetta, Marco Cosentino, and Tsukasa Sakurada

Herbal Medicines: Development and Validation of Plant-Derived Medicines for Human Health

Giacinto Bagetta, Marco Cosentino, Marie Tiziana Corasaniti, and Shinobu Sakurada

Natural Products Interactions on Genomes

Siva G. Somasundaram

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Introduction

Worldwide, the use of botanicals is a key component of healthcare. In the era of patient-centered and evidence-based care, a solid knowledge of botanicals and other natural products, as well as additional components of integrative healthcare is essential for clinicians. This is especially true in primary care, where clinicians commonly work with diverse individuals, as well as with their families and communities. Recognition and understanding of an individual's interest in the use of botanicals is important in particular, as many chronic conditions, for example, are related to lifestyle choices. The incorporation of botanicals, in addition to behavior changes, may better encourage a person's engagement in their own healthcare.

Many people routinely use botanicals and other natural products as part of one's self-care for general health and wellness across their lifespan. Our focus in this book has been to go beyond this. In addition to briefly reviewing the background, pharmacognosy, dosing and product issues, and safety, the chapter authors review the published clinical trial data on the use of botanicals in common diseases and health conditions in humans and conclude with a brief summary of the clinical application. Of note, similar to prescription and nonprescription drugs, clinical trials with botanicals commonly have issues related to their study methodology and thus their resulting application to patient care. The chapter authors have selected what they consider to provide the best evidence evaluating safety and efficacy in humans, especially as an integrative therapy.

An important consideration is that the individual botanical products studied in clinical trials may differ significantly from those products commonly available in a specific country. Given the complexity of the specific components in a botanical product, the results may not reflect those identified in the clinical trials. Caution should be exercised in extrapolating the results to specific individuals. A final point is that clinicians and researchers should be committed to reviewing the current and emerging evidence of botanicals and other aspects of integrative healthcare in an open, unbiased manner.

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