

Regulatory aspects of ayurvedic medicines around the globe: An Updated review

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Abstract

Pharmaceutical drug regulatory affairs covers different registration parameter of pharmaceutical product. As it is the new profession which was developed from the desired of all over the world to protect the public health by providing good quality of medicine including safety and efficacy in the area of not only pharmacy but also in the area of the veterinary medicine, medical device, insecticides, pesticides, agrochemical, cosmetic and complementary medicine. It also made the interface between the pharmaceutical company and the regulatory agencies. It is also responsible for maintaining the appropriateness and accuracy of the product information. And its main role to act as an liaison with regulatory agencies, providing expertise and regulatory intelligence in translating regulatory requirement into practical workable plan, advising the company on regulatory aspects and climate that would affect their proposed activities.

Introduction

The classification of drugs varies from country to country, with active foods, dietary supplements and traditional medicines being included in certain categories. The stability of those products is also unknown and complex to the critical problem in the analysis of herbal products that this is a complex ingredient combination, as well as the elements responsible for the treatment effects. In order to identify the changes to the newly introduced regulations or regulations, detailed literary searches and online searches for herbal medicinal products regulations have been made in South-east Asia and European countries. Curcumin is an important pharmaceutical compound derived from turmeric. Curcumin is extracted from dried curcuma longa rhizomes. The demand for curcumin grows daily due to its use in the treatment of a number of diseases. Curcumin has long established challenges with its health benefits, such as poor uptake and poor bioavailability.

Traditional Herbal Medicines and Human Health Herbal medicines which formed the basis of health care throughout the world since the earliest days of mankind are still widely used, and have considerable importance in international trade. Recognition of their clinical, pharmaceutical and economic value is still growing, although this varies widely between countries. Medicinal plants are important for pharmacological research and drug development, not only when plant constituents are used directly as therapeutic agents, but also as starting materials for the synthesis of drugs or as models for

pharmacologically active compounds. Regulation of exploitation and exportation is therefore essential, together with international cooperation and coordination for their conservation so as to ensure their availability for the future. The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity states that the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity is of critical importance for meeting the food, health and other needs of the growing world population, for which purpose access to and sharing of both genetic resources and technologies are essential. Legislative controls in respect of medicinal plants have not evolved around a structured control model. There are different ways in which countries define medicinal plants or herbs or products derived from them, and countries have adopted various approaches to licensing, dispensing, manufacturing and trading to ensure their safety, quality and efficacy. Despite the use of herbal medicines over many centuries, only a relatively small number of plant species has been studied for possible medical applications. Safety and efficacy data are available for an even smaller number of plants, their extracts and active ingredients and preparations containing them. Regulation and Registration of Herbal Medicines. The legal situation regarding herbal preparations varies from country to country. In some, phytomedicines are well-established, whereas in others they are regarded as food and therapeutic claims are not allowed. Developing countries, however, often have a great number of traditionally used herbal medicines and much folk-knowledge about them, but have hardly any legislative criteria to establish these traditionally used herbal medicines as part of the drug legislation. For the classification of herbal or traditional medicinal products, factors applied in regulatory systems include: description in a pharmacopoeia monograph, prescription status, claim of a therapeutic effect, scheduled or regulated ingredients or substances, or periods of use. Some countries draw a distinction between "officially approved" products and "officially recognized" products, by which the latter products can be marketed without scientific assessment by the authority. The various legislative approaches for herbal medicines fall into one or other of the following categories: - same regulatory requirements for all products; - same regulatory requirements for all products, with certain types of evidence not required for herbal/traditional medicines; - exemption from all regulatory requirements for herbal/ traditional medicines; - exemption from all regulatory requirements for herbal/ traditional medicines concerning registration or marketing authorization; - herbal/ traditional medicines subject to all regulatory requirements; and - herbal/ traditional medicines subject to regulatory requirements concerning registration or marketing authorization. Where herbal medicines and related products are neither registered nor controlled by regulatory bodies, a special licensing system is needed which would enable health authorities to screen the constituents, demand proof of quality before marketing, ensure correct and safe use, and also to oblige licence holders to report suspected adverse reactions within a post-marketing surveillance system.

The demand for Ayurveda and other conventional medical practices is rising on a global scale. Around 80% of the rural population in India employs herbal remedies or traditional medical practices. The Indian herbal sector is thought to utilize close to 960 plant species, and it has an annual revenue of more than Rs 80 billion. Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, and homoeopathy (AYUSH) products are among the medicines of herbal exports, accounting for 3% of all Indian pharmaceutical exports.¹

Despite the global advancement of modern medicine, the majority of the population in underdeveloped nations continues to rely on the widely used and in high demand traditional remedies. The numerous plant components used to make herbal remedies include leaves, roots, stems, flowers, and seeds.² The World Health Organization (WHO) classifies herbal medicines into three categories: raw plant material, processed plant material, and medicinal herbal products. Herbal medicines are defined by the WHO as aerial or underground plant parts or other plant material that contains an active ingredient as a finished, labelled medicinal product. The many traditional medical systems are practiced in India, China, Korea, and Africa.³

In developing nations, the popularity of the herbal medicines is more in developing countries than in developed countries like US, Germany, France and Italy. The regulatory process and the laws differ from one country to another. Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, and homoeopathic (AYUSH) products are among the

herbal medicines exported, accounting for 3% of total Indian pharmaceutical exports.⁵ It is estimated that nearly 960 plant species are used by the Indian herbal industry, and the turnover of the industry is more than Rs 80 billion.⁴ Internationally, herbal products are categorized as complementary medicines, dietary supplements, traditional herbal medicines, natural health products, over-the-counter (OTC) drugs, and prescription drugs with varying regulatory standards.⁵

REGULATORY SITUATION

India

In India, herbal pharmaceuticals are governed by the Drug and Cosmetic Act (D and C) 1940 and Rules 1945, which explicitly lays out the regulatory requirements for Ayurveda, Unani, and Siddha medicine. Any manufacturing or marketing of herbal drugs must be done after acquiring a manufacturing licence, as appropriate. The Department of AYUSH is the regulating authority. The licence, formulation composition, manufacture, labelling, packing, quality, and export control are all expanded under the D and C Act. The good manufacturing practise (GMP) guidelines that must be followed for the production of herbal medicines are outlined in Schedule "T" of the act. For the purpose of ensuring that medications meet quality standards, authoritative pharmacopoeias and formularies are provided⁶.

Malaysia

In Malaysia, herbal items fall under the heading of regulated goods. Any marketer who wants to sell herbal goods must first register the product with the government. The applicant must be listed under one of two classifications with the Malaysian Registrar of Businesses, or Suruhanjaya Syarikat Malaysia:

While the authorities only allow those functional claims that are listed by the authority are authorized in supplements, the authorities merely require the labelling "traditionally used for" in front of any claim made on traditional products⁷.

Philippines

In the Philippines, herbal medications are governed as traditional herbal goods. The regulations mandate that only preparations made from plant materials whose claimed applications are based solely on long-standing, documented usage in traditional medicine, history, and ethnology—at least five decades, as documented—are allowed to be marketed under this category.

The country's regulatory body, the Bureau of Food and Drugs (BFAD), requires registration of traditionally used herbal items before they can be manufactured, imported, or put on the market. Brand names of conventional herbal goods are also subject to BFAD's jurisdiction, and their prior approval is necessary before submitting a product registration application⁸.

For imported items, the certificate of plant authenticity from the approved government agency of the country of origin is accepted. Authentication of the plant specimen must be obtained from the Philippine National Museum or any BFAD recognized taxonomist. The pharmacopoeial standards are further defined by the quality control criteria. Additionally, BFAD stipulates that product indications must not necessitate medical supervision.

