

Peer Review

Review of: "Herbal Treatments and Their Impact on Male Fertility: A Comprehensive Review"

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My comments on the article titled "Herbal Treatments and Their Impact on Male Fertility: A Comprehensive Review"

1. The main issue with this article lies in its methodology. While the authors state it is a narrative review, the process is structured more like a systematic review. A narrative review does not require the systematic steps outlined by the authors. Therefore, if conducted properly, this could be a systematic review. However, as a systematic review, it also lacks correct steps and has several pitfalls. For conducting systematic reviews, authors need a clear description of the steps, including the reasons for excluding the articles.
2. Key words like "insufficient" do not accurately reflect the breadth of the study. Additional terms such as natural products, sperm, fecundity, and reproductive system should be included to ensure comprehensive coverage.
3. In the methods section, the authors initially focus on English-language literature, including research studies, case reports, systematic reviews, and meta-analyses. However, in the inclusion criteria, they narrow this down to clinical studies. This discrepancy needs clarification.
4. Why did the authors include systematic reviews in their study?
5. The term "irrelevant studies" used by the authors should be clearly defined, specifying exclusions such as book chapters or animal studies.
6. Google Scholar is not utilized by the authors due to its inclusion of articles of lower quality. Instead, they typically use Scopus, PubMed, and/or Embase.
7. A table detailing the quality of evidence scores should be included.

8. In the discussion section, phrases like "improve blood flow" and "antioxidant properties" should be discussed as mechanisms of action for the plants rather than outcomes.
9. In the results section, it would have been better for the authors to display the effects of the plants on male fertility-related outcomes such as sperm concentration, motility, morphology, DNA integrity, and pregnancy outcomes if available, in addition to sperm concentration and hormone balance.
10. The conclusion appears irrelevant as it largely repeats parts of the introduction without clearly answering what the conclusion is based on the results. Please focus on your conclusion and recommendation regarding herbal medicine in male infertility treatment.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.