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PHARMACOVIGILANCE IN HERBAL AND TRADITIONAL MEDICINES: CHALLENGES AND FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

S.Dharshini^a, V.Jayashree^{b*}

^aStudent of B. Pharmacy, School of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies, Chennai

^bAssociate Professor, Department of Pharmacology, School of Pharmaceutical Sciences, Vels Institute of Science, Technology & Advanced Studies, Chennai

** Corresponding Author: jeya.sps@vistas.ac.in*

Abstract:

In recent years, the use of traditional and herbal medicines has gradually increased worldwide. Many people believe that natural products are safe; however, scientific reports indicate that herbal medicines can also cause harmful effects, side effects, toxicity, and interactions with other drugs. For this reason, pharmacovigilance plays an important role in ensuring and monitoring their safety. Herbal medicines are natural-based medicinal products obtained from plants, including roots, leaves, bark, seeds, or extracts, and are widely used in traditional systems. Most of these products are available without prescription and are frequently used for self-medication. In many cases, patients may use these products without consulting healthcare professionals or combine them with modern medications. Herbal products may produce adverse drug reactions such as liver damage, kidney problems, allergic reactions, and bleeding problems. Major concerns include wrongly identified plants, variation in product quality, contamination, and adulterated drugs. Improving awareness among healthcare professionals and the public can help strengthen safety monitoring.

Keywords: Pharmacovigilance; Herbal and traditional medicines; Adverse drug reactions; Drug interactions; Quality control; Safety monitoring.