Nigeria

The National Agency for Food and Drug Administration and Control (NAFDAC) in Nigeria regulates the trade of herbal goods, classifying them as "Herbal Medicines and Related Products." In Nigeria, premarketing registration for herbal medications and allied items is required. [5] NAFDAC preapproval is required for all advertisements. [6] According to the Food and Drug Act of 1990, no advertisement for a treatment for any of the disease's conditions mentioned in "Schedule 1" is allowed. [7]

Saudi Arabia [8]

In Saudi Arabia, herbal products are categorized as traditional goods. If they have been used traditionally for at least 50 years straight, they are permitted. Their dosage and preparation technique must be the same as those employed historically. They could fit into one of the following sub-categories, based on the evidence offered: For the former, the active substances, dosage, route of administration, time for use, dosage form, instructions for use, and risk information should be identical to those in the Pharmacopoeia, and the preparation process must be conventional. For the latter category, any two independent references from clinical studies, pharmacopoeias, textbook references, peer-reviewed published articles, data from nonclinical studies on pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics, toxicity information, reproductive effects, and the potential genotoxicity or carcinogenicity of an ingredient, or information based on previous marketing examples must be provided to supplement the evidence supporting the safety and efficacy of the product.

Australia

Herbal products are regulated by Australia's regulatory body, Therapeutic Goods Administration, as complementary medicines. This category includes remedies from Ayurveda, Traditional Chinese Medicine, and Aboriginal Australia.

Prior to marketing, complementary medications that do not need a doctor's supervision must be registered on the Australian Register for Therapeutic Goods (ARTG). While medications for therapeutic conditions with somewhat higher risks must be registered on the ARTG, medications for low-risk ailments must be included. Only assertions backed by evidence that have been entered on the ARTG are permitted.

United States

According to the uses or claims made, the botanical products are categorized by the US Food and Medication Administration as either a food, a drug, or a dietary supplement. The term "drug" refers to a product that is used to treat, alleviate, diagnose, or cure a condition. A botanical product may be categorized as a medication or dietary supplement if its goal is to change the way the human body looks or works. The FDA mandates that the medication be marketed under a New Drug Application that has been approved (NDA).

Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act of 1994 places dietary supplements under FDA regulation. These are exempt from premarket review, and it is on to the marketer to make sure that their products are safe and labelled in a way that complies with legal requirements. The claims must adhere to the regulatory standards set forth by the FDA. The current GMP for dietary supplements should be followed while manufacturing dietary supplements.

Canada

Since January 1, 2004, Health Canada has regulated natural health products, which include herbal therapies and conventional drugs like Ayurvedic medicine. A maker, packer, labeler, or importer must first register with Health Canada, according to the requirements, before beginning any such operation.

The procedure includes registering both the products and the manufacturing location(s). The Natural Health Product Directorate must receive complete information on the product's composition, standardization, stability, microbial and chemical contaminant testing procedures and tolerance limits, safety, and efficacy, as well as ingredient characterization and quantification by assay or input (NHPD). The regulations stipulate that NHPs must adhere to the contamination limits and be produced in accordance with GMP standards.

European Union

The European Medicines Agency has established two procedures for registering herbal medicines: (1) A full marketing authorization through the submission of a dossier, in accordance with Directive 2001/83/EC, that contains information on the quality, safety, and efficacy of the medicinal products, as well as results of physicochemical, biological, or microbial tests, pharmacological, toxicological, and clinical trial data. (2)

There is a streamlined approach under Directive 2004/24/EC for traditional herbal medicines that do not require medical supervision, where there is evidence of long-standing medicinal use and when sufficient scientific material to support a well-established medicinal use cannot be produced.

Evidence of the product's historic use is accepted as proof of its effectiveness. Authorities may still demand proof of safety, though. Physical-chemical and microbiological tests must be included in the product specifications in order to meet quality control criteria. The product must meet the quality requirements outlined in the applicable national or European pharmacopoeias. A minimum of 30 years, including at least 15 years within the European Union, shall be shown by the bibliographic proof that the product has been used medicinally. If the product has been available for less than 15 years but otherwise qualifies for the directive's streamlined registration process, the application for traditional use registration shall be referred to the Committee for Herbal Medicinal Products.

A growing number of countries are giving legal status to herbal products and allowing the legalized trade of these products in their countries, which points to a growth opportunity for herbal products. Other factors include the growing trend of consumers accepting herbal products for healthcare, beauty care, and diet supplementation globally, the pharmaceutical industry's focus on research in the herbal sector for economic reasons, and researchers' attention on the herbal sector. The development of globally accepted medicines, however, due to disparities in regulatory standards for quality, safety, and efficacy data, as well as disparities in the status of components and excipients, are obstacles to the herbal drug industry's expansion. A global unification of laws governing herbal products will help to give this prospective market the much-needed boost.

Africa

The Division of Traditional Medicine, a collaborating centre of WHO and recognized by the Organization of African Unity, has started the industrial exploitation of medicinal plants, carrying out activities such as: a survey of practitioners; identification of natural areas of growth of medicinal plants in Mali; botanical, chemical and pharmacological studies; development of improved traditional medicines; improvement of quality control; and training in traditional medicine. Since 1974, associations of traditional therapists have been established.

Mauritius

Between 1992 and 1994, a survey was carried out in Rodriguez and Mauritius in the course of a study funded by the European Union under the aegis of the Indian Ocean Commission "Inventory and study of medicinal and aromatic plants of the States of the Indian Ocean". In the course of this study, more than 600 plants entering the traditional pharmacopoeia were identified. The results give a good indication of the distribution and the use of medicinal plants. Phytochemical, botanical, ethno-botanical and bibliographic information is available together with details of physicochemical properties of some additional plants and tests of some of the extracts for their pharmacological properties. Considering the high value of medicinal plants for primary health care, measures for control of this plant material and public information and professional education are required to guarantee the safe and correct use of these products.

Legal Status

The trade in crude indigenous herbal products is completely unregulated. However, once a health-related claim is made for a finished product, it has to go through the full drug evaluation procedure in the Medicines Control Council (MCC) before marketing.

Specific regulations for registration and control of new "traditional" herbal medicines do not exist. Old medicines including some well-known herbal medicines, such as Senna or Aloes, are already registered by the MCC, according to internationally accepted standards of efficacy and safety. Pharmaceutical standards need to be consistent with those of the United States Pharmacopoeia (USP) or the British Pharmacopoeia (BP) [11]. At present, there is no possibility for an abridged application procedure, and there is neither a list of therapeutic indication claims suitable for treatment with traditional medicines, nor a national herbal medicines formulary

of a pharmacopoeia.

Development Programme

The present regulations of the MCC with respect to traditional herbal medicines are comparable to those of the FDA prior to the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act of 1994.⁷

Regulatory Aspects of Herbal Medicines in India:

In India, herbal drugs are governed by the Drug and Cosmetic Act (D and C) 1940 and Rules 1945, which clearly lays out the legal requirements for Ayurveda, Unani, and Siddha medicine. The licensing, formulation composition, manufacture, labelling, packing, quality, and export control are all augmented by the D and C Act. The good manufacturing practice (GMP) guidelines that must be followed for the production of herbal medicines are outlined in Schedule "T" of the act.⁶

The Department of Indian System of Medicine and Homeopathy was renamed as the department of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy on November 9, 2014, with a focus on the development of the AYUSH healthcare system. The Department of AYUSH is liable for the advancement of the AYUSH healthcare system. Sections 33C to 33O cover manufacturing, certification, sales, licensing, GMP certification, and penalties.⁷ Since 2017, it has been required to state the production and expiry dates on the product description. There are established pharmacopoeias and guidelines for the requirements of medication quality. Drug trials in India take about three months to be approved.⁸

In India, most traditional medicinal products are available as over the counter (OTC) drugs. Advertisement and customer preference are the major factors that influence the market for OTC herbal products, whereas prescription medicines are mainly controlled by physician choice. It is interesting to note that nearly half of the total interviewed companies are carrying out general safety studies for the medicines and 12% are conducting formal clinical trials at various medical colleges (Fig. 1).

