**Herbal Medicine**

Name

Institution

Course

Professor

Date

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Herbal medicines are substances made from plants which are used to treat diseases or to maintain health. They are made from plant parts such as leaves, roots, or flowers. The fact that herbal medicines are natural does not necessarily mean they are safe for you to take. Just like other medicines, herbal medicines will have side effects on the body which can be more harmful to the body if not used in the right manner. Herbal medicines should be handled with much care and respect as just any other medicine (Luo et al., 2019).

Examples of herbal medicines that can be purchased at a local supermarket or pharmacy with no prescription include; echinacea, ginseng and ginkgo biloba. Echinacea contains active compounds such as caffeic acid, alkamides and polysaccharides. Cichoric acid, the main compound of echinacea root, has strong antioxidant, immunostimulatory and antiviral, properties and is susceptible to degradation. Echinacea most likely is used is used to strengthen the body’s immune system. Echinacea is also considered a prevention against common colds and flu.

Ginseng products are made from ginseng root and the root hairs. The main chemical component of ginseng are ginsenosides and polysaccharide glycans. Ginseng is used to boost energy, lower sugar and cholesterol levels reduce stress and promotes relaxation. Ginseng is also used as a general tonic to increase overall body tone. The unique components of ginseng boost neuroprotective, anticancer, antidiabetic and immune-supporting properties.

Ginkgo biloba is made from the ginkgo tree which has two active ingredients namely terpene lactones and ginkgo flavone glycosides. Ginkgo biloba is rich in antioxidants and can help reduce inflammation. It is also good for heart health, ginkgo’s apparent ability to increase blood flow to various parts of the body benefits the heart. Ginkgo increases mental performance and perceived well-being. Ginkgo can support vision and eye health due to the increased blood flow to the eye.

The three herbal medicines are safer to use because herbal supplements are not subject to clinical trials or to the same manufacturing standards as prescription or traditional over the counter drugs. Herbal medicines are free from unwanted side effects when used in the correct way. The production of the herbal medicines is cheaper making them easily available. Herbal medicines work when used in the right amount.

Inconclusion, herbal medicines can have adverse effects when not used in the right amounts. Claims made for herbal medicines are based on traditional usage and not evidence of the products effectiveness.

**References**

Luo, H., Vong, C. T., Chen, H., Gao, Y., Lyu, P., Qiu, L., ... & Wang, Y. (2019). Naturally occurring anti-cancer compounds: shining from Chinese herbal medicine. *Chinese medicine*, *14*(1), 48.