



Alternative medicine: challenges and opportunities

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Abstract:

The terms “complementary medicine” and “alternative medicine” refer to a broad set of health care practices that are not part of that country’s own conventional medicine and are not fully integrated into the dominant health care system. They are used interchangeably with traditional medicine in some countries. Examples include herbal medicine, Ayurvedic medicine, Prophetic medicine amongst others.

In developing countries between 80% - 85% of the population rely on herbal medicines. Herbal Medicine enjoys a wider acceptability than does orthodox medicine. This is because it blends readily into the socio cultural life of the people in whose culture it is deeply rooted. Furthermore The practitioners are more accessible to most of the population. Despite these benefits, herbal medicine has its problems and challenges and this creates opportunities for more research into other types of alternative medicines.^{2,3}

This paper highlights the problems of herbal medicines ranging from quality issues, use of the wrong species of medicinal plants, incorrect dosing, errors in the use of herbal medicines both by health-care providers and consumers, products’ contamination with potentially hazardous substances, such as toxic metals, pathogenic microorganisms and agrochemical residues and interactions with other medicines.

The paper reviews the potential benefits of another type of alternative medicine: Prophetic medicine and highlights the concepts and provides evidence of its pharmacological effects against several non-communicable and communicable diseases including COVID 19

Biography

Ibrahim Adekunle Oreagba is a Consultant Pharmacist



and Clinical Pharmacologist with a Masters and Doctorate degree in Pharmacology. He also has a Post Graduate Certificate in Pharmaco-epidemiology and Pharmacovigilance from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine London U.K. He is currently a Professor and Head of the Department of Pharmacology, Therapeutics and Toxicology, College of Medicine University of Lagos Idi-araba. His research interest include herbal medicine, clinical pharmacology, rational drug use, addiction prevention and Pharmacovigilance. He currently serves as a core Technical Member/Consultant to the National Drug Safety Advisory Committee, NAFDAC, Nigeria and was a member of the expert Committee that developed the Nigerian National Pharmacovigilance Policy.

Publication of speakers:

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Webinar on Alternative Medicine and Herbal Medicine, July 15, 2020, London, UK

Citation: Ibrahim Adekunle Oreagba, Alternative medicine: challenges and opportunities, Alternative Medicine 2020, July 15, 2020, London, UK