

Pharmacognostic evaluation of herbal medicines used for obesity on Isfahan traditional medicine market

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Background and Aims: Overweight and obesity have become a major public health issue due to a steep rise in the prevalence of overweight. Overweight and obesity are major risk factors for many diseases, including cardiovascular problem, diabetes, and hypertension. Because of inappropriate diet, lack of adequate physical activity, and sedentary life style; people use medical treatments to lose weight. Herbal medicines have been gaining considerable popularity in recent years. Access to such products is largely unrestricted, without the need for prescriptions. Given the increasing popularity of herbal medicines for treatment of obesity in Iran, there is a need to evaluate these products, which are traditionally provided.

Methods: Ten herbal products used for obesity on Isfahan traditional medicine market were collected, their medical information was recorded, and then the drugs were microscopically and macroscopically evaluated. Finally, their therapeutic effects were compared with the indications mentioned in traditional medicine texts.

Results: More than 50% of the products contained at least one medicinal plant, which has been used traditionally for treatment of obesity.

Conclusions: The providers of traditional medicine should receive required trainings according to texts of traditional medicine. Moreover, they should be continuously monitored and traditional medicine products continuously undergo pharmacognostic testing.

Keywords: Obesity; Herbal medicine; Pharmacognostic evaluation