

Angioedema

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Abstract

In today's world, the patients are forced to look for alternative treatment options due to the fact that recovering from many diseases, as well as changing its course cannot be fully accomplished. The plants are the primary alternative in terms of these choices. Utilization of plants for this purpose is called "phytotherapy". In many countries, phytotherapy is accepted as a "natural alternative" to the synthetic medicines. The confidence in these easily accessible plants has grown more and more in line with the thoughts that they are not harmful. Due to the confidence built in this manner, the unconscious & extensive usage of these plants may cause many problems, which may endanger the public health. Our objective is to present the patient applying with a table of angioedema induced by local usage of herbal products.

Introduction

The use of plants in the treatment for diseases is as old as the history of humanity. This situation has been continued till the beginning of the 20th century. With development of chemical industry, synthetic medicine replaced the plants. Nowadays, however, the patients are looking for other methods of treatment because of no success of protection from diseases changing the process of chronic illnesses. All medical services, methods, practices and hypothesis, can be defined as integrative and alternative medicine with hypothesis and cults beside traditional medicine practice. Integrative and alternative medicine are separated into many groups. Herbal products are most preferred by patients among them (1). The use of plants for this purpose can be defined as phytotherapy (phytos=plant, therapy= treatment).

The use of herbal products shows regional variations, related to different symptoms. Due to the Access difficulty to the synthetic medicine, 80% of African population use herbal products for medical purposes, compared to developed countries-only 50% (2,3). In the USA, more than 15 Mio. people use herbal products, the number of patients who use integrative and alternative medicine is far more than the ones who refer to the doctor (4).

In our country, studies of different range of patients and populations have shown that the use of herbal plants are more preferred contrary to the expectations (5,6,7), if you look for the reasons of the use of herbal products, catarrh, is the most reason for, followed by precaution against diseases,

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the third reason can be defined as hair shedding and skin problems (acne, cellulite, eczema, cutaneous disease etc.). Many people think that plants are innocuous and that they will not show any side effect (5,8). The result of this trust can cause any problems which risk the community health care by common use of it. Thus, if you analyze the side effects caused by herbal products, you found large numbers (9). Skin is the most target herbal medicine, but related to tropic herbal medicine which is more preferred shows the most side effects such as rash and itch (10).

Case

A 45 years old female patient came to ER, with a complaint of extensive eye swelling and skin redness on her face. In her story, she stated that she has been suffering from loss of hair and eyebrows; that her body did not respond to the medical treatment; and that she applied a mixture of apple vinegar, hazelnut oil and black cumin, which she purchased from telemarketing, on her scalp and eyebrows for five minutes, after which she recognized the onset of her complaints. On the physical inspection, the patient had skin redness on her scalp, hair loss (Figure 1), swelling around her eyes and skin redness on her face (Figure 2), with stable vital signs. Other system examinations were normal, as well. On the laboratory assessment, she had white blood cell: 15000 and CRP: 5mg/L, while the other values were within the normal limits. Systemic feniramin maleat 45 mg and metilprednizolon 40 mg were suggested for the treatment. The patient, who was kept under observation by us for two days, were discharged from the hospital.

Discussion

Complementary and alternative medicine applications continue to be widespread today. The most important problem faced in phytotherapy, which is a part of complementary and alternative medicine, is that their interaction with other medicines and their side effects are not known precisely because the plants contain different active ingredients (11-13).

In the Cochrane and PubMed data base, in the screening by keywords of 'herbal, herbal therapy, phytotherapy', it is seen that the data originating from China and the Far East are 80% and the data originating from Europe and North America are very limited. In China and Far East studies, it has been reported that the follow-up period is short and the long-term outcomes are not yet clear (14).

Skin is the target organ where the most common side effect of herbal treatments is seen. Topical herbal treatments are often preferred. The most common side effects are redness and pruritus in the area of application (15)

Aromatherapy, a line of phytotherapy; The most common side effects of the vegetable oils used are photosensitization and contact dermatitis (16).

In a study on aromatherapy; there are publications showing that when used over 30 ml of eucalyptus oil can cause tachycardia, ataxia, muscle weakness and respiratory depression, (17) while no side effects due to the vegetable oils used are observed at all (12,13). Shampoos containing lavender oil and pine tree oil have been reported to cause gynecomastia in boys (18).

It has been reported that the risk of developing allergic skin reactions increases with long-term and topical applications (19). Erythroderma, Stevens-Johnson syndrome, Sweet's syndrome, urticaria, angioedema, anaphylactic and necrotic skin lesions have been reported, with the most frequent irritant dermatitis and allergic contact dermatitis (12).

In our present case, there was a single and short use of apple cider vinegar, also containing aromatherapy mixture (hazelnut oil and black seed oil). The use of these products is mostly supported by written and visual media. As a matter of fact, it has been shown in the majority of studies that the vast majority prefer these products with environmental and media effects (5,20).

In the studies conducted, it has been determined that in the general population, the 35-49 age group, women, those with higher educational level and higher income use alternative treatment more (21). As a matter of fact, in a study conducted, it was found that the education level was high and the working individuals preferred these products more (22).

It is noted that phytotherapy is the method commonly used in diseases that are chronic, resistant to treatments, affecting the psychosocial lives of people who require long-term treatment (15).

Patients also refrain from providing information about herbal treatments to doctors who administer their medical treatment (19).

Less than 50% of patients using herbal products provide information to the responsible physician regarding the product they use (23). Physicians often do not know the side effects and drug interactions of the herbal products used by patients (23). It has been determined that 61.5% of the individuals who applied to complementary and alternative therapies do not inform the physicians about the methods they use (24, 5).

Today, the lack of communication and information between health workers and patients about treatment with herbals can trigger a chain of events that can lead to death (25,26). Because even if herbals are widely used for healing, they are ignored in the field of professional health; as a result, the potential damages are not discussed in scientific settings (5).

As a solution, academicians who have knowledge of this field should fulfill their responsibilities in public lighting. The variety of plants that are medical in our country is quite rich. From this point of view, community health should be taken into consideration both in terms of legal and social responsibility.



Figure 1



Figure 2

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