PANAX GINSENG
This product has been used for numerous indications in traditional Chinese medicine. It is frequently used for decreased libido and erectile dysfunction in the urologic arena. It reportedly has androgenic effects and stimulation, although improvements in penile endothelial L-arginine-nitric oxide activity have been suggested. Clinical trials are not conclusive of its effectiveness.
REFERENCES

PERMINXON (Serenoa repens)
This is the branded saw palmetto extract produced in Farnes. It is the lipid-soluble extract of the dried fruit (berry) of the dwarf palm. It is the most widely studied of all phytotherapies for the treatment of BPH/LUTS. From in vitro studies, it has been postulated to have many mechanisms of action including antiandrogenic, antianabolic, and antiestrogenic effects. It has almost no effect upon prostate size and no effect upon PSA levels. There are no known significant health risks or adverse effects.
REFERENCE

PUMPKIN SEED (Cucurbita pepo)
Fresh and dried seeds are taken whole or ground for the treatment of BPH or obstructive bladder. Active compounds are thought to be phytosterols. There are no current clinical trials and there is no evidence establishing its efficacy. There are no known side effects.
REFERENCE

RYE POLLEN (Secale cereale)
A pollen extract obtained by microbial digestion and extraction with water and organic solvents. Cornilton is the branded product. Active ingredients are thought to be β-sitosterols. It is used for the treatment of BPH and prostatic and chronic pelvic pain syndrome (CPPS). In vitro inhibition of epithelial and stromal cell growth has been demonstrated. No long-term conclusive clinical studies exist. Side effects are reportedly minimal.

REFERENCES

SAW PALMETTO BERRY (Serenoa repens, Sabal serrulata)
There are many different extraction processes and therefore many different brands of saw palmetto. The composition of these brands are variable. A recent National Institutes of Health (NIH)-sponsored double-blind, placebo-controlled study using the Indena brand showed no statistical difference between placebo and saw palmetto berry for treatment of BPH/LUTS. Permixon brand is the most widely studied product (see “Permixon” above). Minimal side effects are associated with saw palmetto. Saw palmetto berry extract (SPE) compounds are also sold for “prostate health.” SPE includes ingredients such as beta-sitosterol and stigmasterol with no reliable clinical data to support their use.
REFERENCES

SELENIUM
A trace mineral that may prevent the development of prostate cancer. Epidemiologic studies suggest a chemopreventative effect. One study of patients with high-grade prostate intraepithelial neoplasia suggested that selenium reduced the incidence of prostate cancer on subsequent biopsy. The National Cancer Institute-sponsored SELECT trial was a 10-yr prospective trial that began in 2001 of over 35,000 men studying the prostate cancer chemopreventive effects of selenium and vitamin E and in combination. The data monitoring safety board (DMSB) halted the trial in the fall of 2008. Their concerns were that the supplements did not appear to offer any benefit. In particular, there was a nonstatistically significant trend to increasing prostate cancer with vitamin E alone and increased diabetes risk in men on selenium alone.
REFERENCES

REFERENCES

STINGING NETTLE (Urtica dioica, Urtica radiata)
Stinging nettle is a branded form of this extract, see above. The clinical evidence of the effectiveness of nettle root is based primarily on open studies, and the significance of this must be confirmed. Minimal toxicity is associated with stinging nettle use.
REFERENCE

YOCON (Pausinystalia yohimb) YOHIMBE
An extract of the bark of the yohimbe tree has been used for erectile dysfunction and decreased libido. The mechanism of action is as an α-adrenergic antagonist. Conflicting studies show both positive and no effect when compared to placebo. It appears to have greatest utility for men with psychogenic impotence. Despite the absence of phosphodiesterase 5 (PDE5) inhibitors, there is still widespread utilization of this over-the-counter product. Side effects include anxiety, tremors, dizziness, hypertension, and tachycardia. Do not use with antidepressants (eg, MAOIs or similar agents).
REFERENCES

SOUTH AFRICAN STAR GRASS (Hypoxis rooperi)
This extract is taken for BPH/LUTS. The active compound is thought to be β-sitosterol, which are thought to induce apoptosis by transforming growth factor (TGF) β. This is an unproven clinically. Initial studies showed dramatic improvements in symptom scores and flow rates; however, confirmatory studies are still needed. Adverse effects are believed to be minimal.
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