

## Evaluation of medicinal plants and herbal products used in Iranian volunteers during the Covid-19 outbreak

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### Abstract:

**Background and Purpose:** The use of medicinal plants in the prevention and treatment of various diseases has a long history. Due to this, the purpose of this study was to investigate the use of herbs and natural medicines during the outbreak of COVID-19 in Iran and its relationship with demographic factors.

**Materials and Methods:** This web-based cross-sectional study was performed on 298 individuals in Iran between April 14 to 19, 2020. Data were collected via online questionnaires in social media including WhatsApp and Telegram. Simple and multiple logistic regression models were used for statistical analysis, and the results of these methods were shown as odds ratio (OR) and 95% confidence intervals (95% CI).

**Results:** The prevalence rate for use of medicinal plants and natural medicines was 50.3%. The results showed that individuals whose family members, friends, and/or relatives were infected with COVID-19 (OR=1.72, 95% CI: 1.01 - 2.96), were more likely to use medicinal plants and natural medicines than others. The highest rates of use belonged to thyme, ginger, cinnamon, chamomile and oregano, respectively.

**Conclusion:** This study indicated the trust and interest of at least half of the population in using medicinal plants and related products, especially in the prevention and treatment of Covid-19. It is therefore necessary to adopt policies to provide accurate information on usage, possible side effects and interactions, and ways to obtain valid information about medicinal plants and natural medicines during the COVID-19 outbreak in order to promote rational use of these drugs in the community.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, SARS-CoV-2, Medicinal plants, Plant preparations

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