

Quality Control of Ayurvedic Medicines

Natural remedies are in use since time immemorial and are widely accepted due to low cost, safety, efficacy, cultural and lesser side effects. As per WHO, eighty percent of the world's total population still relies on the traditional systems for their primary healthcare. In recent years there is an increase in the use of herbal drugs due to the widely encountered side effects of modern drugs. As the resurging interest in herbal drugs is increasing, there is a spurt in the domestic and international trade of herbal drugs, health supplements and nutraceuticals.

India with wide range of geographical variations is home of variety of medicinal plants and there lies ample scope in harnessing this market. As far as international market is concerned China is far ahead of India due to well developed quality assurance system for their medicaments. There lies a great opportunity for India to increase its share in international market by manufacturing and marketing quality drugs

Quality is the sum total of all factors which contribute directly or indirectly to the safety, effectiveness and acceptability of the product. The product reaching the market should also comply with the legal standards laid down by the enforcement agencies. Quality control refers to the analytical techniques which are carried out to ascertain the quality of a product. These tests may be pharmacopoeial or in-house tests. Term standardization is generally applied to quality control. Standardization is an important step in ensuring quality of the drug and it also embodies the compliance to legal standards.

Quality control of raw material, process of manufacture and finished product constitute wholesome quality of ASU drugs. Quality control is an operation undertaken in a laboratory to analyse a sample or material within the known probability limits of accuracy and precision. These days a broader term quality assurance (QA) is used which may be defined as a system through which a laboratory conducts the analysis, the proof of which lies in documentation. It also requires controlling the starting materials, storage and processing.

Government of India introduced Schedule T or good manufacturing practices (GMP) for manufacturers of ASU drugs in 2003. The main aim of introducing Schedule T was to maintain a uniform standard of hygiene for the manufacturers, thereby contributing to the quality of drugs. Compliance to GMP is mandatory for all the manufacturers of ASU drugs.

Thus, quality is the main attribute of the ASU drugs and it directly contributes to the safety and efficacy of the drug.

It gives me immense pleasure to bring out one more issue of the Journal of Drug Research in Ayurvedic Sciences. The articles are grossly based on the quality control aspects of the Ayurvedic drugs. Learned readers are the best judge of the quality of the contents of a scientific publication. Please feel free to contact us in case of any comments on email: jdras-ccras@gov.in



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