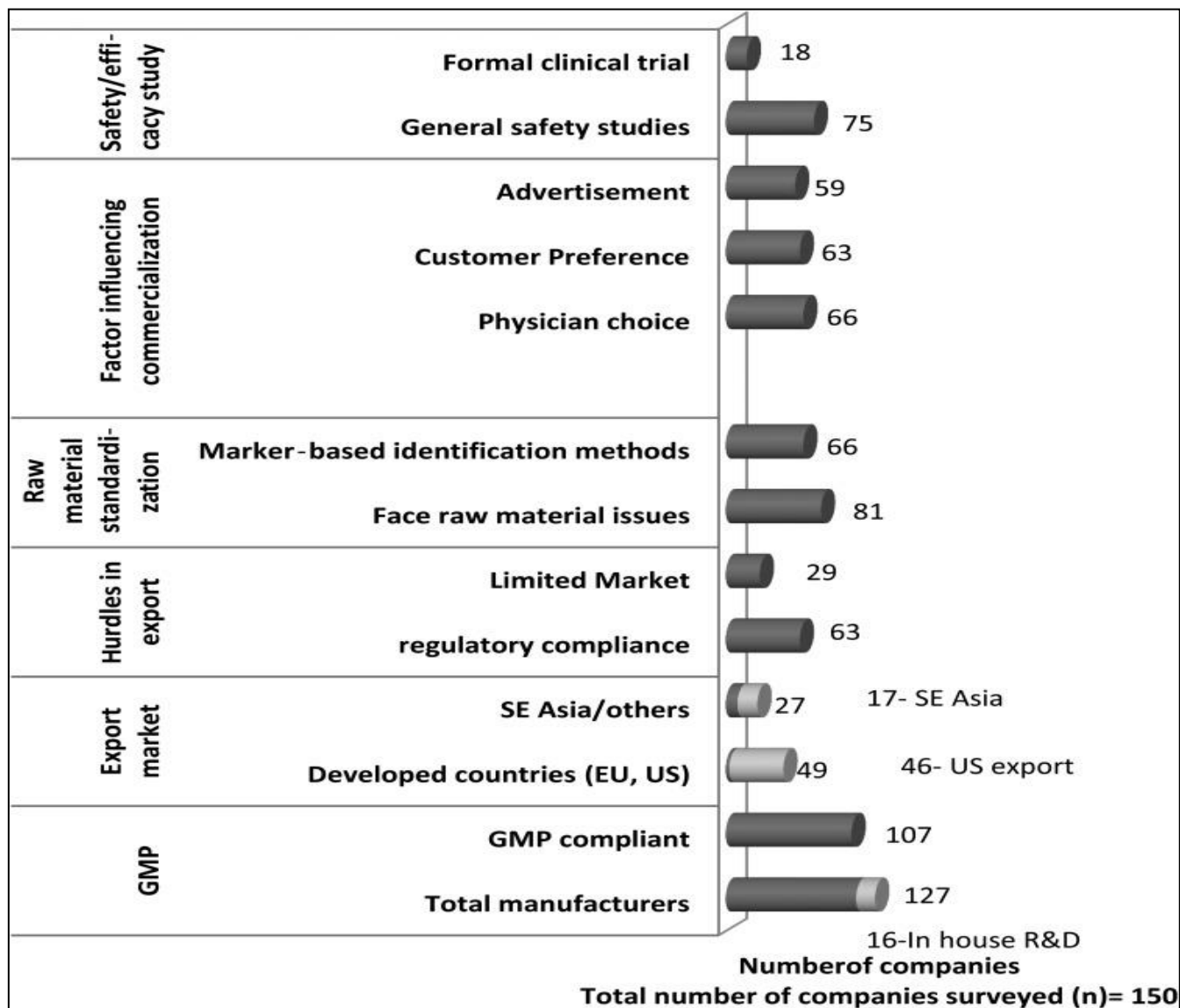


FIG. 1. Commercialization aspects of herbal drugs in India. (Field survey from June 2009 to August 2010. GMP, good manufacturing practice; R&D, research and development.)

So far, no guideline has been issued for evaluation or clinical trials of herbal medicine in India. As a first attempt, the Drugs and Cosmetics 4th Amendment Rule 2008 provides guidelines for evaluation of ASU drugs (Rule 170). The new rule classifies the ASU medicines into four broad categories according to which clinical study requirement is prescribed. For the ASU drugs manufactured in accordance with formula, as per the definition given in Section 3(a) of DCA, and medicines based on aqueous extracts of medicinal plants for indications, as per text, no evidence of safety and efficacy (clinical evidence) is required. However, for proprietary ASU drugs, Indian ethno-medicine-based drugs, and hydroalcoholic extract-based drugs, safety and efficacy studies are mandatory.⁹ Hydroalcoholic extracts represent a different category than

that recognized by Ayurveda through crude powders, decoctions, or aqueous extracts of medicinal plants. It is believed that the manufacturing process for hydroalcoholic extracts is a deviation from the fundamental principles of classic preparation. Therefore, hydroalcoholic extracts in any form should not be allowed for use in formulation that claims to be Ayurvedic. Clinical study is also necessary for medicines based on aqueous extracts for new indications.¹⁰

Another major drawback in the Indian herbal industry is the implementation of the DCA and its regulation. The field study revealed that only 107 of the surveyed companies were GMP compliant, even though GMP compliance as per Schedule T of the DCA has been compulsory since 2006. Further, survey responses revealed that the SFDA interprets the DCA differently; as a result, the same drug or formulation that is not permitted in one state is allowed to be manufactured in another state. The survey also identified nonuniformity in the drug registration timeline across states as a major issue. Development of unified protocols, defined timelines, and specific guidelines defining the meetings with regulators may help remove the anomalies with respect to state licensing authorities and establishing a unified system in the country. Most respondents suggested the need for scientific advice at the beginning of drug and formulation development, clinical trials, and dossier submission.¹¹

With more than 90% of the total herbal drug units in the country forming part of the small-scale sector, our interview analysis revealed that government support is required in many aspects of production. Supply of standardized raw material is the most common demand by the companies, as revealed in our study. Good-quality raw material can be produced if the growers and collectors are made aware and educated about the GACPs. More emphasis should be given to organic farming so that good-quality material can be produced. Initiative must be taken for cultivating some of the herbs predominantly used for herbal medicines. The government has already given many subsidies for the small and medium enterprises. But because of limited awareness, most small companies have not availed themselves of any help from the government. In such circumstances, it is essential to increase awareness about the facilities and support available from the government.¹²

Compliance with different national regulatory standards was identified as a major hindrance for commercialization. More than half of the respondents recommended the need for development of a common technical dossier format for easier and faster approval. Uniformity in herbal drug registration process and dossier submission requirements is also suggested. Pharmacopoeia harmonization and recognition of Indian monographs in other countries would be helpful for registration of drugs across countries. For example, in the United States, manufacturers face difficulties in marketing herbal products because unlike the U.S. Pharmacopoeia (USP) the Indian Pharmacopoeia (IP) does not have a separate section on dietary supplements. General notices of IP 2007 state that the mere presence of a monograph in the IP does not automatically mean that the formulation has been approved as a drug.¹³ However, as per the DCA, if a manufacturer wants to claim any substance to be IP grade, a drug license is required, even though the substance may not be meant to serve the drug industry. The drug rule also insists that an IP-grade substance cannot be manufactured at a site or with equipment with which a non-IP substance has been manufactured. It is not cost-effective for small and medium-sized manufacturers to establish manufacturing facilities dedicated to IP/USP-grade herbal extracts and preparations. Harmonization among the pharmacopoeia is necessary for ensuring uniformity of quality, safety, and efficacy of the same herbal medicines across countries. Harmonization of herbal drug registration requirements.

Challenges Faced By Herbal Industries:

One of the key difficulties facing the herbal sector is the absence of strict quality control requirements for herbal materials and treatments. The Ministry of AYUSH has launched a central endeavor to develop a standard operating procedure (SOP) for the industrial process of producing pharmacopoeial-grade herbal products. To develop safe and effective herbal products in India, successful DCA management, more

extensive recommendations on QC and QA issues, and the adoption of marker-based standards are required. Scientific and technological progress in the field of herbal medications must be prioritized.

