

Botanical Medicines & CKD Patients

Potential Problems with Botanical Medicines & CKD

Alterations in: electrolytes, blood glucose, blood pressure, K⁺ levels/cardio profile

Interactions with anticoagulant therapies; potentiation of blood thinning

Drug-botanical & botanical-botanical interactions; potentiation of negative properties

Common Botanical Medicines that may be Harmful to CKD Patients

Aloe, Buckthorn, Capsicum, Cascara, Chapparal, Comfrey, Dandelion, Ephedra, Licorice, Mate, Nettle, Noni Juice, Pennyroyal, Rhubarb, Sassafras, Segrada, Senna

CAUTION-Anticoagulant properties: Ginger, Ginkgo Biloba, Garlic, Ginseng, Feverfew

General Guidelines for Botanical Medicine Products

Ensure products are clinically tested & reliable for potency/purity such as Nature Made Products
(Caution: adulteration of products with heavy metals, toxins, hormones, etc)

Consumer Lab Certification: www.consumerlab.com

NSF International Quality label: www.nsf.org

USP (US Pharmacopedia): www.uspverified.org

Botanical Practice Tips: Goal - Develop rapport, gain trust & promote informed patients!

- Listen first, avoid judgements, offer sound advice, promote patient empowerment
- Encourage patient to seek sound advice from licensed/credentialed professionals such as a Registered and Nephrology Dietitian!
- Review case reports in medical literature (Lancet-focus on case reports)
- Regarding botanical medicine dosing: be conservative, start with small doses
 - Initiate at 50% of suggested dose and titrate upward slowly
- Suggest using only one botanical product at a time to better assess single effect
- Avoid prolonged use & known toxic botanical medicines
 - Reassess +/- effects on regular 1-2 week basis
- Discourage use of botanicals with Rx drugs that have similar action/active ingredients such as: willow bark and aspirin or warfarin
- Discourage use of botanicals that alter absorption time of other medicines or supplements
- Suggest patient use a journal to record daily notes of negative & positive effects
- Discontinue botanical medicines immediately with symptoms of headache, nausea, or diarrhea
- Avoid taking botanical medicines & OTC or Rx drugs at same time
 - Suggested to take at least two hours apart

Helpful Resources

National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine @ <http://nccam.nih.gov/>

Phytochemical and Ethnobotanical Databases @ <http://www.ars-grin.gov/duke/>

Alternative Medicine Facts @ <http://www.rosenthal.hs.columbia.edu/CAM.html>

Herbal Research Foundation @ <http://www.herbs.org>

American Herbal Pharmacopoeia @ www.herbal-ahp.org

International Bibliographic Information on Dietary Supplements (IBIDS) Database @ <http://ods.od.nih.gov>

Alternative Medicine Foundation, Inc. @ <http://www.herbmed.org>

MEDLINEplus for Herbal Information @ <http://www.nlm.nih.gov>