

Author's response to reviews

Title: African herbal medicines in the treatment of HIV: Hypoxis and Sutherlandia. An overview of evidence and pharmacology

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Author's response to reviews: see over

Dear Dr. Hiromichi Kumagai,

RE: MS# 1850825821617601

Attached you will find the revised version of the article, 'African herbal medicines in the treatment of HIV: Hypoxis and Sutherlandia. An overview of evidence and pharmacology.' In reviewing the 'comments to the authors' that you sent, it has been a pleasure to rework our manuscript to what we feel is a much-improved version. The following points of the reviews have been addressed in bold.

Editor's comments:

1. The reference numbers should be written in regular font size.
 - **Reference numbers now bracketed in regular font size**
2. Correct some typographic errors in p5, line 4; p5, line 17; p6, line 4; p6, line10; p7, line 1; p8, line 5.
 - **Typographical errors corrected as listed**
3. What is ABC transporter systems? Indicate the full spelling for abbreviations.
 - **Section on ABC transporter system removed due to non-relevance to HIV/AIDS pharmacology**
4. The constituents of *S. frutescens* (p10, line 19 -)is recommended to appear in p10, line 6.
 - **Constituents section moved accordingly**

Reviewers comments to the author:

1. The possible drug interactions are over-stressed.
 - **We appreciated this point brought up by the reviewer and changed the tone of the article somewhat. Specific additions made to the text deserve special attention.**
 - a. **Addition made to Hypoxis section on page 7, line 4 just prior to the section on toxicity ... "It should be noted, however that this evidence is only from one *in vitro* model and may not translate to the same effect *in vivo*."**
 - b. **Addition made to Sutherlandia section on page 10, lines 15 and 16 just prior to section on toxicity.... "*In vivo* human studies are required to determine if there is a clinically relevant drug/herb interaction and if so what the true extent of the interaction is."**
2. Consider clarifying the pharmacology related to HIV/AIDS and removing extraneous information unless relevant to HIV/AIDS. Grouping by functionality rather than constituents may help clarify the pharmacology possibly relevant to HIV.

- **All descriptions on pharmacology and biological activity of the herbs that did not pertain to HIV/AIDS were removed from the text. We felt this comment was very useful in helping to streamline and focus the article.**
3. The manuscript provides conflicting data with regards to lipid effects of plant sterols.
 - **The section on page 8 that included data on the very rare toxicity issues with sitasterols and the special conditions required for such effect was removed as being misleading.**
 4. D-pinitol is one possible enantiomer of pinitol (L-pinitol is another)
 - **We appreciate this astute point and have altered the text to read D-pinitol in all cases as it is this enantiomeric form which is biologically active.**

Finally we'd like to thank the editor and reviewers for their thoughtful review that has hopefully contributed to an overall improvement in the manuscript.

Sincerely,

Ed Mills (on behalf of the manuscript authors)