Challenges Associated to Regulatory Status of Herbal Medicines:

According to its definition, a nutritional supplement is a consumable product with a "dietary element" and is intended to supplement a diet. The nutritional components of these supplements may contain various vitamins, herbs, minerals, and other phytonutrients. If the herbal supplement was marketed before 1994, additional toxicity studies are typically not required by the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA). The burden of proving that a botanical therapeutic product or "dietary component" is harmful or unfit for human consumption rests with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). An additional major issue is that in many other countries, government agencies and drug safety centers frequently do not exchange regulatory data about herbal medications AS ALOWN IN Fig.2:

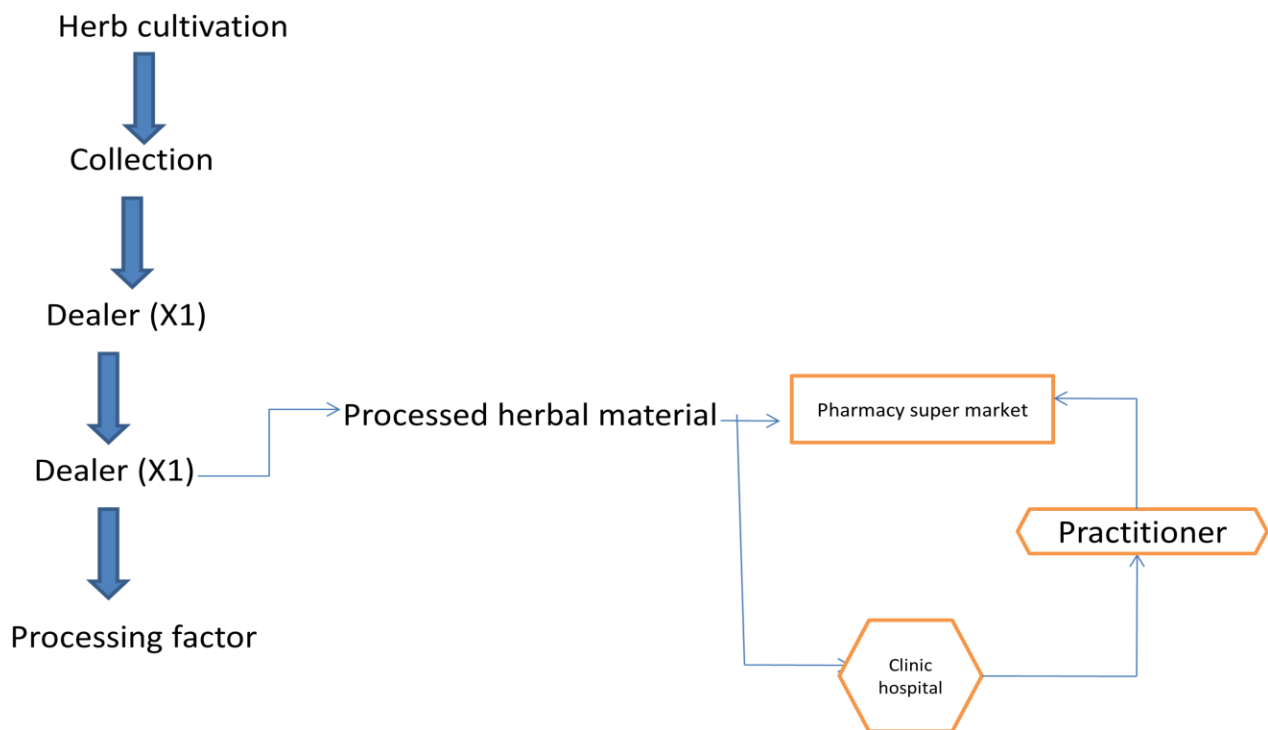


Fig 2 Regulatory of herbal materials

Challenges Associated to Quality Control of Herbal Medicines:

The caliber of the initial components used in the formulation of herbal drugs heavily influences both their efficacy and safety. Both internal (genetic) and external factors, including the environment, superior agriculture, and improved plant gathering methods, which include plant selection and cultivation, affect the quality of raw ingredients. There are many reasons why it is difficult to conduct quality checks on the raw materials used in herbal formulations. According to GMP, important criteria for the quality control of raw materials include the proper identification of medicinal herbs, specific storage, and special cleaning procedures for various materials. It is extremely important to perform Quality Control (QC) on final herbal preparations, especially on mixed herbal medications.

Regulatory Aspects of Herbal Medicines in United States:

A lot of chemistry, manufacturing, controls, preclinical science, and clinical trial research is necessary to develop a new medicine. It is the duty of drug reviewers in regulatory bodies across the world to determine whether the research data support a new drug product's safety, efficacy, and quality control in order to promote public health. Every nation has a regulatory body that is in charge of enforcing laws and issuing directives to control the marketing of pharmaceuticals.

The "Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act" of 1994 regulated herbal medicines and did not require the FDA to do any evaluations. In the USA, herbal items are classified as either dietary supplements, foods, or drugs. In the US, over one in five persons say they use herbal products. Herbal medicine has been used for more than 5,000 years, according to written sources. In fact, herbal medicine was the only form of treatment for the majority of history. Even as recently as 1890, 59% of the US Pharmacopeia's entries were for herbal remedies, and it has been estimated that up to one third to one half of all currently prescribed medications have their roots in plant material. Thousands of herbal products are sold over-the-counter in the United States and are frequently used by patients, despite the fact that many herbs are primarily of historical interest. Therefore, knowing the ingredients, laws, safety, and effectiveness of herbs may help clinicians when advising patients to use these products.

Herbal supplements are categorized as dietary supplements under the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) of 1994. According to this regulation, a supplement is "anything that supplements the diet." Vitamins, minerals, herbs, amino acids, enzymes, organ tissues, metabolites, extracts, or concentrations are examples of supplements. The fact that nutritional supplements cannot make the claim to "diagnose, cure, ameliorate, treat, or prevent sickness" distinguishes them significantly from drugs in this regard. It's interesting to note that producers of dietary supplements are permitted to make specific "structure/function" claims, which are frequently ambiguous assertions of health advantages. A product containing echinacea, which is frequently used to treat or prevent colds, might make the claim that it "supports the body's natural defenses." Unlike pharmaceutical medications, which must first prove their safety and efficacy before being manufactured, sold, and advertised, dietary supplements are not subject to this requirement. In addition, unlike with medications, where a manufacturer must show the FDA that a product is safe and effective before it can be sold, the FDA bears the regulatory burden of demonstrating that a dietary supplement is harmful before it can be taken off the market.

The most typical application of echinacea is to cure the common cold. Nine of the 16 randomised, placebo-controlled trials of echinacea were favourable, and seven were negative, according to a recent systematic review. Although there is some evidence of a potential benefit from Echinacea purpurea for treating the common cold, the authors found that the findings are inconsistent. The treatment of experimentally produced rhinovirus infection with Echinacea angustifolia was not proven to be beneficial in a subsequent big, high-quality randomised controlled trial. A different species (Echinacea purpurea), or a higher dosage of the species under study, according to some experts, would have been more likely to produce a result. Due to previous research demonstrating comparable side effect rates between the Echinacea and placebo groups, the herb is thought to be safe.

In numerous drinks and tonics, ginseng can be found. It is largely marketed in the US to increase energy and physical or mental performance. A systematic analysis discovered 16 randomised, placebo-controlled studies of ginseng for herpes simplex type II infections, diabetic mellitus, immunomodulation, physical performance, psychomotor performance, and cognitive function, but no conclusive proof of benefit for any of these conditions. The ginseng is believed to be safe, although there are some case reports of excessive arousal and hyperactivity.

Ginkgo extracts, which are typically standardised to 24% flavonoids and 6% terpenoids, are among the best documented herbal products. Ginkgo is probably useful for dementia, offering a small improvement of about 3% in the Alzheimer's Disease Assessment Scale-Cognitive subtest, despite assessments of earlier trials finding inconsistent findings. It is noteworthy that ginkgo did not enhance cognitive function in older adults free of dementia. Ginkgo has been shown in a systematic evaluation of 8 previous trials to increase the amount of time individuals with claudication may walk without experiencing any pain, a modest benefit with questionable therapeutic value. Although side effects from ginkgo and a placebo are comparable in clinical trials, the observed link with spontaneous bleeding is a serious issue when using ginkgo.

