

## **Is the use of plants in Jordanian folk medicine for the treatment of male sexual dysfunction scientifically based? Review of in vitro and in vivo human and animal studies.**

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**Abstract**

Male sexual dysfunction is a serious problem which has an impact on the quality of life. In Jordanian folk medicine, 56 plant species were reported to be used by males to improve sexual potency and as aphrodisiacs. The aim of this study was to search for scientific evidence justifying their folk use. Of the 15 studied plants, only five were found to enhance spermatogenesis. The other 10 were reported to decrease spermatogenesis at least by one study. The majority of the studied plants possessed a protective effect on testis in different in vivo models as well as antioxidant activities. The effect of these plants on steroidogenesis and the hypothalamic-gonadal axis was also reviewed. The effect of only five plants was studied on sexual behaviour enhancement and three of them were active. Three of the four studied plants enhanced erection. The mechanism of action of active constituents isolated from the studied plants was also investigated. In conclusion, many plants used in Jordanian folk medicine decreased or had no effect on spermatogenesis in animal models. These plants have antioxidant and/or adaptogenic effects, and this may result in a beneficial action on male reproductive system.

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### **KEYWORDS:**

Jordan; folk medicine; male sexual dysfunction; medicinal plants; natural products

PMID:27312517

DOI:[10.1111/and.12619](#)