

Are Wellness Teas Non-Pharmacologic Alternatives?

Charles Dean Shively*

Chief Executive Healthcare Officer, St. Petersburg, Florida, USA

*Corresponding Author: Charles Dean Shively, Chief Executive Healthcare Officer, St. Petersburg, Florida, USA.

Received: December 30, 2016; Published: January 04, 2017

Recent market assessments indicate the current \$7 Billion tea market will grow to \$ 8 Billion by 2020—three years from now. Are teas and special herbal tea formulas actually effective in doing more than just supporting overall health? Can certain teas actually effect healing? The answer is YES!

While doing research on the published clinical success of some fifty-four (54) herbs or natural medicinals in promoting actual healing, nearly one hundred (100) different human conditions have shown to have achieved needed improvement outcomes. From age-related disorders to cancer to depression to liver problems to stroke to varicose veins and external wounds, the utility of natural medicinals in teas has been confirmed.

Many of these natural medicinals and their utility can be traced back to the Bible (for example-the natural medicinal *Balm of Gilead*). About 370 B.C, the Greek Theophrastus, a pupil of Plato with fellow student Aristotle, published a work entitled *An Enquiry Into Plants* which included a section entitled “The Juices of Plants and the Medicinal Properties of Herbs”. Use of certain natural medicinals (ginseng for example) has recorded use and dates back more than 4000 years. Gotu kola has been used as medicine in the Ayurvedic tradition of India for thousands of years. It is listed in the historic *Susruta Samhita*, an ancient Hindu medical text. Gotu kola is deemed as a “miracle elixir of life” by the Chinese and is prominently mentioned in the *Shennong Herbal* compiled in China over 2000 years ago. Further support to the clinical usefulness of medicinal teas was documented in Egyptian writings which used herbal teas based upon work by Pliny the Elder and later preserved in the first century B.C. *Materia Medica*.

In more recent times, the Society of Apothecaries was founded in London in 1617 and later published the *London Pharmacopoeia* in 1618. A later version called the *Compleat Herbal*, authored by the Master Herbalist Nicholas Culpeper was subsequently made available to the masses. It also contained compositions or formulas to promote healing for many different maladies of the time.

The Complete German Commission E Monographs: A Therapeutic Guide to Herbal Medicines (first edition 1998, ISBN 0-9655555-0-X) was the result of the *Bundesgesundheitsamt* (Federal Health Agency now called the Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices) established an expert committee on herbal remedies to evaluate the safety and efficacy of phytomedicines. This commission included physicians, pharmacists, pharmacologists, toxicologists and lay individuals who were charged with the assignment of initiating official monographs for the 600-700 different plant drugs currently being sold today. This therapeutic guide to herbal medicines has been repeatedly supported as the most rational system in any industrialized nation for assessing the safety and efficacy of herbs when sold as nonprescription medicines.

Many of the herbs listed in *The Complete German Commission E Monographs: A Therapeutic Guide to Herbal Medicines* are referenced for inclusion in herbal wellness teas intended to “cure, alleviate or prevent disease, suffering, physical injury, or symptoms of illness, or to influence the nature, state or function of the body or mental health conditions”.

European physicians frequently prescribe these OTC single ingredient phytomedicines (herbs) or in combination for a variety of maladies as opposed to traditional prescription drugs which have required the more expensive government document filings.

Although a comprehensive listing of the most used medicinal herbs is beyond the scope of this particular commentary, many of the herbs mentioned below are widely used (based on sales): Angelica Root, Artichoke, Celery Root, Chamomile, Echinacea, Elder Blossom, Ginko Biloba, Hawthorne flower and leaf, Horse Chestnut seed, Kava Kava, Marjoram, Myrtle, Saw Palmetto, St. John's Wort, Stinging Nettle Root, Whitethorn Berries and Woodruff.

When considering use of medicinal herbs a Master Herbalist or adequate personal investigation may provide the best recommendation of which to use.

Indeed, a *Wellness Tea* can be an excellent non-pharmacologic alternative for health.

Volume 3 Issue 1 January 2017

© All rights reserved by Charles Dean Shively.