

Traditional complementary & alternative medicine (TCAM) with special reference to herbal medicines: Quality, safety and efficacy

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Ever since the incorporation of Traditional Medicines in its program in the year 1976, World Health Organization (WHO) has gone a long way for the worldwide promotion and development of different systems of traditional medicines and their best utilization in the health care services. Interest in medicinal plants has been revived in modern times and various organizations have been addressing issues concerning herbal medicines research.

In the present study an attempt has been made to deal a clear understanding for research on herbal medicines starting from good agricultural practices (GAP) of plants; good cultivation practices (GCP); good field collection practices (GFCP); technical planning; population density; geographical distribution; topographical maps; collecting techniques & procedures; source and period of collection; identification; storage; chemical standardization; assay; good manufacturing practices (GMP); pre clinical studies to clinical approach, with special reference to maintain standardization at every stage and subsequent production of quality herbal medicinal products (HMP).

Besides above protocols, this study deals with post harvest studies starting from preliminary examination of a medicinal plant, its morpho-anatomical, pharmacognostic, physicochemical and analytical parameters, foreign organic matter, pesticide residue, radioactive and microbial contamination, chemical assay, finger printing of the successive extracts using IR, UV, TLC & HPLC, GC/MS techniques, phyto-chemical screening, quantitative analysis of inorganic constituents and finger printing for purity assessments of raw botanical materials.

Different stages, i.e. quality control studies of raw herbal materials, controlled studies of methods of processing, quality control studies of finished herbal product, standardization procedures at each stage from birth of the plants up to its clinical application have been described. An emphasis has been given on the protocols which are required for quality control of medicinal plants with special reference to fingerprinting.

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Ear diagnostics for new born babies: Treating small children with traditional Tibetan medicine

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1. The first few months of life can be a critical stage in the development of a person, determining their health for the rest of their lifetime. Treating new born babies therefore demands special care and skills. Traditionally a two-pronged approach is used in Tibet combining religious practices with medicine. In the first part of the presentation, a brief outline of the religious rituals usually performed immediately after a child is born will be given. These ceremonies of purification to ensure auspicious circumstances for the child and his or her family may be performed by a doctor or a lama.
2. Since traditional diagnostics methods such as checking the pulse and urine are not suitable for new bore babies, in the second part of the talk, an ancient technique of ear diagnostics specially aimed at babies under 12 months will be discussed.
3. Another form of diagnosis may be carried out on the mother's breast milk and in the final part of presentation, it will be discussed how illnesses in newborns can be treated, either by applying herbs to the mother's nipples or by administering special medicine to her.

Biography

Rakhyung Kalsang Norbu is from a line of traditional Tibetan doctors and as such, he began his medical training at an early age and has been practising ever since. He took monastic vows at the age of fifteen, graduating as Doctor of Religious Philosophy (geshe) from Menri Monastery, India, in 2000. He is currently head of the Garuda Institute for the Five Sciences, Tibet. He has presented papers at several international conferences and has taught Tibetan history and medicine at Barcelona. He is the author of several publications in Tibetan.

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