HOW MINERALS ARE IMPORTANT FOR HUMAN HEALTH

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PALAVRAS-CHAVE: argila, areia, sal-gema, água mineromedicinal, saúde humana, geomedicina.

ABSTRACT

Unfortunately, research in recent years has been mainly addressed to the negative effects of minerals in the human health. However, it is well established that some particular minerals are of paramount importance for good human health, either being part of the composition of drinkable spring waters and eatable vegetables and fruits, or being incorporated in many pharmacs after being submitted to some degree of industrial processing. Presently, there is a growing interest on treatments using natural means, alternative to those of the conventional medicine. It is the so-called naturotherapy, that involves distinct processes and methods, such as: phytotherapy, hydrotherapy, mudtherapy, thermotherapy, etc. Whenever naturotherapy involves minerals or other mineral resources we can name it geomedicine, a scientific area that comprises the fundamentals and practises of the application of geomaterials as conditioners of human health. In fact, particular types of clay/mud, sand, rock salt and spring water, intervene both as chemical and physical conditioners in human health. Examples of mineral resources used in geomedicine and of their relevant properties, particularly clay/mud and biogenic carbonate sand, are described in the present paper.

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