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OPEN PEER REVIEW

Comparison of Cinnamon and Vitex on Improving Sexual Function in Postmenopausal Women: A Triple-blind Randomized Clinical Trial

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About this report

This open peer review (OPR) report shows the public comments made on this article during peer review, by the reviewers, the associate editor and the editor-in-chief, for every revision round, together with the authors' replies. Comments appear only with the consent of the people who wrote them. Reviewers who chose to sign their report are named; the others are shown as "Referee". Comments are edited for language only, and confidential remarks to the editors are not included.

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1 Original submission

3 comments · 21 Jun 2022 – 13 Jul 2022

Leila kouti Reviewer

MAJOR REVISION 21 Jun 2022

Dear Author,
The idea of your study is novel. There are studies on the effects of cinnamon and Vitex on sexual function, but none comparing them, and the currently published literature on Vitex is limited. But the English in the present manuscript is not of publication quality and requires major improvement. Some spelling errors are very obvious (e.g., the spelling of dysfunction and consent). I recommend that a native-speaking expert proofread the manuscript.
Did your subjects suffer from sexual dysfunction, or was the purpose just to improve their normal status? In either case, the article lacks an explanation of this point.
The measurement methods are poorly explained.
The statistical analysis, sample size, blinding, and randomization should be described in detail and with clarity.
A detailed, written, and vetted protocol for the trial is missing.
Didn't any of the subjects drop out of the study? Why?
It seems that you didn't carefully examine the literature.
Please include these studies:

The 4-month effect of Vitex agnus-castus plant on sexual function of women of reproductive age: A clinical trial.
Heirati SFD, Ozgoli G, KabodMehri R, Mojab F, Sahranavard S, Nasiri M.
J Educ Health Promot. 2021 Aug 31;10:294. doi: 10.4103/jehp.jehp_63_21. eCollection 2021.
PMID: 34667794

The effect of medicinal plants in the treatment of sexual disorders: A narrative Review
Farahmand, Maryam and Ramezani Tehrani, Fahimeh (2021) The effect of medicinal plants in the treatment of sexual disorders: A narrative Review. The Iranian Journal of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Infertility, 24 (5). pp. 87-102.

Referee 1 Reviewer

MAJOR REVISION 12 Jul 2022

The manuscript entitled “Comparison of the effect of cinnamon and Vitex on improving sexual function in postmenopausal women: a triple-blind randomized clinical trial” evaluated the effect of administration of cinnamon and Vitex on sexual dysfunction.
While the findings are straightforward, major flaws are present in the manuscript and need to be addressed.
Major Comments
1. The manuscript needs major language editing. (Some parts are exact translations from Farsi.)
2. Was consumption of alcoholic beverages included in the checklist?
3. How could the effects of herbs used as seasonings affect the results?
4. Why was the HAMD scale not used?
5. The pharmacologic properties of cinnamon and Vitex should be described in more detail in the introduction.
6. How were the doses of cinnamon and Vitex selected?
7. The following sentences “Sampling started in January 2020 and continued until October 2020. In this study,

178 individuals were interviewed and invited to study, and finally 105 samples included in the study were divided into 3 groups of 35. There were 32 samples in the Vitex group and 32 samples in each of the cinnamon and placebo groups" should not be stated in the Results section.
8. P values should be included in Tables 3 and 4.
9. In Table 2, the statistical tests used should not be written in the table. Instead, they should be written as footnotes.
10. It is suggested that the Discussion be organized in detail based on the findings.

Editor-in-Chief MAJOR REVISION 13 Jul 2022

Dear Authors,

Your manuscript has been scrutinized by our experts, and they suggest a major revision. We will reconsider it if you decide to revise your manuscript according to the reviewers' comments. Please provide a point-by-point answer or rebuttal to the comments and highlight changes in the revised manuscript.

Kind Regards,
JJNPP EIC

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Revision 1

AUTHORS' RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS

Authors' reply to reviewers

The next pages contain the authors' point-by-point reply to the comments of this revision round, as submitted with the revised manuscript. It is published as the authors wrote it.

Dear reviewer

1- According to your comment our study had novelty, because there are studies on cinnamon and vitex's on sexual function, but not in comparison and also published literature on vitex were small, so we wanted to compare these two herbal medicine to determine the more effective ones and using confidentially.
2- According to your comment , native translator has revised the manuscript for better transcript.
3- Spelling errors corrected by native expert.
4- We did sampling on public health center and evaluate the sexual dysfunction before and after in three groups, not just who had sexual function problems clinically. I highlighted it on the text.
5- The measurement method is fully explained and highlighted
6- Statistical analysis,sample size, blinding and randomization were fully described in the text and highlighted.
7- We didn't register any protocol in any sites. But if you mean the evaluation process, I fully describe it in the text.
8- In the Vitex group, 3 people were excluded due to headache and depressive symptoms, and in each of the cinnamon and placebo groups, two people were excluded from the study due to abdominal pain.
9- I carefully examine related litreatures, but I cant include all of them in the text. Otherwise if you like to include the mentioned article, I try to include it in the manuscript .(number 34,35)

Derar second reviewer

10-The manuscript was fully revised by native translator
11-All interfering variable such as smoking and alcoholic beverages were included in the check list and exclude the subjects. But the samples in our study claimed not using them.
12-We used randomized allocation which choose individuals for treatment groups entirely by chance with no regard to their condition, in this situation many factors have no interfering effect such as seasoning effect.in addition not using herbal teas and any medicinal herbs during the study was an inclusion criteria.
13- Research team decided to use Beck and Spielberger for assessing depression and anxiety symptoms. The reliability of Beck questionnaire has been reported 0.83 to 0.96 using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient (18,19). Marteau and Bekker (1992), Spielberger and Gorsuch (1983) reported good validity and reliability for the Spielberger State-Trait Anxiety Inventory (20). Hamilton depression scale is used for screening depressed person to 0 absent,1 mild,2 moderate,3 severe incapaciting. In fact our study has no aim to screen depression status. in addition if any one declare about depression situation exclude from study.
14- i tried to include more details about Pharmacological properties of cinnamon and vitex according to word limit of journal instruction. I cant

explain more and very specifically about them. I Highlighted them. But I think there were too long.

15-The effective dose of cinnamon and vitex were evaluated according to past studies, pharmacological refrences (PDR book). Dr mojab, pharmacologist of shahid beheshti university of medical sciences determined the clinical dose in this study

16-The sentence “Sampling started in January 2020 and continued until October 2020. In this study, 178 individuals were interviewed and invited to study, and finally 105 samples included in the study were divided into 3 groups of 35. There were 32 samples in the Vitex group and 32 samples in each of the cinnamon and placebo groups” is deleted in result section because it was shown in table, according to reviewer’s opinion.

17-Pvalue included in table 3and 4.

18-In table 2, the statistical tests used is omitted in the table and put it in the foot note.

19-According to your suggestion, I try to revise the discussion according to finding as much as possible.

2 Revision 1

1 comment · 21 Sep 2022

Referee 1 Reviewer

ACCEPT 21 Sep 2022

Dear Editor,

The authors have addressed my concerns.

Thank you,