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Abstract

Plant extracts and isolated compounds are increasingly used in cosmetics and food supplements to improve skin conditions. We first introduce the positive plant monographs with dermatological relevance of the former German Commission E. Subsequently clinical studies with botanicals for atopic dermatitis, psoriasis, acne, condylomata acuminata and herpes simplex are discussed. The best studies have been conducted with atopic dermatitis and psoriasis patients. Mahonia aquifolium, Hypericum perforatum, Glycyrrhiza glabra and certain traditional Chinese therapies have been shown to be effective in the treatment of atopic dermatitis. Mahonia aquifolium, Indigo naturalis and Capsicum frutescens are effective treatments for psoriasis. Green tea extract and tea tree oil have been investigated in the treatment of acne. Podophyllin and green tea extract are effective treatments for condylomata acuminata. Balm mint and a combination of sage and rhubarb have been shown to be effective in the treatment of herpes simplex in proof of concept studies.

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