

The use of herbs and herbal products has increased dramatically in recent years. Many consumers obtain their products in the retail market through health and natural food stores, mass-market retailers, and multi-level marketing (MLM) organizations. As a result, retail employees and MLM distributors may encounter inquiries concerning these herbs and herbal products. It is important for them to be able to educate customers with well-researched and accurate information that will help them make sound decisions. However, it is not their role to substitute for the services of a healthcare professional.

The American Botanical Council (ABC) developed the ABC Herbal Information Courses to address this need for accurate, science-based information. The Courses present a range of general topics to familiarize the retail employee and MLM distributor with the overall field of herbal medicine and focus on the specific use of many of the popular herbs and herbal products sold in the retail setting. The Courses will also guide them toward knowing what is or is not appropriate to discuss with a customer.

Upon completion, participants are certified by ABC and the National Training Institute (NTI) as Herbal Information Specialists. Certification is valid for one year from the date of issue. A renewal course is offered each year in order to keep the certification active. Certificate holders will be notified near the expiration of their current certificate to offer them the opportunity to renew the certificate. New concepts and expanded content will be provided each year as the certificate is renewed thus providing ever-expanding continuing education opportunities to the certificate holder.

Course One comprises an overview of key issues and concepts in the field of herbal medicine including history of medicinal herbs; recent market and consumer trends; herb safety issues; standardization; legal and regulatory status; communicating with customers; interpreting product labels. It also includes information about 29 commonly used herbs. For each herb, subjects discussed include origin, traditional use, clinical studies, dosage, safety, contraindications and adverse effects.

For more information and to purchase [Course One](#)

Course Two provides more in-depth information on safety, standardization, market, and legal and regulatory issues that affect consumers and the herbal products industry. It presents additional information on the herbs in Course One and safety information on specific herbs from Course One plus other herbs. Course One is a prerequisite for Course Two.

For more information and to purchase [Course Two](#)

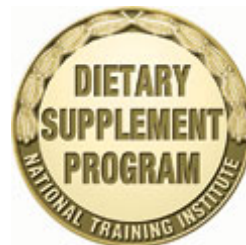
For information on quantity purchases of the Herbal Information Courses contact the American Botanical Council.

The Herbal Information Courses are provided by



The American Botanical Council (ABC) is a nonprofit, member-supported organization whose mission is to educate the public, researchers, educators, healthcare professionals, industry, and media with science-based and traditional information that promotes the responsible use of herbal medicine. ABC's [website](http://www.herbalgram.org) provides a wealth of both technical and consumer-friendly up-to-date information on clinical studies, legal and regulatory issues, market statistics and herb news, along with two databases of in-depth herbal information. In addition to *The Guide*, ABC published *The Complete German Commission E Monographs-Therapeutic Guide to Herbal Medicines* and *Herbal Medicine: Expanded Commission E Monographs*, and also publishes the quarterly, peer-reviewed journal, *HerbalGram*.

www.herbalgram.org



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The Dietary Supplement Program includes online training and certification programs for companies and individuals in the dietary supplement industry. **The National Training Institute (NTI)** is a leading provider of web-based, correspondence and face-to-face training and certification programs in a variety of trades and professions. NTI is a division of **Virgo Publishing** which produces a variety of magazines and trade shows.

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