Information products on Medicinal Plants

Guidelines
Information on Medicinal Plants
Quality Assurance
WHO Monographs
List of Selected Information Material

World Health Organization
Marketing and Dissemination
Plants have been used for medicinal purposes for many centuries. Today, herbal medicines are being employed worldwide in a variety of health care settings and as home remedies. In some developing countries, communities rely heavily on traditional health practitioners and medicinal plants to meet their primary health care needs. In many industrialized countries herbal medicines are gaining popularity as alternative and complementary therapies.

The popularity of herbal medicines has led to increasing concerns over their safety, quality, and efficacy on the part of health authorities and the general public. In many countries the herbal medicines market is poorly regulated and products may be neither registered nor controlled. National surveillance systems to monitor and evaluate adverse events are rare. Though there has been an increase in scientific studies on herbal medicines, there is still insufficient reliable data.

The WHO works to provide its Member States with technical guidance to ensure the safety, quality control, and efficacy of herbal medicines as well as their rational use by health practitioners and the general public. As medicinal plants are often an important part of traditional medicine, the publications and documents featured in this catalogue exemplify WHO’s major work not only on medicinal plants and herbal medicines, but also on traditional medicine in general.

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An index of titles is provided on page 10. An order form is contained in this catalogue on page 11.

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**Guidelines for the Appropriate Use of Herbal Medicines**

Reports the findings and recommendations of a working group convened to prepare guidelines for the use of herbal medicines in Western Pacific countries. Addressed to national health authorities, the report responds to the widespread use of herbal medicines in this part of the world and the corresponding need for mechanisms to ensure that these products are safe and effective, yet remains broadly accessible. With this need in mind, the report sets out a comprehensive framework for developing national policies designed to control the safety, efficacy, and quality of herbal medicines, manufacturing practices, product registration, and labelling, marketing, and trade.

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**Research Guidelines for Evaluating the Safety and Efficacy of Herbal Medicines**

Sets out detailed guidelines for conducting scientific research on the safety and efficacy of herbal medicines. The guidelines, which reflect the consensus reached by 17 experts in pharmacology, biochemistry, and traditional medicine, respond to the need to assure the safety of widely-used herbal medicines while also facilitating the search for new pharmaceutical products. Specific research criteria are covered together with general principles of investigation, including ethical concerns.

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**Herbal Medicine for Human Health**

Examines the research issues and methodological problems that need to be resolved in order to exploit the therapeutic potential of medicinal plants and herbs. The opening chapters describe the potential uses of medicinal herbs in primary health care, set out criteria for the selection of plants for further research or immediate use, and compare the use of specific remedies in different countries. The third chapter, devoted to research, considers the need for a different methodological approach when attempting to develop drugs from herbal sources. Arguing that the clinical trial methodology developed for synthetic compounds is inappropriate for testing medicinal plants, the fourth chapter establishes a model for clinical evaluation that avoids several of these methodological pitfalls. Subsequent chapters consider what can be done to strengthen the role of herbal remedies in primary health care, and address questions of standardization and regulation. The book concludes with an outline of research priorities for the coming decades.

"...The author deserves to be complimented on having condensed so much information into such a short book..."

— Indian Journal of Medical Research

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**WHO Regional Publications, Western Pacific Series, No. 23**

1998, vi + 79 pages [E]
ISBN 92 9061 124 3
Sw.fr. 7.50/US $6.70
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Order no. 1510023

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**WHO Regional Publications, South-East Asia Series, No. 20**

1991, ix + 87 pages [E]
ISBN 92 9022 162 3
Sw.fr. 8.—/US $7.20
In developing countries: Sw.fr. 5.60
Order no. 1560020

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**Nonserial publication of the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific**

1993, v + 86 pages [E]
ISBN 92 9061 110 3
Sw.fr. 7.50.—/US $6.70
In developing countries: Sw.fr. 5.20
Order no. 1520003
Medicinal Plants in Viet Nam
Catalogues the 200 species of medicinal plants most commonly used in traditional Vietnamese medicine. The book, which has been translated from the original Vietnamese, was produced in an effort to communicate knowledge about herbal medicine that has accumulated over thousands of years, has been confirmed through both empirical experience and scientific evaluation, and yet has rarely been published outside the Vietnamese literature. The book also responds to increasing respect for the value of medicinal plants as a source of efficacious and inexpensive new drugs that offer an important alternative to chemically synthesized medicines.

