

Review Group Membership

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Introduction

Separated wheat germ is traditionally included in healthy foods, consumed or served as raw material for extracts rich in vitamin E. During the 1990s, a new, fermented wheat germ extract for human consumption was invented by Professor Máté Hidvégi in Hungary. The standardized manufacturing technology included the extraction of wheat germ, the fermentation of the extract, followed by separation of the fermentation liquid, microencapsulation, drying, and granulation. The resulting powder was named Avemar pulvis (or simply Avemar), and the granulate is also known as Avemar. For a 70-kg weight adult, the single daily dosage of Avemar contains 8.5 g of Avemar pulvis plus flavoring ingredients, such as fructose and arome. After being dissolved in 150 ml of cold water, Avemar should be drunk preferably before a meal. The product has been approved as a dietary food for special medical purposes in cancer patients by the National Institute of Food Safety and Nutrition of Hungary.

This review was requested by the Senior Director of the Food Safety and Quality Division, Ministry of Health Malaysia following a request to import Avemar granulate as a special purpose food for cancer patients.

Objective/Aim

To assess the effectiveness, safety and cost-effectiveness of Avemar granulate as a dietary food / special purpose food for cancer.

Results and Conclusions

Benefits to patients with colorectal cancer, head and neck cancer as well as post surgical cancer patients cannot be determined as the evidence are limited and of poor quality of evidence. Hence, further research into the role of Avemar as a dietary food / special purpose food in these areas is warranted.

Methods

Five articles were included that consists of five non-randomised clinical trials and comparative studies.

Literatures were searched through electronic databases specifically PubMed/Medline, Cochrane, OVID, INAHTA and also in general databases. Google was used to search as additional web-based information. In addition websites for existing HTA agency, society websites and cross-referencing of the articles retrieved were also carried out accordingly to the topic.

A critical appraisal of the retrieved papers was performed and the evidence level was graded according to the US/Canadian Preventive Services Task Force.

