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Burdock Root Tea Poisoning

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Full Text

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Abstract

To the Editor.— A clarification seems necessary concerning our article on "Burdock Root Tea Poisoning: Case Report Involving a Commercial Preparation" (239:2157, 1978). Several readers have written stating that burdock root normally does not contain any atropine-like alkaloids. They are correct. It was our purpose to describe a patient who, after ingesting a commercially prepared burdock root tea, had anti-cholinergic symptoms that cleared with physostigmine salicylate treatment. The Food and Drug Administration confirmed the presence of 30 mg/g in a commercial preparation of burdock root tea. (The original article contained an error, stating there was 300 mg/g.) It could be only speculation as to how this alkaloid was mixed with this preparation; certainly this could have been a contaminant in the picking of the product. It was our intention to review this case because of the nature of its presentation and to alert health professionals that a commercially available preparation