Human Medicinal Agents From Plants

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A review of analgesic medicinal plants in Iran

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ABSTRACT

Pain and inflammation are the main problems associated with different diseases in human communities. The currently available drugs including opioids and nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs are helpful for all patients because of complications and side effects. Therefore, there is still the need for suitable analgesics and researchers are still studying in this regard. Medicinal plants are rich sources of bioactive substances and antioxidant, and could have analgesic uses. In this review study, analgesic medicinal plants were searched for. Medicinal plants and analgesics were used as key words. The findings indicated that Thymus vulgaris, Mentha pulegium, Ziziphora tenuior, Origanum vulgarel L.Spp, Satureja hortensis Linn, Salvia sclarea, Gundelia tournefortii L., Datura stramonium L., Carum copticum, Pistacia vera L., Coriandrium sativum, Cinnamomum zeylanicum,Artemisia herba-alba,Cuminum cyminum L., Elaeagnus angustifolia, Glycyrrhiza glabra, etc. are the most frequently used analgesics.

Key words: Medicinal plants, pain, drug mechanism, Iran

INTRODUCTION

Pain is a sensory unfavourite experience caused by acute or potential tissue damage. Pain is also a protective mechanism of the body to appropriately respond to eliminate pain-causing agent and an index for diagnosis of diseases [1].

Pain and inflammation are the main and basic problems associated with different illnesses in human communities. The currently available drugs including opioids, nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs and some other agents could not be helpful for all patients because of complications and side effects [2]. Therefore, suitable analgesics are still required and researchers are still studying in this regard.

Severe pain results in fear and anxiety in patients and increased stress responses of hypothalamus through cortical stimulation. In addition anxiety and related stress responses cause increase in blood viscosity and platelet accumulation [3].

Analgesic drugs are categorized into opioids and non-opioids. Opioids exert their effect through connecting to central opioid receptors including μ, κ, and δ, that have central analgesic effect. Opioids include morphine, codeine, and heroine. Long term use of opioids results in physical tolerance and dependency and also increases the sensitivity to pain and hyperallergy [4].

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