There are many alleged therapeutic benefits of garlic, but the impact on cholesterol is the subject of the most extensive body of study. According to the most recent comprehensive analysis, garlic has a modest 4-6% reduction in cholesterol levels compared to the 17-32% reduction brought on by statin medication use. GI issues and garlic breath are the most typical negative effects. Two case studies imply that using garlic may increase the risk of bleeding.

Despite inconsistent and ambiguous results from earlier studies, St. John's wort is probably useful in treating mild to moderate depression. It was proven to be ineffective for people with severe depression in two recent investigations. The numerous well-documented medication interactions that St. John's wort has are enough to limit enthusiasm for its use.

In herbal treatments advertised to treat irritable bowel syndrome, peppermint is a frequent constituent. Despite the possibility of a benefit being shown by an analysis of 8 earlier trials, the quality of the studies was insufficient to draw firm conclusions. There don't seem to be many, minor side effects.

Nausea is frequently treated with ginger. The effectiveness of ginger for preventing postoperative nausea has only been studied in 3 previous randomized controlled trials, and while 2 of those studies found some benefit, the combined summary of the 3 studies failed to reveal a statistically significant benefit. Other uses for ginger, such as motion sickness, morning sickness, and nausea brought on by chemotherapy, provide tentative, albeit unclear, evidence of potential benefit. The side effects are unknown.

Soy is a popular dietary source of phytoestrogens with modest estrogenic action that is frequently used to treat menopausal symptoms, mainly hot flashes, as well as to decrease cholesterol. An analysis of nine clinical trials that looked at the effects of consuming more soy and nine more that looked at the effectiveness of soy extracts found that neither was useful for treating menopausal symptoms. According to a recent analysis of 11 trials, soy can reduce total and low-density lipoprotein (LDL) cholesterol by 4-5%, a negligible effect similar to that seen in studies with garlic.

Since ancient times, chamomile has been used to treat a variety of illnesses. It is frequently found in teas (where it acts as a moderate sedative) or herbal remedies for gastrointestinal issues, anxiety, and sleep disturbances. For any of these indications, there are no credible scientific trials to establish efficacy. Although it is widely accepted that the herb is safe, there have been reports of severe allergic responses.

In the South Pacific islands, kava has a long history of use as a sedative and relaxing. The therapy of anxiety may have a slight benefit, according to earlier clinical research. The reported connection to many incidences of severe hepatotoxicity has restricted this herb's use.

There is strong scientific evidence supporting the efficacy of five of the top ten herbs (garlic, ginkgo, garlic, St. John's wort, soy, and kava) for particular purposes. However, even with these frequently used herbs, there is often insufficient methodology, inconsistent outcome measurements, a variety of herb preparations, and contradictory results in the scientific data. In this nation, there are 20,000 herbal products, according to estimates. It is obvious that there is little evidence to support the efficacy of even

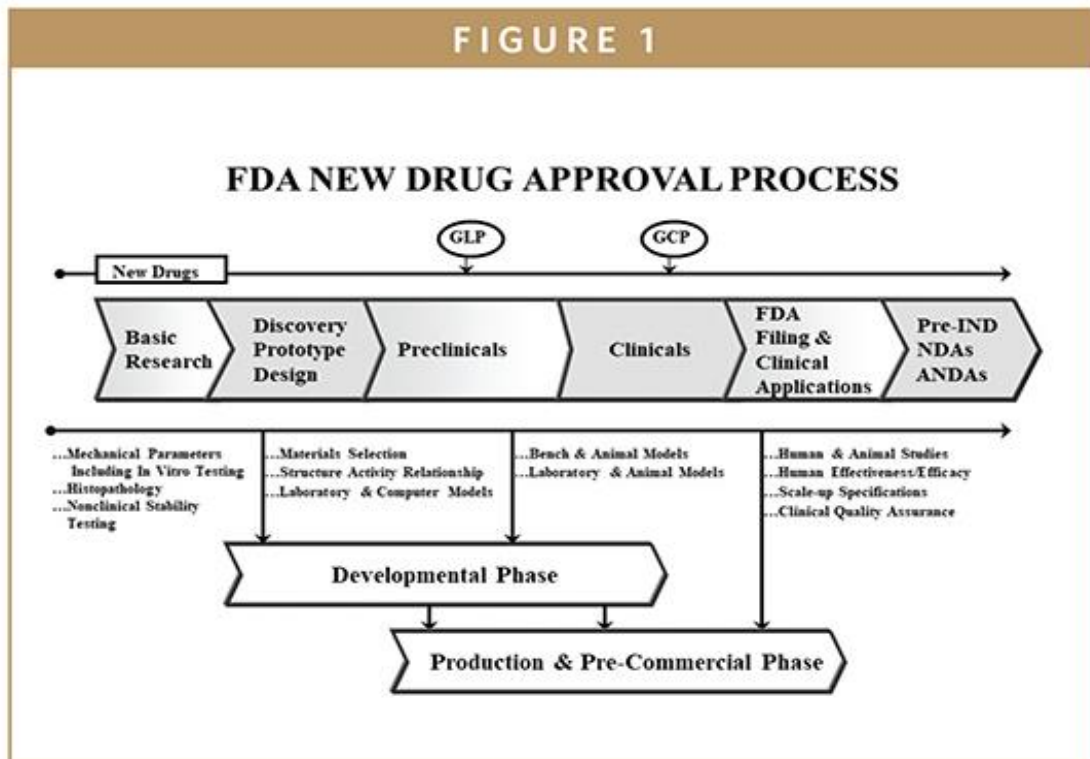
the top 10 plants, and that the remaining 20,000 herbs have even less proof. There aren't enough conclusive studies, either positive or negative, to prove the efficacy of the majority of herbal products, but this lack of evidence doesn't necessarily mean there aren't any benefits.

Approximately 1 in 5 U.S. adults reports using an herbal product within the past year. Unfortunately, for most of the roughly 20,000 herbal products available in this country, there is little evidence regarding safety or efficacy. However, as one third to one half of all pharmaceutical drugs were originally derived from plants, there is clearly a potential to find effective therapies from the natural environment. The current regulation of herbs does not ensure that available products are safe, and false and illegal marketing claims are common. Several simple changes to the regulation of these products could dramatically improve the appropriate use of herbs. National criteria for the chemical components of particular herbs should be developed, together with stronger incentives for research and the introduction of study designs that are less expensive and time consuming.

Among its various responsibilities, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) is in charge of upholding the laws of the country that are meant to safeguard the health and safety of American customers. The FDA was given the authority to ensure that drugs and devices are safe and effective, that foods and cosmetics are safe and made from the right ingredients, and that product labelling and packaging are accurate, informative, and not misleading by the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act of 1938, the main US food and drug law. It is well known that the FDA oversees the safety of all foods and medications supplied in the country. In addition, the FDA is in charge of monitoring a wide range of consumer goods, including cosmetics, bottled water, infant formula, dietary supplements, vaccines, and blood products, biologics, radiation-emitting electronics, ultrasonic technology, veterinary products, and tobacco products. The FDA has developed criteria to help determine which category regulations should apply because each of these product categories has quite different rules and regulations for approval and/or sale. For instance, a product is probably regarded a medicine and is subject to FDA drug laws if it is intended to treat, mitigate, diagnose, or prevent disease in people or to influence the structure or function of the human body.

The drug development and approval process:

Phase 1, Phase 2, and Phase 3 studies are the names given to the sequential clinical trials of a study drug. Following the drug's approval for marketing in the US, phase 4 studies are carried out. Phase 1 studies are intended to evaluate the metabolic and pharmacologic profiles of the agent in people, detect potential adverse effects, and, if possible, obtain proof of medication effectiveness. They frequently constitute the first in-human exposure to the medicine. Phase 1 studies typically involve a small number of people and are single-blind (20 – 80). They are meant to reduce any potential risk to study participants while giving enough data to enable the design of phase 2 studies that are supported by science. Phase 2 trials are controlled clinical studies to determine an effective dose that offers the best benefit-risk profile for the usage of the drug and to assess the efficacy of the drug in a particular disease. Several hundred people frequently participate in phase 2 research. Large-scale clinical investigations known as phase 3 studies typically involve several thousand patients and are carried out concurrently using the same study design. Phase 3 trials are designed to validate the effectiveness and safety results from earlier research. The FDA typically requires phase 4 studies to be conducted after drug approval in order to provide further details on the product's safety, effectiveness, or manufacturing methods. (Fig 1).



