

Preface

A significant preoccupation of modern traditional Chinese medicine (TCM) research has been the characterization of TCM components, such as pertain to their isolation, purification, structural determination, and pharmacological activity. As a reference tool, this *Encyclopedia of Traditional Chinese Medicines* presents a comprehensive and integrative work on surveying TCM plant sources, chemistry, pharmacology and medicinal effects and indications in a systematic manner.

This encyclopedia is an integrated achievement of a long-term TCM research project by the authors at the Chinese Academy of Sciences^[1-4], involving three parts and now organized in six volumes:

Part I (Volumes 1 to 4 and part of Volume 5) provides structural, physical, pharmacological and natural source information on 23,033 isolated chemicals captured from 5,535 references, basically up to year 2005. A great deal of effort has been paid on overlapping or contradictory data in order to provide readers with an accurate and reliable resource.

Part II (last part of Volume 5) describes 6,926 TCM plants and congeners, together with their medicinal effects and indications. The contents of Part I and Part II are all organized in alphabetical order.

Part III (Volume 6) includes seven indexes produced by a computer program. Based on the indexes, users can readily find concerned contents in multiple ways.

With this encyclopedia, the authors attempt to provide a bridge for the communication between the TCM system and Western medicinal systems, and a platform with multiple-subjects in support of research and development of the health sciences.

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[3] Jiaju Zhou, Guirong Xie and Xinjian Yan, *Handbook of Chemical Components in Plant Origins of Traditional Chinese Medicines*, Chemical Industry Press, Beijing, 2004 (in Chinese)

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