

History of Pharmacology

Medications, their origins, and their uses are older than any written records that we have. Many ancient cultures have contributed to the knowledge base and evolution of pharmacology, including Greek, Chinese, Egyptian, Persian, and Arabic. The healers were called by many names, but all shared an extensive knowledge of plants, minerals, and animal products. Pharmacology has evolved significantly from the days when these resources were used to cure the ill without understanding why they worked or did not work. Some ancient remedies are still valuable medicines today, whereas others have been discarded as worthless or dangerous. With the advent of scientific inquiry and technology, researchers around the world have created new and better medications. The ability to isolate pure substances and formulate drugs in a laboratory enables pharmaceutical companies to mass-produce needed medicines in a timely manner.

In this chapter, you will learn about the history of pharmacology and sources used for developing drugs; the acceptance of alternative medicine, and its place in medicine; and the six main categories of drugs and their uses.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of this chapter, you should be able to:

- 1.1** Define all key terms.
- 1.2** List three societies critical to the development and evolution of pharmacology.
- 1.3** List four sources of drugs.
- 1.4** List 10 drugs, and record their sources.