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Slimming teas, are they therapeutic or noxious?

Yunus Emre Bakirhan
Marmara University, Turkey

Slimming teas (diet teas) are becoming more popular with increasing social media popularity among people aiming to lose weight effortlessly. These products are widely used because they are believed to be harmless, especially among women who encounter these teas on the internet on a regular basis. These kind of weight-loss teas are mostly mixed form of cassia (*Cinnamomum cassia*), nettle leaves (*Urtica sp.*), rosehip (*Rosa canina*), green tea (*Camellia sinensis*), rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*), mate plant (*Ilex paraguariensis*), fennel seed (*Foeniculum vulgare*). Although they provide psychological relaxation and acceleration of the digestive system through herbal extracts, these teas may cause numerous adverse effects especially when used persistently. The purpose of selling these products is to provide the effect of laxatives, diuretics and enhance the perspiration in user. However, chronic use of laxatives and diuretics may cause the development of cardiac and muscle toxicity, depending on the dehydration and electrolyte dissipation. In addition, the people who already have the heart or muscle disorders can suffer exacerbation. Based on the clinical studies, the continuous use of laxatives will cause stomach and intestinal motility corruption, bradycardia, heart block, "torsades de pointes" syndrome (due to potassium deficiency), suppression of the heart's contractile force, chronic diarrhoea, abdominal pains and even hypertension, which can lead to deadly heart diseases. All these findings proposed that plants used in these mixtures may cause a number of adverse effects. For this reason, people should be made aware of several types of slimming teas ingredients and their possible adverse effects. Moreover, these products should be distributed with prescription and should be used under the control of health care professionals such as doctors, dieticians and pharmacists. Additionally, these types of products (slimming or detox teas) should be considered as conventional drugs so that its sale can be regulated by official health minister. This way, the health of individuals can be protected with more care. Online purchase of unregulated items needs to be avoided; in case they are purchased the user should avoid its consumption.

Biography

Yunus Emre Bakirhan has completed his MSc from London Metropolitan University in Human Nutrition programme. He is currently pursuing his PhD on Nutrition and Dietetics at Marmara University.

yunusemrebakirhan@hotmail.com

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