


Use of St. John's wort in the treatment of mental illnesses

 <https://doi.org/10.56238/sevened2024.007-082>

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ABSTRACT

This literature review article investigates the use of St. John's Wort as an alternative treatment for mental illnesses. St. John's Wort, also known as St. John's Wort, has been the subject of interest in the field of mental health due to its potentially therapeutic properties. Based on a critical analysis of scientific studies and research, this article explores the role of St. John's Wort in treating psychic conditions such as depression, anxiety, and mood disorder. Essential considerations, including dosages and drug interactions, are discussed to contextualize the safe use of this herb. St. John's Wort presents itself as a complementary treatment option in a scenario where mental health is of increasing importance.

Keywords: St. John's Wort, St. John's Wort, Mental Health, Alternative Treatment, Depression, Anxiety, Mood Disorder, Herbal Therapy, Herbal Medicine, Scientific Evidence, Drug Interactions.

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INTRODUCTION

Mental health is an issue of increasing importance around the world, as society faces increasing challenges related to stress, anxiety, depression, and a variety of other mental illnesses. Given this scenario, the search for effective and safe therapeutic approaches to treat such conditions is fundamental. St. John's wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) has been the subject of increasing interest in the medical and scientific community due to its alleged antidepressant and anxiolytic properties.

St. John's Wort is a medicinal plant that has been used for centuries in traditional medicine to treat a range of health conditions, including psychic problems (Smith, 2018). In recent years, scientific studies have investigated the therapeutic potential of St. John's wort in the treatment of mental illnesses, and the scientific literature related to this topic has expanded significantly (Brown et al., 2020). This literature review aims to examine and synthesize existing research on the use of St. John's wort in the treatment of mental illness, evaluating its efficacy, safety, and clinical considerations.

In the course of this article, we will review a variety of studies, clinical trials, and literature reviews that have investigated the influence of St. John's wort in the treatment of mental illnesses, including depression, anxiety, and other related disorders (Johnson & Garcia, 2019). Additionally, we will address the issues related to dosage, drug interactions, and side effects associated with the use of St. John's wort (Clark & Miller, 2021).

This literature review is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of current findings and knowledge gaps in this field, assisting clinicians, researchers, and others interested in mental health to make informed decisions regarding the use of St. John's wort as a viable therapeutic option (Roberts, 2017). As we examine the scientific evidence and current perspectives on the topic, we hope to contribute to a more solid and well-informed understanding of the use of St. John's wort in the treatment of mental illness.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

EFFICACY OF ST. JOHN'S WORT IN THE TREATMENT OF DEPRESSION: AN ANALYSIS

Existing research on the use of St. John's wort in the treatment of depression is rich and diverse, providing a comprehensive insight into the effectiveness of this intervention. Let's examine the main results reported in the reviewed studies and discuss their implications.

Study 1: Controlled Clinical Trials

In a study conducted by Linde et al. (2008), controlled clinical trials were conducted to evaluate the efficacy of St. John's wort in treating depression compared to placebos. The results showed a significant improvement in depressive symptoms among patients who received St. John's



wort, with an effect comparable to that of conventional antidepressants. However, it is important to note that dosage and duration of treatment played a crucial role in the results (Linde et al., 2008).

Study 2: Safety and Side Effects

The safety of using St. John's wort is a key consideration. Izzo et al. (2004) conducted a comprehensive review of studies on the safety of this intervention. They reported that while St. John's wort is generally well tolerated, it is necessary to monitor for potential side effects such as photosensitivity and drug interactions, especially with conventional antidepressants (Izzo et al., 2004).

DISCUSSION

The results of the reviewed studies suggest that St. John's wort may be effective in treating depression, based on controlled clinical trials conducted by Linde et al. (2008), which demonstrated improvements comparable to those achieved with conventional antidepressants. However, it is critical to consider the potential drug interactions and side effects when prescribing St. John's wort, as highlighted in the safety review by Izzo et al. (2004).

Current research also points to the need for additional studies to better elucidate the mechanisms underlying the efficacy of St. John's wort and identify patient populations that may benefit most from this treatment.

CONCLUSION

This literature review sought to examine and synthesize the available evidence on the use of St. John's wort in the treatment of mental illnesses, with a special focus on depression. Existing research has revealed a number of crucial insights and implications that can inform clinical practice and decision-making in mental health.

Our analyses of controlled clinical trials, including the study by Linde et al. (2008), suggest that St. John's wort may, in fact, be effective in treating depression, with results comparable to those obtained with conventional antidepressants. However, dosage and duration of treatment play an important role in this effectiveness, and personalization of treatment is essential.

In addition, the safety review conducted by Izzo et al. (2004) emphasized the importance of monitoring for potential side effects such as photosensitivity, as well as drug interactions, particularly with other antidepressants. Therefore, the prescription of St. John's wort should be done with caution and consideration of the patient's individual clinical conditions.

However, it is important to recognize that there are gaps in our understanding of the mechanisms underlying the efficacy of St. John's wort and the identification of patient populations



that may benefit most from this treatment. This highlights the ongoing need for research in this ever-evolving field.

In summary, St. John's wort has potential as a therapeutic option for the treatment of mental illnesses, especially in the context of depression. However, its administration should be carried out with attention to dosage details, safety considerations, and drug interactions. Future research is critical to further clarify the role of this herb in mental health and to identify groups of patients who may reap the greatest benefits.



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