



K24 A Study of the Adulteration of Chinese Herbal/Patent Medicines Collected From New York City's Chinatown With Western Pharmaceuticals

Richard A. Stripp, PhD, and Gretchen Miller, BS, John Jay College of Criminal Justice-The City University of New York, 899 10th Ave., New York, NY 10019*

After attending this presentation, attendees will understand the dangers associated with consumption of some unregulated patent/herbal medications and the extent to which they contain western drugs.

This presentation will impact the forensic community and/or humanity by making the community aware of the potential exposure of individuals to western drugs upon consumption of some imported herbal preparations.

In America, recent growth in the popularity of Chinese Herbal/Patent Medicines (CHM/CPM) has generated concerns as to the safety of these and other herbal remedies. These agents are consumed due to their suggested ability to aid with many maladies ranging from hypertension, cold and flu, inflammation, chronic and acute pain, asthma, arthritis, sexual dysfunction, stress and anxiety, to name but a few. Lack of strict federal regulations has led to the possibility of adulteration of these products with western drugs or other chemical contaminants. This may pose a problem among consumers unaware that they may contain hazardous ingredients. Additionally, potentially serious drug interactions are also possible due to the lack of proper labeling of these products. In order to determine the extent of adulteration and/or mislabeling of CHM/CPM in New York City's Chinatown, the laboratory has conducted a study to screen these products for mislabeled or undeclared pharmaceuticals and therapeutic substances. Representative samples in the form of pills, tablets, creams and teas were screened and confirmed by appropriate analytical techniques including, thin layer chromatography (TLC), gas-chromatography mass spectrometry (GC/MS), and high performance liquid chromatography (HPLC). To date, approximately 25% of all samples analyzed contained western pharmaceuticals, undeclared or mislabeled substances. Drugs that have been identified in CMH/CPM thus far will be presented and include; promethazine, chlorpheniramine, diclofenac, chlorthalidone, reserpine and steroidal antiinflammatory drugs.

Herbal Medicines, Adulteration, Western Pharmaceuticals