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Effect of spearmint (*Mentha spicata* Labiatae) teas on androgen levels in women with hirsutism

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Abstract

Mentha spicata Labiatae, known as spearmint and *Mentha piperita* Labiatae, known as peppermint can be used for various kinds of illnesses in herbal medicine and flavoring in industry. *M. spicata* Labiatae grows on the Anamas plateau of Yenithornarbademli town of Isparta, located in southwest part of Turkey. In this town, clinicians thought that consumption of tea steeped with *M. spicata* or *M. piperita* caused a diminished libido. Because antiandrogenic effects of spearmint and peppermint were found previously in rats, it was decided to observe the effect of this herbal tea on the androgen levels in hirsute women. Twenty-one female hirsute patients, 12 with polycystic ovary syndrome and 9 with idiopathic hirsutism were included to the study. They were took a cup of herbal tea which was steeped with *M. spicata* for 5 days twice a day in the follicular phase of their menstrual cycles. After treatment with spearmint teas, there was a significant decrease in free testosterone and increase in luteinizing hormone, follicle-stimulating hormone and estradiol. There were no significant decreases in total testosterone or dehydroepiandrosterone sulphate levels. Spearmint can be an alternative to antiandrogenic treatment for mild hirsutism. Further studies are needed to test the reliability of these results and the availability of spearmint as a drug for hirsutism.

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