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Studies on Adulteration and Misusage of *Acanthopanax* Cortex in Market

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ABSTRACT

Alternatives and adulterants of raw materials may affect the therapeutic efficacy of Chinese medicinal preparations, and pose harm to health. Therefore, authentic raw materials are the priority issue for the safety and quality of traditional Chinese medicines.

The botanical origin of *Acanthopanax* Cortex is dried root bark of *Acanthopanax gracilistylus*. According to literatures, there are a number of alternatives and adulterants, such as *Periploca sepium* Beg., *Acanthopanax giraldii* Harms., and *Lycium chinense* Mill, etc. In order to identify the botanical origins of commercial *Acanthopanax* Cortex in Taiwan, forty-three samples were purchased from market and were distinguished from authentic materials by morphology, microscopy, thin layer chromatographic analysis and DNA sequencing.

The results showed that 9 out of 43 samples (20.9%) were *A. gracilistylus*, 32 samples (74.4%) were *P. sepium* and 2 samples (4.7%) were *A. giraldii*. According to the results, the adulteration of *Acanthopanax* Cortex in market is very serious.

key words: *Acanthopanax gracilistylus*, *Periploca sepium*, *Acanthopanax giraldii*, identified