"...Illustrated with meticulous coloured art-work..."  
— Tropical Diseases Bulletin

Medicinal Plants in the South Pacific
Information on 102 commonly used Medicinal Plants in the South Pacific
Describes the information available, from both traditional medical texts and recent scientific studies, for 102 medicinal plants used in the South Pacific Islands. Plants from this part of the world represent an especially diverse flora and include several species currently undergoing scientific investigation. Addressed to ethnobotanists, phyto-chemists, and pharmacologists, the book aims to document traditional clinical uses and bring these to the attention of the international scientific community.

Medicinal Plants in the Republic of Korea
Information on 150 commonly used Medicinal Plants
Presents concise monographs, accompanied by full-colour photographs, for the 150 plant species most commonly used for medicinal purposes in the Republic of Korea. In view of the country’s long and successful history in the use of traditional medicines, the book aims to provide written and visual documentation of important plants and summarize their uses to treat ailments, protect against disease, or promote health.

Compiled by Natural Products Research Institute, Seoul National University  
WHO Regional Publications, Western Pacific Series, No. 21  
1998, ix + 316 pages, 150 colour plates [E]  
ISBN 92 9061 120 0  
Sw.fr. 42.–/US $37.80  
In developing countries: Sw.fr. 29.40  
Order no. 1510021

WHO Regional Publications, Western Pacific Series, No. 19  
1998, xvii + 254 pages, 102 colour plates [E]  
ISBN 92 906 1119 7  
Sw.fr. 33.–/US $29.70  
In developing countries: Sw.fr. 23.10  
Order no. 1510019

WHO Regional Publications, Western Pacific Series, No. 3  
1990, 410 pages, 200 colour plates [E]  
ISBN 92 9061 101 4  
Sw.fr. 45.–/US $40.50  
In developing countries: Sw.fr. 31.50  
Order no. 1510003
Medicinal Plants in China
Catalogues the 150 species of medicinal plants most commonly used in traditional Chinese medicine. Each plant species is first documented by a full colour photograph taken under natural conditions during the flowering or fruiting season. Where relevant, a second photograph illustrates the plant parts from which the crude drug is extracted. Explanatory notes for each species cover botanical name and synonyms, Chinese name, English name, parts used, description of the plant, its habitat, and geographical distribution, and clinical indications and dosage. Some of the syndromes and clinical signs are described in traditional Chinese medical terminology. Information on indications and dosage is in keeping with theories for the prescription of medicinal plants taken from traditional Chinese pharmacology.

“...A valuable contribution to Pharmacognosy...”
— Tropical Disease Bulletin

WHO Regional Publications,
Western Pacific Series, No. 2
1998, 327 pages,
151 colour plates [E]
ISBN 92 9061 102 2
Sw.fr. 50.-/US $45.00
In developing countries: Sw.fr. 35.-
Order no. 1510002

Quality Control Methods for Medicinal Plant Materials
A collection of test procedures for assessing the identity, purity, and content of medicinal plant materials, including determination of pesticide residues, arsenic and heavy metals. Intended to assist national laboratories engaged in drug quality control, the manual responds to the growing use of medicinal plants, the special quality problems they pose, and the corresponding need for international guidance on reliable methods for quality control. Recommended procedures - whether involving visual inspection or the use of thin-layer chromatography for the qualitative determination of impurities - should also prove useful to the pharmaceutical industry and pharmacists working with these materials.

