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Tanzania traditional eye medicines: Systematic documentation, assessment on awareness of health risks and safety evaluation**Sheila Mgole Maregesi**

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Eye are delicate sensory organs whose treatment requires special attention to avoid medical problems. Traditional eye medicines (TEM) are commonly used in the developing countries but their chemical composition, sterility and pH are neither known nor controlled leading to partial or total vision disability to users. Previous study in Tanzania reported 25% of corneal ulcers linked to TEM application. Our studies aimed at systematic documentation of Tanzania TEM, assessment on awareness of health risks and safety evaluation. Information was obtained from published journal articles, books and ethnomedical studies in Kigoma and Misungwi districts. Safety evaluation included determination of pH, absence of microbial contamination and mineral analysis. Study I reported 82 products, the majority (98%) were from plants, animal excreta and unrefined-salt. Tested products exhibited acidic pH (2.5 to 6.57) and contamination with pathogenic microbes. The ratio of interviewee unaware on health risks associated TEM was 65%.

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