The overall cost of medication development is debatable and has been used as part of the case for why drugs are so expensive for consumers. The capitalized cost of an approved medicine has estimated by numerous financial model studies to range from US \$868 to US \$1.241 million.

Safety, Toxicity, and Side Effects:

Herbs are typically regarded as "natural" and secure because they are plants. But several adverse effects of all kinds have been documented and recently reviewed, including those brought on by the biologically active components of herbs, adverse effects brought on by contaminants, and interactions between herbs and medications. There are numerous case reports of nephropathy brought on by the usage of specific Chinese medicines. Aristolochiafangchi, a Chinese herb used to treat obesity, induced nephropathy in 105 patients in Belgium who had been taking a Chinese herbal supplement for weight loss. 39 individuals underwent prophylactic kidney removal, while 43 patients experienced end-stage renal failure. It was discovered that 18 of these patients had urothelial carcinoma, which was linked to the development of DNA adducts from the aristolochic acid in this study herbs. Pyrrolizidine alkaloids, complex compounds present in specific plants that may be used or accidentally added to herbal treatments, are another prevalent hazard to herbal remedies (including comfrey, which is still available in the United States). These alkaloids cause hepatotoxicity by causing a veno-occlusive condition that can advance quickly and be lethal.

In medicines imported from Asia, contaminants in herbal items may be particularly hazardous. A research that looked at 260 Asian patent medications revealed that 25% of the goods had significant amounts of heavy metals, and another 7% had drugs that were intentionally and illegally added to the items to generate the desired effect. Most herbs are not well-established for their safety when taken with medications. Although the majority of this knowledge comes from case reports rather than thorough research, some plants are known to interact with pharmaceutical medications. The most notoriously interactive herbal substance, St. John's wort, has been demonstrated to interact with several medications

processed by the cytochrome P- 450 liver enzyme system, including oral contraceptives, protease inhibitors, and chemotherapy treatments. Many herbs, including kava, valerian, and St. John's wort, have the potential to interact with anaesthetics and other medications administered during the perioperative phase, according to some sources.

Many herbs include pharmacologically active substances, hence certain herbs may have unwarranted biological effects. For instance, ephedra, which contains ephedrine, has a long history of usage in Chinese traditional medicine. It later gained popularity in this nation in the 1990s as an ingredient in weight-loss and energy-boosting products. Ephedra was 40 times more likely to result in a complaint of a side effect than other frequently used herbal medications, according to an analysis of contacts with poison control centres. According to a systematic review, ephedra raised the risk of nausea, vomiting, mental symptoms, and palpitations by two to three times when compared to placebo. Ephedra was prohibited by the FDA on April 12, 2004, as a result of this and additional data.

The seven biggest producers of ephedra-containing items began offering "ephedra-free" goods that all contained the citrus aurantium plant soon after the ephedra prohibition. Synephrine, an ingredient in this herb often known as bitter orange, has many of the same pharmacological characteristics as ephedrine and can consequently have many of the same negative effects. It has been demonstrated that taking a herbal supplement containing citrus aurantium and caffeine increases systolic and diastolic blood pressure by around 9 millimetres of mercury (mmHg) and pulse by about 16.7 beats per minute in healthy persons. Patients using such products may have increased heart rate and blood pressure, sleeplessness, or jitteriness, all of which may be brought on by the supplement's caffeine and citrus aurantium content.

Unfortunately, because most herbs have not been subjected to rigorous clinical studies and because surveillance systems are much less developed than those in place for pharmaceutical goods, it is impossible to determine the true incidence of side effects for most herbs. According to a review by the Office of the Inspector General, surveillance methods intended to find herb-related adverse responses are insufficient and likely only catch 1% of all occurrences. The frequent use of false marketing claims serves to increase the risk of poisoning from some plants. For instance, a systematic review of citrus aurantium for weight loss only found 1 study that was methodologically unsound and misreported a statistically significant advantage for weight loss (the herb was no more effective than placebo). This deceptive article, which makes no mention of any side effects, is frequently claimed as "published scientific evidence" of the effectiveness of citrus aurantium for weight loss. Herbal product marketing frequently makes erroneous and illegal claims. More than half of herbal items in one study of internet marketing made false claims to treat, prevent, diagnose, or cure particular conditions.

Clinical Use and Physical Advice:

The decision to use a herbal product should involve a discussion between the patient and healthcare provider of the potential dangers, benefits, and alternatives, just like any decision to take a medicine or medical intervention. Patients may decide to select an alternative option as a result of such a talk, or they may decide to test the product while keeping an eye out for any negative effects. The majority of patients, however, rarely discuss these and other complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) therapies with their healthcare providers, which may be the result of patients' perceptions that doctors are biased towards herbs, according to a recent poll.

Unfortunately, due to the current regulatory structure and the limited safety and efficacy evidence, the discussion of dangers must emphasise the potential for major side effects from contaminants, pharmacologically active ingredients, or drug interactions. Similar to this, arguments of benefits frequently bring up a lack of evidence (or inconsistent evidence). Not to mention, there are complementary therapies with established safety and efficacy. For instance, in a patient with

hypercholesterolemia, the choice between taking soy or garlic supplements, which both lower total cholesterol by about 4-6%, and statin medications, which lower cholesterol by 17-32% and have extensive data to support their safety and a lower risk of cardiovascular disease, does not compare favourably.

It may be permissible to use some herbs for patients who have illnesses for which there are no known therapeutic treatments or when current medications have not been tolerated or have failed to produce changes, despite the generally poor risk-benefit analysis for most herbs. A healthcare practitioner should closely follow the course of a herbal product treatment to help identify any benefits or negative effects and determine whether the course of treatment should be continued.

Regulatory Aspects of Herbal Medicines in China:

Chinese herbal products can be registered as functional foods or pharmaceuticals in China and are controlled by the State Food and Drug Administration (SFDA). The Department of Food License is in charge of regulatory approval for functional foods, while the Department of Drug Registration's Division of TCMs & Ethno-Medicines is in charge of regulatory permission for Chinese herbal medicines. Pharmaceuticals in China include both conventional treatments and chemical drugs. The following is the definition of medications as stated in Article 102 of the People's Republic of China's Drug Administration Law (State Food and Drug Administration P.R. China, 2001): "Drugs refer to articles that are intended for the regulation of physiological functions of humans and used in the prevention, treatment, and diagnosis of human diseases, for which indications, usage, and dosage are established, including Chinese crude drugs, prepared slices of Chinese crude drugs, traditional Chinese medicine preparations, chemical drugs substances, radioactive pharmaceuticals, antibiotics, biochemical drugs, serum, and vaccines,"

Laws and Regulations

The fundamental law governing drug administration in China is the Drug Administration Law of the People's Republic of China (Drug Administration Law), which was passed in 2001 and aims to protect people's health as well as their legal rights and interests when using pharmaceuticals. In accordance with the Drug Administration Law, the People's Republic of China has developed Regulations for the Implementation of the Drug Administration Law, which establishes a legal framework for the regulation of drug producers, distributors, pharmaceuticals in healthcare facilities, packaging, pricing, and advertising.

The Regulations for the Protection of TCM Products, which offer administrative protections for TCM products made in China, are a distinctive aspect of the regulatory framework (State Food and Drug Administration P.R. China, 1993).

