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Summary

The taste, odor and features upon microscopic observation of crude drugs are to serve as the criteria of propriety in the Japanese Pharmacopoeia (JP). Macroscopic features of the crude drugs are also noted in the description in each monograph, but these descriptions are not to serve as criteria. In this study, we compared the descriptions of macroscopic features of 140 crude drugs in JP15 and Pharmacopoeia of China (CP2005). We found that the origins of 111 (79%) crude drugs were the same in the two Pharmacopoeias, but most of the descriptions of macroscopic features were different.

"Huashi" is a Chinese mineral crude drug that has been used as a diuretic and for the treatment of urolithiasis. The origin of Huashi is unclear, and at least five types of Huashi are available in Japanese and Chinese markets. Samples of Huashi in the Japanese market were composed of halloysite, quartz and orthoclase, and had been imported from Fujian Prov. of China. However, we could not find the same type of Huashi in Chinese markets. Here, we describe a market survey in Fujian Prov. of China, where Japanese Huashi is produced, and in Shandong Prov. of China, where Chinese Huashi has been produced from ancient times. Shandong Prov. is well-known for producing talc. In total, we collected 23 samples of Huashi. In order to determine the original mineral of these samples, we performed X-ray diffraction analysis. The results showed that no sample of the Japanese type was included among the commercial samples collected in Fujian Prov. and Shandong Prov. in China. Most of the Chinese samples were composed of mainly talc with small amounts of calcite, clinohlore, dolomite, magnesiohornblende, magnesite and quartz.

Key words
Pharmacopoeia, Crude drug, Description, Huashi, X-ray diffraction method