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Potential therapeutic applications of the genus *Annona*: Local and traditional uses and pharmacology.

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Abstract

Ethno-pharmacological relevance:

Annona species (*Annonaceae*) have long been used as traditional herbal medicines by native peoples in tropical areas. In different countries they are used against a large variety of illnesses, such as parasitic and infectious diseases, cancer, diabetes, peptic ulcers, and mental disorders.

Aim of the study:

This review aims to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the research conducted so far on the local and traditional uses, pharmacological activities, mechanism of actions of active compounds, toxicity, and possible interactions with other drugs of the *Annona* species. Through analysis of these findings, evidences supporting their applications in ethno-medicines are described. We discuss the possible research opportunities and stand out the weak points in our knowledge that deserves further investigation.

Material and methods:

Information on ethno-medicinal uses and pharmacological activities of the *Annona* genus was collected. The main scientific biomedical literature databases (Cochrane, PubMed, Scopus, Lilacs, SeCiMed, Elsevier, SpringerLink, Google Scholar, SciFinder) were consulted. The search covered all the literature available until September 2017. National and regional databases of Herbal Medicine and Complementary and Alternative Medicine were also revised in order to explore further data. For a better understanding of the therapeutic importance of these species, we have classified the pharmacological activities within each group of disorders. The International Classification of Diseases (ICD), used from WHO Member States, was chosen as the reference classification.

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