



Herbal Medications and Vitamins

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What Does Herbal Mean?

- Leafy Plant?
- “Natural Medication”
- Alternative Therapies?



Classification

- Dietary Supplements
- Also included are:
 - Vitamins
 - Minerals
 - Food additives



Food and Drug ADMINISTRATION (FDA)

- ▶ Not regulated as strictly as medication
- ▶ Increase in oversight
- ▶ Still issues.....
 - ▶ Labeling
 - ▶ % of active ingredients
 - ▶ Variations in product based on cultivating and manufacturing process



Most Commonly Used

- ▶ Cranberry
- ▶ Soy
- ▶ Saw palmetto
- ▶ Garlic
- ▶ Ginkgo
- ▶ Milk Thistle
- ▶ Echinacea
- ▶ Black cohosh
- ▶ St. John's Wart
- ▶ Ginseng
- ▶ Valerian
- ▶ Green Tea
- ▶ Evening primrose



Cranberry Juice

- Urinary Tract Infections..
 - Does it work?
 - Is it safe?
 - Adverse effects?



Soy

- Menopause
 - Plant estrogens (isoflavones)
- To Lower cholesterol
- Safe
 - High doses may increase risk of breast cancer in women past menopause



Saw palmetto

- Benign prostatic hypertrophy
 - Does it work?
 - Is it safe?
 - Adverse effects?



Garlic

- Infections
- High blood pressure
- Colic
- Cancer
- Effective-
 - Have been used throughout history
- Safe
 - May increase bleeding in people on blood thinners
 - Nausea and Vomiting
 - Rash on contact



Ginkgo biloba

- Alzheimer Disease
- Circulation Disorders
- Effective
 - Limited data
- Safe
 - May cause bleeding if on blood thinners



Milk Thistle

- Liver failure
- Mushroom poisoning



Echinacea

- Colds
- Safe
 - Allergic Reactions



Black Cohosh

- Premenstrual symptoms
- Menopause
 - Used instead of estrogen
- Arthritis
- Sleep aide



St. John's Wart

- Depression
- Wounds
 - Limited effectiveness
- Safe
 - Interacts with other antidepressant medications
 - Sensitivity to the sun



Ginseng

- Used widely in China
 - Stomach disorders
 - Respiratory symptoms
 - Stress
 - Fatigue
 - Safe
- Used here as a treatment for inflammation
- Safe
 - May increase blood pressure, heart rate
 - Decrease glucose



Ginseng Abuse Syndrome

- High Blood Pressure
- Agitation
- Insomnia
- Diarrhea



Valerian

- Anxiety
- Sleep problems
- Safe
 - May make you more drowsy in combination with other sleep aides



Green Tea

- Prevents Chronic Disease
- Weight Loss
- Cancer
- Decrease Cholesterol levels
- Japan Study 2006
 - Decrease in deaths associated with heart disease
- Safe
 - Cases of liver failure



Evening Primrose

- PMS
- Diabetes
- Arthritis
- Rashes
- Safe
 - If have epilepsy it may lower the level where it is likely to occur



Chamomile Tea

- Relaxation
- Stress Reducer
- Safe
 - Allergic reactions



Kava Kava

- Relaxation
- Colds
- Induce Labor
- Aphrodisiac
- Safe
 - Muscle Weakness
 - Liver problems
 - Skin discolorations



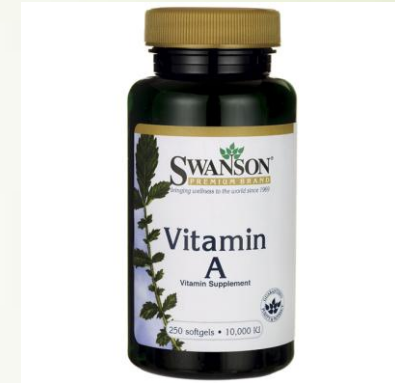
Vitamins

- ▶ Water soluble and safe
 - ▶ Thiamine
 - ▶ Riboflavin
 - ▶ Folic Acid
 - ▶ Biotin
- ▶ Water soluble but may cause toxicity
 - ▶ Vitamin C
 - ▶ Vitamin B6



Vitamin A

- ▶ Safe
 - ▶ If you are a smoker avoid large ingestions of Vit A
 - ▶ May increase risk of lung cancer
- ▶ Overdose
 - ▶ Headache
 - ▶ Seizures
 - ▶ Nausea and vomiting
 - ▶ Liver failure
- ▶ Chronic Use
 - ▶ Hair loss
 - ▶ Nail changes
 - ▶ Bones and skin changes



Vitamin K

- Safe
 - Avoid supplements if on a blood thinner



Vitamin D

- Safe
 - Accumulates in the body
 - Off balance when walking
 - Muscle weakness
 - Muscle and bone pain
 - Headache
 - More serious long term effects



Vitamin E

- Essential for all body functions
- Safe
 - Nausea
 - Vomiting
 - Diarrhea
 - May decrease absorption of blood thinner agents and Vit K



Vitamin C

➤ GI irritation



Niacin

- What about the flushing?????
- Does a small dose of aspirin help?
- What else helps..
 - No alcohol
 - Not showering close to taking it
 - Food but not spicy food



Energy Drinks



What is in Them

- Caffeine
- Stimulants
- Safe
 - Increase in heart rate
 - Increase in blood pressure
 - Agitation
 - Potential for seizures



Powdered Caffeine

- ▶ Safe Dose is 1/16 of a tsp
 - ▶ Comparable to a cup of coffee



Clinical Effects

- Vomiting
- Hypotension
- Dysrhythmias
- Seizures



Safe Use of These Products

- Always check with your health care provider before taking these products
- Always tell you health care provider that you are taking these products
 - Own doctor
 - Covering doctor
 - Emergency department staff
 - Specialists
- Add them to your list of medications



Safe Use of These Products

- Know the side effects
- Know if they are dangerous taking with your medications
- Take only the recommended amount



Safe Use of These Products



Questions



Contact

Upstate New York Poison Center

www.upstatepoison.org

We are only a phone call away!

1-800-222-1222

