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Herbal immune boosters: Valuable preventive means for international travelers' flu**Mohammad Ali Daneshmehr**

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Acute respiratory tract infections account for millions of lost effective work or school days, healthcare clinic visits, antibiotic prescriptions, hospital admissions and eventually morbidity or even mortalities. International tourism including religious pilgrimage to overcrowded destinations considerably increases the chance for dissemination of such contaminations. As an example, Hajj is a worldwide ceremony that can affect every country with Muslim sub-population regarding surge of multi-microbial and drug resistant respiratory tract infections. Therefore disease prevention in the involved societies would be highly life and cost saving. Besides use of common antibiotics that has major drawbacks, natural immune boosters are viable and accredited options in this field. *Echinacea* supplements are well-known for immune-modulation and anti-flu effects. They have all characteristics that recommended by CDC to fight flu: Immune augmentation, evidence-based preventive value and anti-viral (microbial) properties without promoting any resistance or life-threatening adverse reactions. *Echinacea* vastly grows in different geographical territories, is reasonably affordable and easily accessible almost all over the world just like in Iran. As we published in a recent review article, there is a huge amount of evidence that shows promising results for *Echinacea* in both prevention and treatment of respiratory tract infections especially in high risk populations and would be potentially useful in susceptible travelers. There will be a great opportunity to prevent respiratory tract infections related to international gatherings and their infectious adverse consequences with standard protocols for supplementation of natural products like *Echinacea* after adequate examinations via goal-directed clinical trials.

Biography

Mohammad Ali Daneshmehr has studied Pharmacy at Tehran University of Medical Sciences (TUMS) and graduated in 1990. He has started his career in Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences (SBMU) as an Instructor. In 1993 he pursued his studies in University of Manchester, UK in Medicinal Chemistry and received PhD in 2001 on ligands in DNA minor groove. He has been working since, in different parts of Iran as Founder of a number of pharmacy schools including Hamadan (UMSHA), Kermanshah (KUMS) and currently Iran University of Medical Sciences (IUMS). His field of interest includes natural products as lead compounds to find new drugs.

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