Basic Tests for Drugs, Pharmaceutical Substances, Medicinal Plant Materials and Dosage Forms
Includes basic tests for confirming the identity of four commonly used medicinal plant materials (Ipecacuanhae radix, Podophyly resina, Sennae folium and Senae fructus). Also describes tests for 23 pharmaceutical substances and 58 pharmaceutical dosage forms, most of which are included in the WHO Model List of Essential Drugs.

WHO Regional Publications,
Western Pacific Series, No. 2
1998, viii + 115 pages [E, F*, S*]
ISBN 92 4 154510 0
Sw.fr. 35.-/US $31.50
In developing countries: Sw.fr. 24.50
Order no. 1150451

1998, iii + 91 pages [E, F, S]
ISBN 92 4 154513 5
Sw.fr. 26.-/US $23.40
In developing countries: Sw.fr. 18.20
Order no. 1150462

...A valuable contribution to Pharmacognosy...
— Tropical Disease Bulletin
Quality Assurance of Pharmaceuticals: a compendium of guidelines and related materials.

Assurance of the quality, safety and efficacy of pharmaceutical products is a continuing concern of WHO. Despite efforts made around the world to ensure a supply of high-quality and effective drugs, inadequate pharmaceutical regulation and substandard, spurious and counterfeit products will compromise health care delivery in many countries.

To respond to the global need for adequate quality assurance of pharmaceuticals, WHO’s Expert Committee on Specifications for Pharmaceutical Preparations has over the years made numerous recommendations to establish standards and guidelines and to promote the effective functioning of national regulation and control systems and the implementation of internationally agreed standards by trained personnel. Many of the relevant documents endorsed by the Committee are reproduced in these two volumes.

**Volume 1:** provides guidance on aspects of national drug regulation, product assessment, registration and distribution, The International Pharmacopoeia, basic tests for drugs, laboratory services, international trade in pharmaceuticals, counterfeit products, and training.

**Volume 2:** provides guidance covering all aspects of good manufacturing practices and includes important texts on inspection.

Most of the materials have been published separately in the Expert Committee’s reports. This compendium brings it together for the first time to make it more accessible and of greater practical value to those working in faculties of pharmacy, in drug regulation and control, and in the pharmaceutical industry.

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**Quality Assurance of Pharmaceuticals**

A Compendium of Guidelines and Related Materials, Volume 1

Of particular interest to herbal medicines, WHO’s Expert Committee on Specifications for Pharmaceutical Preparations, at its thirty-fourth meeting, adopted “Guidelines for the assessment of herbal medicines”. These guidelines were subsequently reproduced in Chapter 2 of the Quality Assurance of Pharmaceuticals: A compendium of guidelines and related materials, Volume 1.

The guidelines define criteria for the evaluation of the safety, efficacy, and quality of herbal medicines, and thereby assist national regulatory authorities, scientific organizations, and manufacturers in undertaking an assessment of the documentation/submissions/dossiers in respect of such products. Prior to the adoption of the guidelines at the Expert Committee, these guidelines were discussed at the Sixth International Conference of Drug Regulatory Authorities (ICDRA), held in Ottawa in October 1991, as the guidelines were developed following the request of the Fourth and Fifth ICDRA meetings. The guidelines have been distributed to WHO Member States and their utility has been widely recognized.

1997, vi + 238 pages [E, F, S]
ISBN 92 4 154504 6
Sw.fr. 50.-/US $45.00
In developing countries: Sw.fr. 35.-
Order no. 1150452

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**Quality Assurance of Pharmaceuticals**

A Compendium of Guidelines and Related Materials, Volume 2: Good Manufacturing Practices and Inspection

Specialized good manufacturing practice (GMP) guidelines for the manufacture of herbal medicinal products address manufacture of products from material of plant origin, which may be subject to contamination and deterioration and may vary in its composition and properties.