Distinction between TCM and natural medicinal products:

Practical rules for the registration of pharmaceuticals are provided by the Provision for Drug Registration (SFDA order 28). (State Food and Drug Administration P.R. China, 2007). The quality, effectiveness, and safety of the drugs will be evaluated. In accordance with this clause, natural medicinal products are defined as natural medicinal substances and their preparations used in accordance with modern medical theory, as opposed to traditional Chinese medicines, which refer to medicinal substances and their preparations used in accordance with traditional Chinese medical theory. Natural medicines and traditional Chinese medicines can be divided into the following 9 categories:

1. Extracted active components and their formulations from plants and animals
2. Recently found unprocessed medicines and their formulations.
3. 3 New alternatives to current Chinese street drugs.
4. New medical components of current illicit substances or their formulations.
5. Active fractions and their preparations that have not been sold in China
6. 5. Preparation of commercialized Chinese medicines and natural medical goods
7. Making marketed Chinese drugs and natural remedies with modified dose forms.

Drug standards:

The national drug standards and provincial requirements must be adhered to by TCM and natural medicinal items. The old standard is outlined in the PRC Pharmacopoeia (ChP) and in SFDA-approved specifications. For Chinese prepared sliced crude pharmaceuticals and TCM items, there are standards in the ChP. The 2015 version will include the specifications for the herbal granules, whether they be extracts for lone herbs or combinations of traditional formulations. Chinese Materia medica monographs and TCM herbal slices processed in accordance with provincial norms.

Supplementary rules for TCM Registration:

The SFDA issued the Supplementary Requirements on the Registration of TCM in accordance with pertinent provisions of the Provisions for Drug Registration in order to adhere to the rules on the study of TCM, reflect the distinguishing feature of the registration of TCM, regularize the registration of TCM, and support the development of TCM and medicine of Chinese minorities (State Food and Drug Administration P.R. China, 2008).

Based on their formulation source, their composition, function, indication, and manufacturing processes, the application data for marketing TCM combination preparations from historic, classic, and well-known recipes may be largely exempted. Safety data are required, nevertheless.

Isolated nutrients, herbal products, dietary supplements, innovative foods, and components from processed foods are all examples of nutraceuticals. Nutraceuticals have grown to be a multimillion-dollar sector on the international market. With its long history of usage for illness prevention and treatment, traditional Chinese herbal medicine is a significant resource in the creation of nutraceuticals. The global market for nutraceuticals is third to China. By establishing rules to control the manufacture and certification of herbal products, the nation will be able to actively participate in both domestic and foreign trade. This article discusses the classification of nutraceuticals, the creation of regulatory agencies, and recent changes to China's lawsgoverning nutraceuticals and health foods.

Even though the majority of Chinese herbal medicines (CHM) are mostly thought of as medicinal materials, some of them may be taken for both the medical and food reasons in some traditional culinary dishes and herbal products. Due to their dual purposes, the distinction between these herbal medicines' medical and culinary qualities is sometimes obscured. The national regulation of CHM for food purposes is for the protection of public health as well as protecting customers from potentially dangerous herbal ingredients because natural herbal materials are not always safe. This study compares and summarizes a sizable number of CHM that the governments of Taiwan and mainland China have approved for use in

food. The creation of CHM and its restrictions for both medical and food usage are also covered in this article. The richness of knowledge could serve as a resource for international food standards on herbal goods.

Foods Safety of Chinese Herbal Medicines for Food Uses:

No product is 100% risk-free. Despite the fact that herbal medicines come from natural sources, these organic materials are not always harmless and sometimes even poisonous. The Chinese Medicine Ordinance (Chapter 549 of the Hong Kong legislation) states that Schedule 1 of the ordinance lists 31 different forms of powerful or dangerous CHM (CMCHK, 1999). In 2001–2004, Aristolochic acid, pyrrolizidine alkaloids, and ephedrine alkaloids

(ephedra) are some herbal compounds that have been linked to the development of nephropathy, hepatic veno-occlusive disease, heart attack, and stroke, respectively. The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has ordered dietary supplement makers to remove these products from the market and has encouraged consumers to stop using any herbal products that contain these ingredients (CFSAN, 2001a, b, 2004a, b).

When a herbal medicine is incorporated as an ingredient in a conventional food, precautions should be followed to prevent any safety issues. A reasonable number of pollutants, such as pesticides or heavy metals, should be absent from herbal food products and supplements (i.e., arsenic, cadmium, lead, and mercury). It would be better to understand CHM's anticipated physiological activities, efficacy, toxicity, optimal dosage, and potential adverse effects before using them in any culinary applications. Since a large number of people have consumed them in the past, there may be widespread agreement about their safety. Regulations are put in place globally to prevent drug addiction and guarantee the safety of foods. A guideline or regulation on the types and amounts of uses of CHM would be very useful to ensure the safety of consumption.

Regulations of Chinese Herbal Medicines for Food Uses:

A comparison of the CHM's rules for food uses in various nations or districts was provided, as seen in Table 1. Foods, CHM, and pharmaceuticals all have separate ordinances in Hong Kong that were handled separately by several administrative divisions of the Department of Health. Proprietary Chinese medicine, western medicine, food, and consumer goods (including personal hygiene products and cosmetics) are the four primary categories into which products containing CHM are divided in accordance with the Chinese Medicine Ordinance (Chapter 549 of the laws of Hong Kong) (CMCHK, 1999). The classification of herbal products is carried out based on their pharmacological effects, components, and claims. The Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance (Chapter 132 of the laws of Hong Kong), which regulates food and medications, classifies products containing CHM as food if they meet all of the following conditions (FEHD, 2004):

Table 1. Comparisons of the regulations of the Chinese herbal medicines for food uses			
Country or district	Administrative unit	Status	Authoritative list

Mainland China	Ministry of Health, People's Republic of China	About 80 types of Chinese herbal materials can be used as general food ingredients	Yes
Taiwan	Bureau of Food Safety, Department of Health	About 600 types of plant materials (348 types belonging to Chinese herbal materials) are allowed for food uses Classification is based on the claims, ingredients, and pharmacological effects of the herbal products in accordance with the Chinese Medicine Ordinance and Part V (Food and Drugs) of the Public Health and Municipal Services Ordinance	Yes No
Hong Kong	Department of Health	Herbs or other botanicals may be regarded as dietary ingredients intended to supplement the diet in the 'dietary supplement' which is regulated by the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA)	No
USA	Food and Drug Administration		
Major commonness among countries or districts: herbal products cannot make any claim of 'therapeutic' nature regarding the use of the product.			

- (a) used in form or manner of normal foods (e.g. to be taken orally, and usually without recommended dose regimens);
- (b) the product does not contain any claim on curative or health care function; and
- (c) all the Chinese herbs used in the product are generally being considered as food.

As a result, certain CHM that are typically regarded as food may be utilized legally in Hong Kong in culinary applications. However, there is no reliable list of CHM that are typically regarded as food in Hong Kong.

Food and CHM are divided by law in Taiwan. The Department of Health (Taiwan) has created regulations to limit the CHM that are allowed for food uses after becoming frustrated with the impossibility to regulate all herbal medicines for specific types of uses. Between July 2000 and August 2003, the Bureau of Food Safety of the Department of Health (Taiwan) published a list of 21 different plant species, including CHM, that are frequently utilized in Chinese dishes for both culinary and medicinal purposes. The agency summarized a large number of plant substances (including CHM) that have been utilized or approved in domestic food items in March 2005, and ultimately reported over 600 different plant substances that are permitted for use in food (DOH, 2005). This abundance of knowledge could serve as the foundation for the creation of herbal food products containing CHM. These herbal remedies can be used to tea bags, drinks, and other food products as food additives. It is possible to convert the herbal extracts into tablets, capsules, powder, or granules. It should not be assumed that these CHM have any therapeutic properties when used in culinary products.

These herbal remedies are generally regarded as safe when used for their intended purposes, with the exception of *Symphytum officinale* L., which contains pyrrolizidine alkaloids and may be harmful to users' health. The USFDA has suggested taking pyrrolizidine alkaloids-containing herbal items off the market. It is advised that all CHM containing pyrrolizidine alkaloids be eliminated from Taiwan's official list of CHM approved for use in food. According to the latest scientific literature from around the world, it would seem that this authoritative list should be updated at least once a year.

