



Indigenous phytotherapy for paediatric diseases in Jalgaon District (Maharashtra)

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Abstract

Objective: Seventeen plant species employed for paediatric diseases in Jalgaon district of Maharashtra and being presented in this communication. **Material and Methods:** The ethnic groups viz., Pawara, Bhil, Tadvi and Vanjari inclusive of rural populace, are interviewed. **Results:** They informed plants, and parts used, their local names, forms of recipe, doses, administration etc. **Conclusion:** Out of 18 plants species, 14 species are little known and not reported in Indian classical literature. These, however, obviously need scrutiny on modern scientific lines to improvise their efficacy and to study toxicity.

Keywords: Phytotherapy, Paediatric Diseases, Jalgaon District, Maharashtra.

1. Introduction

Interest in traditional wisdom and in the plants used as ethnomedicine is increasing. Studies in ethnomedicine, in recent times, are yielding encouraging results and thereby it is being recognized and respected worldwide. It has become particularly relevant in view of General Agreement on Tariff and Trade (GATT) and new opportunities opened by modern technology. Awareness about depletion of plant wealth for obvious reasons is a forcing factor to gear up such studies. Moreover, with the passing away of the older tribal generations, their medicolegal may also deplete because of oral tradition.

Therefore, it is important to accrue data of ethnomedicinal plants, their mode and methods of utilization. In the present communication, the plantlore of tribals such as Pawara, Bhil, Tadvi, Vanjari, apart from rural folks, in Jalgaon district of Maharashtra is being dealt.

2. Methodology

The data presented is based on first-hand information gathered from the tribal and rural elderly men and women and practitioners of ethnic groups, apart from personal observations of the authors. The data collected was verified

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and cross-checked. Voucher specimens are collected. They are deposited in the Herbarium, Department of Botany, Pratap College, Amalner. The plant and their parts used, doses, the mode of administration, local plant names etc. were recorded in field. Plants are arranged alphabetically. Botanical name, family (in parenthesis), local name/s, voucher specimen number (in parenthesis) are followed separately by the data obtained during field study. The data accrued is compared with the classical literature to point out new uses and cross-cultural observations in India [1, 2, 3, 4]. The results are given in the following enumeration. New reports to India are asterisked (*) in the enumeration.

3. Enumeration

1* *Abrus precatorius* L. (Fabaceae), Gunj, Charmtadi (12). An half seed pounded in spoonful of honey is given to infants for stomach disorders.

2 *Aegle marmelos* (L.) Corr. (Rutaceae), Bel. (1). Pulp of ripe fruit about spoonful is given daily till cure, to children to control dysentery.

3 *Allium sativum* L. (Liliaceae) Lasun, Loson (06). Fresh paste of bulbets is kept under the sole of foot of a child. A pair of woolen socks and shoes are worn. It helps to cure asthma slowly.

4* *Aloe vera* L. (Liliaceae), Korphad (15). Latex and honey are homogenized in equal ratio. About 10 ml is given orally once to children to expel intestinal worms.

5* *Bridelia airy-shawii* P.T. Li. (Euphorbiaceae) Asan (48). A small quantity of stem bark paste is mixed in a cup of milk and given to kid for three to five days twice a day. It expels tape-worms and stops abdominal pain.

6* *Carica papaya* L. (Caricaceae), Papyee, Popai (83). A paste of few seeds is homogenized

in jaggery. It is consumed at morning with empty stomach for three days to kill worms in child.

7* *Carissa carandas* L. (Apocynaceae) Karwand. Kalimaina (62). Emulsion of root is mixed with citrus juice (*Citrus aruntifolia* Christm. SW.) and Camphor and applied on boils of kids as a cure.

8* *Cassia fistula* L. (Fabaceae), Bawa, Bahava, Ramdanda (54). Fruit pulp is rubbed in mother's milk. Half spoon of it is administered to a kid orally for a day to cure flatulence.

9* *Citrus aurantifolia* (Christm.) SW. (Rutaceae) Nimboo, Limboo (68). Excessive salvation in kids can be prevented by taking one spoonful of juice and honey at morning for a month or so.

10* *Corchorus trilocularis* L. (Tiliaceae) Chukanda (69). Extract of two or three seeds is prepared in mother's milk and given orally to children for stomach-ache.

11* *Cordia dichotoma* Forst. f. (Boraginaceae) Bhokar (88). Decoction of leaves, about half cup, if given at morning to children for expelling intestinal worms.

12 *Chrozophora prostrata* Dalz. (Euphorbiaceae) Unhali, Betna (91). Decoction of root, about half cup, is given twice a day for cough problem in children till cure.

13* *Cuscuta chinensis* Lam. (Cuscutaceae) (Amarvel (81). Decoction of stem, about half cup, is drunk at morning especially by child for expelling worms for three days.

14* *Euphorbia neriifolia* L. (Euphorbiaceae), Sabar, Sabarkand (132). Latex is homogenized in mother's milk and given orally half spoon at night for 3-4 days as a cure for stomach-ache.

15* *Hardwickia binata* Roxb. (Caesalpiniaceae) Anjan (292). Leaves are added in bath water to reduce body heat of kids.

16* *Helicteres isora* L. (Sterculiaceae) Murud Sheng (155). Stem is pounded in water. A spoonful of it is administered to children for flatulence once a day till cure.

17 *Limonia acidissima* L. (Rutaceae), Kavath (117). Spoonful of fruit pulp mixed in honey is given to kid once a day to stop dysentery till cure.

4. Discussion

In all, 17 angiospermic species are used by the tribal and rural people of Jalgaon district. They are administered in the form of extract, juice, emulsion, decoction or in pounded form. Their applications are critically compared with the Indian classical literature and recent publications. It is to be noted that out of 17 plant species, 13 species are little known and not documented in the Indian classical and recent literature. All these form new reports of medicinal uses for our country. The diseases are successfully treated by the tribal and rural people, apart from traditional herbal practitioners. It is desirable to undertake chemical and pharmacological studies to establish the therapeutic properties of plants used by them, so as to standardize their

methods of treatment. The claimed therapeutic value of the presently reported species also call for modern scientific studies like biological screening and chemical trials to prove their safety and effectiveness. The alarming rate of deforestation in the district and acculturation warrant to conserve the floras.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, the people of Jalgaon district have their own treatments to cure paediatric diseases. Their medical system is deeply rooted. Even on the advent of modern medicine, it is still in practice. The phytochemical screening of the species used may add new lead or alternate sources of molecules. Their wisdom can be employed after critical studies for health security at large.

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