

Review Article

HERBAL DRUGS IN THE TREATMENT OF DIABETES: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

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Diabetes mellitus is a chronic metabolic disease that has been causing millions of people globally and steadily increasing at an alarming pace. It is defined by high blood glucose levels following some malfunctions in secretion of insulin or insulin action or both. Even though the use of modern pharmacological therapies has become a common practice, it is characterized by adverse long-term outcome and cost implication. This has seen its growing attraction to the use of herbal drugs as alternative or complementary therapy. Traditional systems, like Ayurveda, Unani and Chinese medicine, have been using herbal medicines since ancient times. These organic compounds have bioactive and antidiabetic properties; flavonoids, alkaloids, terpenoids and glycosides are found in these natural products. They work by various processes, such as insulin secretion stimulation, enhanced insulin sensitivity, carbs absorption inhibition and antioxidant properties. The paper gives a detailed description of the herbal medications in the treatment of diabetes, how they work, the commonly used medicinal plants, its benefits, drawbacks, and outlook. Herbal medicine added to the mainstream healthcare system can provide a less harmful, cheaper, and more comprehensive solution to diabetes.

Keywords: Diabetes mellitus, Herbal medicine, Antidiabetic plants, Insulin resistance, Phytochemicals, Natural therapy, Medicinal plants

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