SCIENTIFIC ABSTRATCS

Measurement of Methanol Contents in Most Commonly Used Herbal Distillates in Mashhad

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Background: Herbal distillates had been used for many centuries as herbal medicine in Traditional Persian medicine. Recently, some studies claimed the presence of methanol in different types of herbal distillates which can cause different complications or even death as methanol is highly toxic. The main purpose of this study was to determine methanol content in the commonly-used industrial herbal distillates produced in Mashhad .

Methods: A total of forty-five herbal water extracts of five types of most commonly used herbal distillates including peppermint, camel thorn, chicory, fumitory and rose water were randomly bought from market. Methanol content of each sample was measured according to the standard method. Collected data was analyzed by SPSS software using appropriate descriptive statistical tests.

Results: The lowest and highest concentration of methanol were found in rose water extract (mean=9.04 ± 3.42 mg/dL) and peppermint extract (mean=93.87 ± 76.59 mg/dL) samples respectively. One-way ANOVA showed statistically significant differences between methanol concentration in the studied herbal distillates ($P = 0.03$.(

Conclusion: Methanol concentration, especially in peppermint extract was very high that may induce toxicity in people taking these products regularly for a long time. Therefore, considering the harmful effects of methanol on human health, further studies are required for determining permitted levels of methanol in herbal distillates.

Keywords: Methanol; Plant Extracts; Toxicity

Development of the Alcohol Policy Document in Iran

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Background: Statistics of alcohol use Iran was investigated in the beginning of 2010 in Mental, Social Health and Addiction Department of Ministry of Health. The findings showed that the alcohol use, especially in young people, is notable. Hence a strategic plan or a policy document in alcohol use was needed to explain the main vision also provide countrywide strategies for all related domains such as prevention, treatment and harm reduction.

Methods: Several expert panels for scientific and technical support, also identifying interested researchers and people who can help us in this issue were held. We continued to do this with snowball sampling method. In addition, the best evidences about the topic were collected, and several meetings with main and the most related alcohol use stakeholders were held.

Results: Initially, a sub-national alcohol policy document was written that was communicated by health minister to all medical universities throughout the country. Subsequently, we expanded our audiences and wrote the national alcohol policy document which consists of main interventions and determines the direct responsible and collaborative organizations of all these interventions. In this process, our activities were formed in the national committee of prevention and control of alcohol use that works under the supervision of Ministry of Interior. This document was finally communicated by Interior Minister to the all related organizations in the late of 2013.

Conclusion: We should try to employ this document that was created as the result of a lot of efforts during 4 years.

Keywords: Alcohols; Health Policy; Health Planning; Iran

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5