

MEDICINAL USES OF PLANT ROOTS FROM SHEOHAR DISTRICT, BIHAR

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Abstract: The paper enumerates 39 medicinal plant species belonging to 39 genera and 28 families, which are used as folk medicine in the treatment of various ailments or diseases by the rural and common people of Sheohar district.

Keywords: Folk medicine, Medicinal plants, Vaidhya, Sheohar.

Introduction

Indian Systems of Medicine derives many of their curative tools from plants. Reference to plants used as drugs are often found in old literature (Atharveda, Charak Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, etc.). In spite of achievement of allopathic medicines the Indian Systems of Medicine still continue to provide medical cure to majority of the people on account of their cheaper cost and no side effects. Folklore use of medicinal plants from Trinidad; Gwalior forest circle, Madhya Pradesh; Chittor district, Andhra Pradesh; Dehradun; Amritsar; Yanandis of Sathyavedu Mandal; Chittor district, Andhra Pradesh; Barnawa in Baghat district Uttar Pradesh; and Baghat district of Uttar Pradesh have been reported.

Methodology

The Sheohar District situated in the latitude 26°51 N and longitude 85°29 E. It is bounded in the North by District Sitamarhi, in the South by District Muzaffarpur and in the West by District Purbi Champaran, respectively. Sheohar district comprises of 5 blocks of 53 panchayats comprising 203 villages in the district. The survey of folk medicinal plants was conducted for two consecutive years in villages of 5 Blocks in Sheohar district. The study involved field work and interviews, folk medicinal information collected from the native informants (Vaidhya or Hakim) and elderly village people. Interviews were held in villages and information was recorded; medicinal plants were collected and deposited in the University Department of Botany, B.R.A.B.U. Muzaffarpur Bihar.

Ethnomedicinal uses of plants root in Sheohar District

1. Plant name - *Achyrenthes aspera* Linn.

Family - Amaranthaceae

Local name - Chirchita

Uses - The root paste is applied externally at the point of scorpion sting thrice a day for two days for giving instant relief.

2. Plant name - *Acorus calamus* Linn.

Family - Araceae

Local name – Bach

Uses - Rhizome paste is given in fever to children thrice daily for 2-3 days.

3. Plant name - *Aerva lanata*(Linn.) Juss

Family - Amaranthaceae

Local name - Dedua ki chal

Uses - The root paste is rubbed on the forehead in headache for 3-4 times a day till relief.

4. Plant name - *Albizzia lebbbeck Benth.*

Family - Mimosaceae

Local name - Siras

Uses - Dilute root paste is given orally repeatedly till the patient regains consciousness in case of snakebite; paste is also applied externally on the bite point.

5. Plant name - *Argemone mexicana Linn.*

Family - Papaveraceae

Local name - Peelikateli

Uses - Root is given for expelling tapeworm.

6. Plant name - *Aristolochina bracteolata lamk*

Family - Aristolochiaceae

Local name - Kiromar

Uses - Dried roots are given to increase uterine contraction during labour. Root is also given thrice a day for expelling round worms.

7. Plant name - *Asparagus racemosus Wild*

Family - Liliaceae

Local name - Satawar

Uses - Root powder with cold water is given for biliousness; also given with honey; used as tonic.

8. Plant name - *Bauhinia variegata Linn*

Family - Caesalpiniaceae

Local name - Kachnar

Uses - Root decoction is administered for reducing corpulence.

9. Plant name - *Bombax variegata Linn.*

Family - Bombaceae

Local name - Samel

Uses - For the treatment of sexual debility, root powder is given with milk for 7 days in the morning. Treatment is repeated twice every alternate month.

10. Plant name - *Cissampelos pareira Linn.*

Family - Menispermaceae

Local name - Padh, Jaljamini

Uses - Root paste is applied locally in skin diseases. Root paste mixed with black pepper (Kali mirch) powder is given thrice a day for 5 days for the treatment of malaria.

11. Plant name - *Citrullus colocynthis Schrad*

Family - Cucurbitaceae

Local name - Indrayan

Uses - For internal inflammations, root powder mixed with castor oil is given for 3 days.

12. Plant name - *Clitoria ternatea Linn.*

Family - Papilionaceae

Local name - Gokarni

Uses - Root juice is given in chronic bronchitis to help expectoration.

13. Plant name - *Curcuma domestica* Val.

Family - Zingiberaceae

Local name - Haldi

Uses - For cold, milk boiled with turmeric and sugar is given. For catarrhal cough, fresh rhizome and Dhania (*Coriandrum sativum*) decoction is given thrice a day.

14. Plant name - *Cynodon dactylon* (Linn.) Pers

Family - Gramineae

Local name - doob ghas

Uses - Paste prepared from equal quantities of fresh Doob roots and Kans (*Saccharum spontaneum*) is given with cow milk and sugar early in the morning for one month to cure leucorrhoea.

15. Plant name - *Cyperus rotundus* Linn.

Family - Cyperaceae

Local name - Motha

Uses - Scraped roots with ginger and honey are given in gastric & intestinal disorders. For the treatment of malaria, decoction of equal quantities of moth rhizome, Gloe (*Tinospora cordifolia*) stem pieces and dried ginger is given thrice daily for 4-6 days.

