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Herbal medicine use and the emerging concern for ADR monitoring

Prashanth D

JJM Medical College, India

Worldwide usage of herbal medicines is increasing since three decades. Presently most of the herbal products of interest remain untested, its monitoring is way far behind, and the knowledge of their pharmacodynamics and kinetics are poorly understood. So safety has become a fundamental principle for these products. WHO specifies in the guidelines that ADRs reported with the herbal products are mainly because of lack in quality, inappropriate usage, adulteration or due to presence of pathogenic micro-organism. Also poor regulatory measures, improper quality control and unrestrained distribution of these products were suggested by WHO as additional factors for increase in the ADRs. Presence of multiple ingredients in the herbal products and its combination with conventional medications makes it difficult to identify the exact agent causing the adverse reaction; added to that, most of these products enter into the market without undergoing any clinical trials. Because of uninterrupted increase in use of herbal product there is a need to strengthen the regulatory system for quality and control of herbal medicine. Even though monitoring of these products has been included in the national pharmacovigilance program, there is a need to raise the awareness among the doctors and paramedical staffs regarding the ADR reporting of these products. Hence the post marketing Pharmacovigilance plays a crucial role in monitoring the safety and efficacy of these herbal products and its accomplishment depends on awareness of National Pharmacovigilance Program among health care professionals.

Biography

Prashanth D has completed his MBBS from MS Ramaiah Medical College, Bangalore and is presently pursuing his PG in Pharmacology in JJM Medical College, Davangere.

dr.prashanthd@gmail.com