Global Hazards of Herbal Remedies: Lessons from *Aristolochia*

**Virtual Grand Rounds 2016 - 2017**

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Classroom 3  
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George Education Center | One University Place  
Rensselaer, NY 12144

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To find out more about this talk and the **SUNY Global Health Institute**, please contact Dr. Mark Sedler  
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Eighty percent of the world’s population use herbs to prevent and treat disease; however, few herbal remedies have ever been tested systematically for toxicities and carcinogenicity.

For example, Aristolochia herbs have been used worldwide for 2500 years yet their nephrotoxic and carcinogenic effects were recognized less than 20 years ago. In China alone, 100 million people are currently at risk of aristolochic acid nephropathy and cancer.

Cultural, commercial and political forces restrict government and public health authorities from instituting stronger regulatory measure for herbal use. Nevertheless, empirical knowledge based on tradition should not be permitted to “trump” the scientific method in matters of public health.