

POPULAR HERBS OF CHHATISGARH AND THEIR USES IN THE TREATMENT OF COMMON DISEASES IN BASTER REGION

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ABSTRACT

Due to innovative researches human life expectancy is increasing but on the other hand the condition of human life is deteriorating due to environmental factors, such as pollution, fast life and stress. The ratio between births and deaths is tapering down. But men are suffering with some common diseases which are required to be treated.

An overview of historical events confirms the use of traditional herbs for instance, SANJIVNI a herb was brought by HANUMANJI to cure LAXMAN the brother of Lord RAM. Various instances explain that during ancient period Warrior's wounds, ailments of people were also treated through herbs. The present study is based on verdicts of traditional healers of Chhattisgarh during excursion tour to BASTER [area towards south of Chhattisgarh, a state full of dense forest and rich in herbs] who treat many diseases using herbs, as a challenge. Five common diseases are still being cured by Herbal medicines they are Asthma, Leucoderma, and fracture of bones, Piles and also problems related to sexual weakness. Herbs being used for the treatment of a few common respiratory diseases caused by gazer-ghass (*parthenium hysterophorus*) a species of flowering plant in Aster family-Asteracea Genus-parthenium is also called as gajar ghass or congress grass. It can Trigger allergy. Contact with plant causes dermatitis and respiratory malfunction in humans. This grass is commonly found in Chhattisgarh and responsible for respiratory diseases. Aduza, Bluma lacera and karayal seed etc. are used for curing respiratory diseases. Brinjal, Dhatura and many for Leucoderma and Ratti (*Abrus precolorius*) for treating sexual weakness. Doob (*Cynodon dactylon*) is good for indigestion and for eyes.

KEYWORDS: Herbs, Chhattisgarh, Bastar Region, Common Diseases

Health is wealth. Healthy person can achieve success in every walk of life. But there are many environmental factors such as pollutants, unsystematic routine and stress in life that make men unhealthy. Since time immemorial plants have been used for the treatment of various ailments. Even today several important drugs used in the modern system of medicine are obtained from plants. The use of medicinal plants has figured in several ancient manuscripts like the Rig-Veda, the Bible, and the Iliad. The Odyssey, and the History of Herodotus. As far back as 4000 BC the ancient Chinese were using drug plants. The earliest reference to the use of medicinal plants as a cure for diseases is found in the manuscript of "Eber Papyrus" written in 1600 B.C. The Greek and Romans were also familiar with many of the present day drugs as is evident from the work of Hippocrates (460-370 B.C.), Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) and Theophrastus (370-287 B.C.). Hippocrates, known as the Father of Medicine, was the first person who tried to explain the diseases on a scientific basis. Dioscorides De Materia Medica was an invaluable and authoritative book on medicinal plants. In the 16th century, several herbals were published: the important being those of Brunfels (1530), Bock

(1539), Fuchs (1542), Cordus (1561) and L'Obel (1576). At about the same time Paracelsus (1493-1541) advanced Doctrine of signatures, which advocated that all plants useful for man possessed certain forms and shapes that indicated their specific use in the treatment of similarly shaped organs in the human-body. For instance, plants with heart-shaped leaves were used for Cardiac disorders, walnut as brain tonic and pomegranate seeds for dental diseases. With the advancement of our knowledge, such superstitions were gradually lost. In present scenario, ASTHMA is prevalent in Chhattisgarh. Besides many reasons, one of the reasons may be assigned to, an obnoxious weed *Parthenium hysterophorous* found in Chhattisgarh. The pollen of this weed is responsible for respiratory diseases.

Chhattisgarh is a state with dense forest and rich in traditional herbs. There are 15000 types of herbs which have been declared and are still being used by traditional healers to cure patients from India as well as abroad, The patients suffering with various diseases are satisfied with the treatment given by the traditional healers.

Interactions with patients taking herbal medicines reveal that they are contented with the treatment to the extent that they are propagating their experiences to other sufferers.

There are traditional healers who use these herbs alone or in combination with others both internally and externally depending upon the types of diseases. Amongst many herbs, there are few herbs which are still being used for curing common diseases such as asthma, leucoderma, fracture of bones, piles and diseases related to sexual weakness. This study is based on interactions with traditional healers of Baster area of Chhattisgarh region.