Furthermore, procedures and techniques often used in the manufacture and quality control of herbal medicines are substantially different from those used for conventional pharmaceutical products. These specialized GMP guidelines were adopted by the WHO Expert Committee on Specifications for Pharmaceutical Preparations at its Thirty-fourth meeting and supplement the existing WHO core GMP guidelines.

These guidelines were subsequently published in Quality Assurance of Pharmaceuticals: A compendium of guidelines and related materials, Volume 2, Good manufacturing practices and inspection. This publication reproduces guidelines related to good manufacturing practices (GMP) and to the inspection of pharmaceutical manufacturing and drug distribution channels.

1999, v + 198 pages [E, F*, S*]
ISBN 92 4 154526 7
Sw.fr. 62.-/US $55.80
In developing countries: Sw.fr. 43.40
Order no. 1152452
WHO Monographs on Selected Medicinal Plants, Volume 1

This book contains 28 monographs on widely used medicinal plants, selected for inclusion on the basis of scientific evidence for both safety and efficacy. Each monograph contains two parts, the first of which provides pharmacopoeial summaries for quality assurance purposes, including botanical features, identity tests, purity requirements, chemical assays and major chemical constituents. The second part, drawing on an extensive review of scientific research, describes the clinical applications of the plant material, with detailed pharmacological information and sections on contraindications, adverse effects and dosage.

The monographs are intended to promote international harmonization in the quality control and use of herbal medicines and to serve as models for the development of national formularies. They will be a comprehensive scientific reference for drug regulatory authorities, physicians, traditional practitioners, pharmacists, manufacturers and research scientists.

Plants covered in volume 1


1999, v + 289 pages [E]
ISBN 92 4 154517 8
Sw.fr. 92.-/US $82.80
In developing countries: Sw.fr. 64.40
Order no. 1150460

...Well structured, highly evidence-based and thoroughly referenced. As far as the pharmacology, botany and pharmacy-related sections of these monographs are concerned, they are a superb and highly useful reference text, a must for anyone with a serious interest in phytomedicine...”

— Focus on Alternative and Complementary Therapies
**WHO Monographs on Selected Medicinal Plants, Volume 2**

Volume 2 of the WHO Monographs on Selected Medicinal Plants provides an additional collection of 30 monographs covering the quality control and traditional and clinical uses of selected medicinal plants reviewed by 120 experts in more than 50 countries. The monographs are not only a valuable scientific reference to health authorities, scientists and pharmacists, but will also be of interest to the general public.

### Plants covered in volume 2


**WHO Monographs on Selected Medicinal Plants, Volume 3**

IN PREPARATION

Provides an additional collection of some 31 monographs.

### A Proposed List of Monographs

Selected additional information material on medicinal plants and traditional medicine

**National policy and monitoring**


Apia Action Plan on Traditional Medicine in the Pacific Island Countries. Manila, WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific, 2001

Traditional Health Systems in Latin America and the Caribbean: Baseline Information. Washington, DC, Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization, 2000


The Role of Traditional Medicine in Primary Health Care in China (Based on an Inter-Regional Seminar Sponsored by the WHO in Association with the Ministry of Public Health of the People's Republic of China, 9-21 October 1985). Geneva, World Health Organization, 1986 (document reference WHO/TRM/86.2)


**Quality, safety and efficacy**

**Medicinal Plants**


Traditional and Modern Medicine: Harmonizing the two approaches. Manila, WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific, 2000

Guidelines for Clinical Research on Acupuncture. Manila, WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific, 1995 (WHO Regional Publications, Western Pacific Series No. 15, Sw.fr. 7.50, order no. 1510015)


Rational use
Acupuncture Nomenclature

Conservation of Medicinal Plants

Selection and Use of Therapies

Training and good practice
Acupuncture: review and analysis of reports on controlled clinical trials. Geneva, World Health Organization IN PRESS
Training Package of Practitioners of Traditional Medicine. Manila, WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific, 1999

WHO Collaborating Centres

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