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Actions



Medicinal plants and traditional medicine in Africa.

Author(s) : [Sofowora, A.](#)

Book : [Medicinal plants and traditional medicine in Africa](#). 1982 pp.xviii + 256pp.

Abstract : China and India have standardized their own indigenous medicinal pharmacopoeia yet countries in Africa, despite the pressures of disease and an abundance of plant species, have not followed suit. Most of the existing texts on traditional medicine in Africa deal only with medicinal plants and their uses, ignoring chemical and pharmacological studies. Reflecting the current interest in developing traditional medicine, the author attempts to fill this gap by providing a text for medical and other students which details procedures that are common to most

rather than discussing differences in the practice of traditional healing methods. After a historical review of traditional medicine, its methods and techniques, it discusses the scientific evidence supporting some remedies and practices in traditional medicine, the traditional roots of some modern drugs, the advantages and disadvantages of traditional medicine (although he hardly touches on their toxic adverse reactions) and integration of traditional and modern medicine. Return to a practical level that he stresses in his introduction, he includes chapters on the standardization of herbal potions, methods of obtaining information (locally and from scientific literature) about medicinal plants, practical methods of screening plants for bioactive agents and a 42-page chapter on medicinal plants that are in common use in African traditional medicine in which he does discuss toxic side-effects. Other chapters include guidelines for research on plants for local drug production and research in the field.

The book is well produced and should go a long way towards meeting its stated objective.
~ *D.W. FitzSimons*

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Broader term(s) : eukaryotes

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