The government is also in charge of controlling how CHM is used in food and medicine on the Chinese mainland. With a few exceptions, the majority of CHM are essentially controlled as medications and cannot be utilized in regular food products. The People's Republic of China's Ministry of Health approved the use of more than 80 different kinds of Chinese herbal materials as basic food components in food items in February 2002. (MOH, 2002). There are 59 different varieties of CHM that are permitted for use in food in mainland China. Taiwan shares similarities. In comparison to mainland China, Taiwan allows

for 3–4 times as many CHM to be used in food. This could be explained by the food business expanding more quickly and diversifying more in Taiwan than in mainland China during the previous few decades. As a result, the demand for herbal materials has increased for the development of new products. For the rapidly expanding sector in mainland China, it is anticipated that more CHM that can be used in conventional food products will be required. More than 110 types of CHM have been approved for use in functional foods but not in other food items, according to the Ministry of Health (MOH, 2002), while only 39 types of these CHM are permitted in other food products for general food uses in Taiwan. It is clear that these two major CHM marketplaces have different regulations (Table 1). However, it is a frequent practice in their legislation to forbid making any claims about the "health" or "therapy" benefits of using herbal food products.

The word "dietary supplement" was first used in the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA), which is governed by the US Congress, in 1994. Herbal ingredients are regulated under the DSHEA under the phrases "dietary ingredient" and "novel dietary ingredient" (CFR, 2001c). If a herbal ingredient was not marketed in the US for dietary supplements before October 15, 1994, it may be regarded as a "novel dietary ingredient." If a company or distributor plans to commercialize a dietary supplement containing a potential "novel" herbal ingredient, DSHEA mandates that they notify the FDA. Herbal medicine-containing dietary supplements are not held to the same strict regulations as prescription drugs and over-the-counter pharmaceuticals. The Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA) designates dietary supplements as "foods," not "drugs," and mandates that each supplement bear the designation. In essence, there isn't a reliable list of nutritional or herbal substances. Unless a herbal ingredient has been acknowledged as a food substance and is present in the food supply, such as *Dendranthema morifolium*, *Glycyrrhiza uralensis*, and *Meson chinensis*, manufacturers and distributors are responsible for determining whether a herbal ingredient is reasonably safe for use in a dietary supplement. The Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition (CFR) announced in June 1999 that these herbal materials are GRAS for routine use in beverages or foods based on the evidence of historical use (CFR, 1999).

Regulatory Aspects of Herbal Medicines in Japan:

The way new drugs are developed in Japan has been significantly impacted by significant regulatory changes that have occurred since 1997. The regulating body itself has undergone change. International standards are currently followed when conducting clinical trials. Clinical data produced in one region may occasionally be accepted across the rest of the world thanks to a bridging mechanism that is thought to be just transitory. Multinational clinical trials and simultaneous submission to the key regulatory agencies are the way of the future for medication development.

The emergence of innovative treatments has increased global concern about the escalating expense of medications. The question of how to maintain their astronomically expensive public healthcare systems in a cost-effective way is one that seems intractable for nations with universal healthcare systems like Japan and the United Kingdom. Government policy in Japan calls for a 100 billion yen (\$913 million) annual

cut in pharma spending by that year. Nowadays, more than 28% of the population in Japan is above the age of 65, making it a "super-aged" society. As the population ages and as part of "Abenomics," the government is reducing biological rules and speeding up approval of novel medications in response to the increased medical needs of the elderly. It is challenging to say whether patients or the pharmaceutical business (Pharma) will stand to gain the most from this. However, it is evident that the financial strain caused by Japan's universal national health insurance will soon become intolerable. Japan's updated drug control policy has sped up the review and approval of novel pharmaceuticals and medical devices throughout the past few decades (PMD).

Japan's current objectives, which are well known and cause for concern around the world, appear to be financial gains for the pharmaceutical industry rather than patient health benefits. The nation also hopes to obtain relevant financing, knowledge, and clinical studies from both domestic and foreign sources. The current regulatory framework for products used in regenerative medicine was established by a statute passed in 2013. A good illustration is the Regenerative Medicine Promotion Act, which has drawn strong worldwide condemnation. With the aid of this rule, Pharma was able to secure a conditional, limited-time authorisation (for up to seven years) for innovative regenerative products to be covered by Japan's mandated universal health insurance.

The following requirements must be met by these products: (1) Cells must be non-homogenous in nature; (2) Clinical trials (other than confirmatory ones) must show "potential" efficacy; and (3) Products must not have any significant detrimental side-effects. A noteworthy worry is that the legal framework does not mandate a conventional randomised, placebo-controlled Phase 3 study, even though post-marketing surveillance and safety measures are necessary for approved medications. Three regenerative medicinal products—Heart Sheet (human [autologous] skeletal myoblast-derived cell sheet), Stemirac (human [autologous] bone marrow-derived mesenchymal stem cell product), and Collatogene—have conditional approval as of March 2020. (bepmerminogene perplasmid). Additionally, the PMD Act was revised in late 2019 to further promote approval of general PMD for life-threatening or rare diseases. To do this, a conditional approval apparatus was expanded, and the Sakigake Designation Scheme was implemented, which selectively enables accelerated approval of new medical products that are developed and produced in Japan.

The Regulatory Authority:

The Food and Drug Administration and the Japanese regulatory body both lack international recognition (FDA). Because of linguistic and cultural barriers, it is difficult to get information on Japan. The Japanese Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare (MHLW) is a complex structure, but that is to be expected of any regulatory body. The Ministry of Health and Welfare (MHW), which was its predecessor, put many of the rules and decisions into place today. The Internet has information about both organizations. The Pharmaceutical and Food Safety Bureau (PFSB) of the MHLW is Japan's pharmaceutical regulatory body. This is the official decision-making stage for application approval. Two additional organizations regularly work with the pharmaceutical business. The Center, also referred to as PMDEC or "The Center," is responsible for making decisions about the approval of new drug applications (NDAs). An independent organization connected to the MHLW, the Organization for Pharmaceutical Safety and Research (OPSR), often known as "Kiko" or "the DO" (Drug Organization), is in charge of discussing drug development projects with industry. It has recently been revealed that these two agencies will unite, creating a new entity that will be the equal of the American FDA.

The MHLW is the regulatory body and the final decision-maker, and the three aforementioned agencies are participating in the approval reviews. Companies are strongly urged to bargain their development initiatives with the DO, even though it is not necessary. Pharmaceutical Administration

and Regulations in Japan 2002 is a publication from the Japanese Pharmaceutical Manufacturers Association (JPMA) that provides more in-depth information. The Pharmaceutical Affairs Law (PAL), specifically its article 14, serves as the organizational concept for Japanese legislation governing the development of drugs. This law is being updated right now. The MHLW implements legally binding regulations by way of ordinances. By use of ordinances, the MHLW puts into effect legally enforceable regulations. The MHLW decided to publish the PAL enforcement guidelines in this manner and to implement ICH E6 addressing GCP in 1997. By publishing a "Notification of the Pharmaceutical and Medical Safety Bureau (PMSB)," which renders them non-binding, it is simple to impose laxer restrictions. To receive regulatory permission, certain regulations must be followed. This is how the "ethnicity guideline," also known as ICH E5, was adopted in Japan. There are numerous other regulations, and, as in many other nations, older and newer regulations occasionally coexist. Old guidelines might still be applicable, so it's important to think about doing so or giving the MHLW a solid defense instead regarding their obsolescence.

Conclusion:

One in five American people say they've used a herbal product in the last 12 months. Unfortunately, there is little information available on the safety or effectiveness of the majority of the 20,000 or so herbal products that are sold in this nation. However, given that between one-third and fifty percent of all pharmaceutical pharmaceuticals were originally produced from plants, there is obviously a chance to uncover efficient treatments in the environment. The existing regulatory framework for herbs does not guarantee that the goods on the market are secure, and misleading and illegal marketing claims are frequent.

The proper usage of herbs might be significantly improved with a few straightforward adjustments to the laws governing these goods. National criteria for the chemical components of particular herbs should be developed, together with stronger incentives for research and the introduction of study designs that are less expensive and time consuming.

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