

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
SCHOOL OF PHARMACY
DEPARTMENT OF PHARMACOLOGY AND PHARMACOGNOSY

THEMATIC AREA ; PHARMACOGNOSY

Staff

The Department has highly qualified members of staff to carry out teaching, research and service provision in Pharmacognosy. This includes 1 full professor, 3 lecturers and 3 tutorial fellow. In addition teaching is supported by technical members of staff.

Academic Staff

- Prof. Mwangi Julius W. - (Head of Thematic Unit)
- Dr. Gatuma Ambrose K
- Dr. Mungai Nelly N
- Dr. Bosire Kefa O.
- Dr. Mutai Peggoty C.
- Dr. Mukungu Nillian A.
- Dr. Karumi Esther W.

Technical Staff

- Mrs. Munenge Rahab - Principal technologist
- Mr. Mwaura Amos M - Chief Technologist
- Mr. Mwalukumbi Josephat M - Senior Technologist
- Mr. Ingwela Raphael Tsiavoga - Technologist
- Mrs Kiratu Helen - Laboratory animal attendant
- Mr. Muchai Peter K - Laboratory animal attendant

Introduction

Pharmacognosy is the study of the physical, chemical, biochemical and biological properties of crude extracts, drug substances or potential drugs or drug substances of natural origin. It also involves the search for new drugs from natural sources.

History of the Thematic Unit of Pharmacognosy

The thematic unit of Pharmacognosy is part of the Department of Pharmacology and Pharmacognosy which was created in 1995 when the Faculty of Pharmacy was created out of the then Faculty of Medicine. Prior to this time, it existed as a course unit under the Department of Pharmacy which was created in 1974.

Programs/courses offered

Pharmacognosy is one of the core disciplines for undergraduate pharmacy students pursuing the Bachelor of Pharmacy degree. These students are taught over a period of three years.

In addition, the thematic unit provides training to post graduate students pursuing the [Master of Science in Pharmacognosy and Complementary Medicine](#).

Research and Projects

In the fourth year of undergraduate studies, students are expected to carry out a research project over a period of one year that leads to a dissertation. The thematic unit supports student's research by providing facilities to carry out studies on effects of plant extracts and other natural products on physiological systems, isolated organs and whole laboratory animals.

Research and Consultancy

The thematic unit also runs the [The Mitishamba Drug Research Center \(MDRC\)](#), which provides consultancy services to Kenyan herbalists on the safety and effectiveness of their preparations.

Career opportunities

All alumni of the Pharmacology and Therapeutics thematic unit can specialize (through post-graduate training) in:

- Phytochemistry
- Complementary medicine

They may also pursue careers in academia and institutions involved in natural product research.

News and Events

Click [here](#) for news and events

Alumni

All B.Pharm graduates are alumni of the Pharmacology and Therapeutics thematic unit(click [here](#) for undergraduate alumni).

The thematic unit also has several [post-graduate alumni](#):

- Onyambu Meshack Ondora (MSc, 2011)
- Maina Benjamin B (MSc, 2011)
- Misonge Jared Onyancha (MSc, 2011)
- Baragu Benjamin Mwea (MSc, 2011)
- Sifuma Shaban W. A. (MSc, 2012)