Jalen Powell

HIST-1220-6

Dr. Hauser

April 30, 2020

Testing Herbal Alternatives to Improve Prescribed Drugs

Diseases and illnesses have been ailing humanity since the prehistoric times. Fortunately, doctors and scientist have studied and created prescribed pharmaceutical drugs that alleviate symptoms almost immediately. The upside of over the counter medicine is very promising but the long-term side effects have people wondering what is really going into their body. The technology in the medical field have evolved to the point where petty sickness can be treated in a matter of days and more and the cancer research being done around the country more survivors. The industry for pharmaceuticals discovers new market drugs for people to use for medications. While in the making new drugs, the companies should also be looking for new was to reduce the risk of taking prescribed medicine. With more herbal alternatives being tested, the research can help improve the risk that come with taking over the counter drugs and more people get another option that can help their illnesses.

It’s almost every day that pharmacy companies send out advertisements through television broadcast, the radio, and even through online websites to tell people of prescribed drugs and what symptoms it can relieve. The chemicals used in pharmaceuticals can have long-term side effects that are not desired by the patient. In fact, large pharmaceutical companies like Bayer and Novartis are also big sellers of pesticides and herbicides. Natural supplements have many harmful chemicals as well, but the abundance of plants and herbs shows that are many options that can derived and research to create a safer medication. The negative side effects are lesser than the reported long-term effects of synthetic supplements. Many doctors and medical professionals realized the value of some natural supplements.

When people who are sick go looking for a medication for their condition, they have a few criteria in mind. They want it to be the safest option, have the most efficiency, and it can’t be very costly. Americans already spend around $20 billion per year on natural remedies so to do research will increase the chances of people taking helpful medications. Creating prescribed drugs has given a standard of medication that people look for like immediate relief. A popular drug like Celebrex that is used to treat arthritis costs more than $4 per day, but ginger supplements, a natural remedy for inflammation, costs about $0.38 per day. The pharmaceutical industry has poured millions of dollars into new technologies over the past two decades, but it has little impact on the high drop rate and cost of drug development. People have noticed the cost for herbs is way lesser and that is why an increase of people trying natural remedies.

Developing a commercially successful drug involves multiple compromises that may result in ineffectiveness and unacceptably high failure rates. Companies that produce synthetic supplements can recreate chemicals like Vitamin E and make a slight change to its makeup and make it safer. That technology can be applied to prescribed medicine with the hep of testing herbs. It’s not as easy as replacing the harmful chemicals with good ones but applying properties from natural sources may have a chance to neutralize the negative effects. The number of doctors who decline to look at natural alternatives as a method of medication just beats out the doctors who will. Though the credibility of over-the-counter drugs is greater, many people decide to not take the risk of prescribed drugs over natural supplements. People still take precautions of what herbal medicine they take because there isn’t concrete evidence that proves its better.

The research on natural remedies that can be done now will help create faster acting and more promising medications. No one is saying that natural alternatives are safer than prescribed drugs, but the risk that come with those drugs are far greater than using herbal medications. The internet can show people the real results of both pharmaceuticals and herbal medications to ultimately choose which route is best for them. With scientist working on new ways to examine the properties of herbal medications and doctors helping in the research for new ground- breaking drugs that maximize relief and minimize risk.

Mae, Janice Rachael, and Janice Rachael Mae. “Prescription Drugs vs. Natural Alternatives.” HealthGuidance, March 26, 2006. https://www.healthguidance.org/entry/2225/1/prescription-drugs-vs-natural-alternatives.html.

Popova, Alex. “Natural Supplements vs. Pharmaceutical Drugs.” Be Healthy Today. Be Healthy Today, March 30, 2017. https://behealthytoday.us/blogs/health/natural-supplements-pharmaceutical-drugs/.

Reeser, Dorea. “Natural versus Synthetic Chemicals Is a Gray Matter.” Scientific American Blog Network. Scientific American, April 10, 2013. <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/guest-blog/natural-vs-synthetic-chemicals-is-a-gray-matter/>.