

Critical thinking on what is ethnopharmacology

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



What two classes of drugs does most of ethnopharmacologic research focus on? Ethnopharmacology focuses its major research on antihypertensive agents due to prevalence of hypertension and heart complications among minority populations and psychotropic agents. The study is based on uncovering the differences in how metabolism of the drugs occurs in different ethnicities. It entails discovering the effects of the drugs on patients and how the drugs are taken by the body in terms of the speed of absorption, assimilation, metabolism and excretion (pharmacokinetics).

Ethnopharmacology is the assessment of the effects that lifestyle, cultural practices, physiology and environment have on the intake, prescription, assimilation and response to treatment (Munoz & Hilgenberg, 2005). It studies how people's practices and beliefs affect their treatment. Ethnicity and racial differences among patients affect how they respond to medical drugs, metabolise them, distribute them in their body and how they are prescribed by doctors to the patients. Ethnopharmacology assesses the effects of such factors on the response of patients to pharmacological products.

What is race, culture and ethnicity?

Though the words are commonly used interchangeably, they have different meanings. A race is a group of persons sharing a common or same lineage. The term is used to refer to persons with different genes or rather regions with differing origins of ancestry. Culture is a set of values, beliefs, practices and customs shared by a group of persons and handed down from one generation to another overtime. Ethnicity may refer to a class of persons with the same origin of genes, with the same culture or both.

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Historically, what populations has most clinical drug trials and research focused on?

Many clinical trials are usually carried out on the white population. The trials are conducted mostly on white men. The findings are then assumed to represent the whole population including women and non-white individuals. According to Campinha-Bacote, the data collected, and findings upon which decisions are made concerning treatment and prescriptions result in clinical error (Munoz & Hilgenberg, 2005). This is because ethnicity, culture and differences in races have an influence on pharmacology.

What two things can influence a gene's expression? Which can alter a drug's effect?

Ingestion of tobacco and the general diet affects an individual's genes expression. They alter an individual's genetic makeup which in turn causes a different response to drugs compared to non-smokers.

What are culture bound syndrome?

These are a set of symptoms or behavioural patterns that a given ethnic society may view as not normal while they may appear as perfectly normal to other ethnic groups. For instance, the attack of the nerves is a common occurrence among Hispanics. U. S. Surgeons observe that lack of prior knowledge regarding the condition may lead to wrong treatment and prescription to the patients.

What is cultural competence?

It is the process and efforts put in familiarising oneself with the patient's cultural beliefs, values, customs and practices and how they affect treatment

programmes and response to medication. Cultural competence is a necessity for nurses so that they are not only familiar with the patients medical condition, but as well as external factors that affect the condition, treatment and the influence of medication on such factors (Munoz & Hilgenberg, 2005).

References

Munoz, C. & Hilgenberg, C. (2005). Ethnopharmacology. Nursing Center , Vol 105. No. 8, Pg 40 - 52