

Misconception uses of Herbal in Iraq

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Abstract This study assesses the knowledge and practices of Iraqi herbalists regarding commonly used herbs, including chamomile, cinnamon and senna, to promote public safety and awareness. Misconceptions about herbal science are very important to educate people about the seriousness of side effects resulting from the incorrect and repeated use of these herbs, as they are no less dangerous than synthetic chemical drugs. In this study, many herbalists in Baghdad were questioned and statistics were conducted on the methods of use and the quantities used. This study emphasizes the need for awareness programs and cultural systems to raise the level and safety of herbal medicine use in Iraq.



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Keywords: Folk medicine, Misconception, Awareness.

1. INTRODUCTION

High percentage of the Iraqi population profoundly rely on folk medicine to meet their health needs which makes their safety questionable. This study aims to evaluate the knowledge and practices of Iraqi herbalists of a group of commonly used herbs such as chamomile, cinnamon, and senna to ensure the safety of the public. There is a return to the use of herbs and medicinal herbs have become the destination of many companies. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct this study to raise the level of awareness. This study was conducted between October 2023 and December 2023, using a pre-tested questionnaire administered to Iraqi herbalists practicing in Baghdad. Through a questionnaire, participants completed a multi-component questionnaire consisting of 3 items in six sections. The data obtained was analyzed.

2. METHOD

50 herbalists were selected from different areas in Baghdad. A set of questions were asked about the most famous medicinal herbs used in general, and about the number of people who come to herbalists for treatment with this type of treatment, how to prepare them, and how to use them to know in general. Then they were asked questions about the group of herbs

referred to during this study. The answers ranged from fifty herbalists to say that the most commonly used herbs are chamomile, ginger, cinnamon, and garlic. Requested by the elderly and women. Then, the results of the questionnaire were collected regarding questions related to each of the herbs mentioned in the study and about the methods of using them. The answers varied regarding the use of chamomile as a muscle relaxant and joint pain Take a small handful of chamomiles and put it in water until it boils well, filter the mixture, then drink it when needed, cinnamon for stomach disorders, colic and nausea Take sticks and grind them. At home, boil it with water for 5-7 minutes, then drink the mixture hot, and senna given in cases of severe constipation for adults and even children, it is also given to clean the intestines in case of poisoning Place senna leaves in water, boil for more than 15 minutes, leave until warm and drink.

3. RESULT

By comparing the answers from the questionnaire and using the correct and scientific method mentioned in the Iraqi Pharmacopoeia and Herbs, the results appeared. 54.9% of the answers were poor and incorrect

	CORRECT %	FALSE %
CHAMOMILE	41.2 %	55.4%
CINNAMON	48.2%	44.5%
SENNA	51%	64.8%

4. DESICCATION

The results reveal a significant gap in the knowledge of Iraqi herbalists regarding the correct use of widely used herbs, comparing the results with what is in the Iraqi Pharmacopoeia and Herbs. The survey results showed that 54.9% of the answers provided by the participants were weak or incorrect, which increased concerns about herbalists and their impact on public health. The results show that for chamomile: only 41.2% of the answers were correct, while 55.4% were incorrect. This indicates a lack of awareness of the correct uses and potential contraindications for this herb. As for cinnamon, the answers were slightly better, with 48.2% correct answers. However, the error rate was also high at 44.5%, indicating a lack of full understanding of its proper use. As for the last herb, senna, only 51% of the answers were accurate and correct, while 64.8% were incorrect. Although senna is one of the most common herbs, the incorrect use of senna can lead to serious health consequences. Overall, the results show the urgent need to improve the knowledge and education of herbalists through regular training and supervision and serious campaigns for public safety. These results highlight the need to conduct many such studies and find serious and organized solutions between traditional herbal practices and scientifically approved methods.

5. RECOMMENDATION

Raising awareness among community members In terms of Medical education by Organizing awareness workshops and lectures on the benefits and potential risks of medicinal herbs such as chamomile, senna, and cinnamon or Media distribution by Using media and social media platforms to provide accurate and reliable information about herbs and Advising to consult experts by Educating people about the importance of consulting a qualified doctor or expert before using herbs, especially for pregnant women, children, and those with chronic diseases.

Recommendations for herbalists and specialists in selling medicinal herbs in terms of Providing high quality by Ensuring

that the herbs they have are free of contaminants such as pesticides or heavy metals or Giving appropriate doses by Training herbalists to provide accurate instructions on the doses and method of use for each herb and Emphasizing warnings by Alert customers about excessive or incorrect use of some herbs such as senna, which can cause severe diarrhea or intestinal problems.

Recommendations for using common medicinal herbs like :

Chamomile Benefits: Helps calm the nerves, improve sleep, and treat digestive problems. Proper use: Soak a teaspoon of dried flowers in a cup of boiling water for 10 minutes. Warnings: Avoid excessive use as it may cause allergies in some people.

Senna Benefits: Used as a laxative to treat constipation. Proper Use: Boil a teaspoon of senna leaves in a cup of water for 5 minutes, then leave to cool. Drink as needed, but do not use for more than a week without consulting a doctor. Warnings: Prolonged or excessive use can lead to digestive problems or dependence on laxatives.

Cinnamon Benefits: Helps improve blood circulation and regulate blood sugar levels. Proper use: Add half a teaspoon of ground cinnamon to a cup of boiling water or use it as a spice for food. – Warnings: Avoid large doses (more than a teaspoon per day) as they may cause liver problems.

Finally, must be Collaboration with health authorities Issuing a guide for the safe use of herbs: Developing booklets or applications that explain the doses, benefits, and risks of each herb. Strict control: Strengthening control over herbal shops to ensure adherence to quality and provide accurate information. Encouraging scientific research

The aim of the research: The use of medicinal herbs must be responsible and thoughtful, as the benefit is achieved when used correctly, but misuse can lead to serious health damage.

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