16. Plant name - *Desmostachya bipinnata* Stapf.

Family - Gramineae

Local name - Dhab

Uses - The root infusion is usually given in jaundice and urinary troubles twice daily till cure.

17. Plant name - *Ficus religiosa* Linn.

Family - Moraceae

Local name - Pipal

Uses - Adventitious root of pipal mixed with sugar is given with fresh water in case of chicken pox once a daily for 7-8 days continuously.

18. Plant name - *Gloriosa superba* Linn.(Linn.)

Family - Liliaceae

Local name - Kalihari

Uses - Decoction of Kalihari root stock in sesame oil is filtered and applied twice a day followed by massage on joints having pain continued for one month.

19. Plant name - *Grewia asiatica* Linn.

Family - Tiliaceae

Local name - Phalsa

Uses - Root paste is applied on the back before going to bed in case of backache.

20. Plant name - *Hemidesmus indicus* Linn.

Family - Asclepiadaceae

Local name - Gurmar

Uses - Root paste is used in swellings twice a day. Root decoction is used thrice a day for one month as a blood purifier and in skin diseases.

21. Plant name - *Madhuca indica* Gmel.

Family - Sapotaceae

Local name - Mahua

Uses - Root paste in Madua liquor is given at bed time for 3-5 days continuously to expel intestinal worms.

22. Plant name - *Mimosa pudica* Linn.

Family - Mimosaceae

Local name - Chui-mui

Uses - Root powder with crystalline sugar for three days is given after menstruation to stop conception.

23. Plant name - *Mirabilis jalapa* Linn.

Family - Nyctaginaceae

Local name - Gulabans

Uses - Root poultice is applied over carbuncles, contusions and wounds.

24. Plant name - *Momordica charantia* Linn.

Family - Cucurbitaceae

Local name - Karela

Uses - Root paste is applied over piles.

25. Plant name - *Morus alba* Linn.

Family - Moraceae

Local name - Toot

Uses - Tea made from root is used twice a day for 5-7 days to treat diarrhoea.

26. Plant name - *Musa paradisiaca* Linn.

Family - Musaceae

Local name - Kela

Uses - Saffron (*Crocus sativus*) stamens mixed with banana roots is given once in the morning to cure even most complicated case of typhoid.

27. Plant name - *Nerium indicum* Mill.

Family - Apocynaceae

Local name - Kaner

Uses - Kaner (white flowers) roots ground and fried in ghee is applied externally on the ear of patient to cure inflammation.

28. Plant name - *Ocimum sanctum* Linn.

Family - Lamiaceae

Local name - Tulsi

Uses - Root decoction is given in malarial fevers; fresh root paste is applied to bites of insects and leeches.

29. Plant name - *Plumbago zeylanica* Linn.

Family - Plumbaginaceae

Local name - Chitra

Uses - Chitra roots are crushed and boiled in mustard oil is filtered and kept in a bottle. It is applied (3-4 drops) in the ear for pain, bleeding and itching twice a day.

30. Plant name - *Raphanus sativus* Linn.

Family - Cruciferae

Local name - Muli

Uses - Fresh root juice is given in 1-2 gm doses in urinary troubles and syphilis

31. Plant name - *Rauvolfia serpentine Benth.* (Ex.) Kurz.

Family - Apocynaceae

Local name - Sarpgandha

Uses - In case of mental depression, root powder is given twice a day for 2 days.

32. Plant name - *Sida cordifolia Linn.*

Family - Malvaceae

Local name - Kharaiti

Uses - Root extract is given once a day for 3 days and repeated twice every week in case of constipation.

33. Plant name - *Solanum virginiatum Linn.*

Family - Solanaceae

Local name - Berkateli

Uses - Fresh root extract mixed with equal quantity of lemon juice is applied daily for one month as a preventive measure against cataract.

34. Plant name - *Tephrosia purpurea (Linn.) Pers*

Family - Papilionaceae

Local name - Jungli-mathar

Uses - In fever and vomiting, root paste made with water and ginger is given with honey thrice a day for 3-4 days.

35. Plant name - *Tianthema portulacastrum Linn.*

Family - Aizoaceae

Local name - Santh

Uses - In case of ascites, root and black pepper paste is given twice daily for 8 days. During the treatment, no salt should be used.

36. Plant name - *Urena lobata Linn.*

Family - Malvaceae

Local name - Vilayti san

Uses - Root decoction is used as a remedy in severe windy colic.

37. Plant name - *Verbena officinalis Linn.*

Family - Verbenaceae

Local name - Peelagulabiphool

Uses - Root paste is used as an antidote to snakebite.

38. Plant name - *Withania somnifera (Linn.) Dunal.*

Family - Solanaceae

Local name - Aswagandha

Uses - Root powder is given with goat milk for about 2 months to cure arthritis especially of early stage. During the treatment, use of rice is avoided.

39. Plant name - *Zingiber officinalis Rosc.*

Family - Zingiberaceae

Local name - Ginger

Uses - tea is usually given in colds and influenza. Ginger fresh rhizome juice with honey is a domestic remedy for coughs and asthma. In case of common fever during pregnancy, dried rhizome is pounded and given orally with goat's milk twice daily for 4-5 days.

Results and discussion

In the study, roots of 39 medicinal plant species belonging to 39 genera and 28 families were found to be useful to cure various diseases or ailments. The plants are enumerated with their family, local name and uses.

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