A few herbs are as follows

For the treatment of ASTHAMA- Traditional healers use *Blumea lacera* is an obnoxious weed of *rabi* crop with camphoric smell.

Process- This blumia herb is collected from crop fields dried and its herbal cigarettes are made and sold to local herb buyer, which is used by Asthama Patients.

Treatment- In case of acute asthmatic attack the patient is advised to inhale the fume of dried blumia leaves. Asthmatic patients are given herbal cigarettes prepared in combination with other herbs to check asthmatic attack. Traditional healers believe that an insect Blumnia leaf beetle (*Chrysolina madrasae*), if Infest blumia leaves, they are more beneficial.



This blumia is also used as fly repellent and in diseases of mouth. It is locally known as kukurmutta, kukronda, kukkurchedi and jangli muli.



Figure: KOHA (*terminalia arjuna*)



Figure: Blumia lacera

For the cure of asthma another herb used is **Adusa** known as vasa or vasak in Sanskrit. The scientific name of Adusa is *adhatoda vasica* and belongs to *acanthaceae* family. Traditional healers make leaf decoction for treating asthma. It is also used as herbal cigarette. Its odour also repels flies and its leaves are used to save clothes and stored grains from harmful insects and mites. Another reputed herbs used for the cure of asthma locally known as *duddhi* (*Euphorbia hirta*). Besides this entire mango leave, *Dhatura* leaves, ginger, turmeric with milk and lavender are also used for curing asthma.



Figure :Dhatura



Figure : Hadjod

KOHA (*Terminalia arjuna*) found near Mahanadi in Chhattisgarh is used for making medicine for curing heart-diseases and also used as ground-water indicator. Plant is used for curing over 50 diseases. During Sharad-Poornima, a Kheer is given to asthma patient free of charge, in this Kheer Koha is the main ingredient used to cure asthma.

Herbs For Treating Bone Diseases

In CHHATISGARH there are approximately 40 species of herbs to cure bone diseases. They are used both internally as well as externally.

KOHA- (*Terminalia arjuna*) and bambri (*Acacia nilotica*) are used for bone fracture. The aqueous paste is applied as plaster and bambri seeds are used for reunion of bones.

Hadjod (*Cissus quadrangula*) and bhelwa (*Semecarpus anacardium*) are used for bone fracture an exotic weed upetorium is used to make herbal oil to reduce bone pain.

Herbs For Treating Leucoderma

Leucoderma is commonly found disease in Chhattisgarh. Traditional healers of leucoderma patients advise them to avoid brinjal (ayurdarshi) but healers use its oil made from brinjal fruit externally. Brinjal (*Solanum melongena* L.) is used for the treatment of liver and skin diseases. They collect the fresh fruit, boil it in water and collect its extract. This extract is further boiled in base oil. When all water content evaporates then oil is collected. This herbal oil is considered as a boon for leucoderma patients. Patients themselves have accepted that this oil slowly fed up spots in very less time and slowly the patient is cured.

Karayal seeds are also used as medicinal herb for the treatment of Leucoderma. The seeds are mixed in sirka (vinegar) and an aqueous paste is made. The patients are asked to apply paste on the affected part and expose in sunlight. To make it more effective Bemchi (*Psoralea corylijulia*), Dhatura (*Dhatura stramonium*) and yellow leaves of FUDHAR (*Calotropis gigantean*) depending on severity of patient are also added. Karayal is under cultivation in C.G. but Bemchi, Dhatura & Fudhar grow in waste land. This is considered as one of the promising medicine for leucoderma.

Herbs For Treating Sexual Weaknes

Ratti, a beautiful but toxic seeds are used as weights by goldsmiths and beads for necklaces. Each seed weighs about 1.75 grams. In Keshkal valley of C.G. variety of Ratti seeds occur. 1- Red seed with black eye 2. Black seed with red eye. 3. White seed. This oil is good for sexually ill patients in order to increase sexual desire and stamina.

Process

MUCUNA Seeds- black seeded but brown coloured seeds having black spots are more effective. These seeds are dipped in cow's milk for 24 hours and after 24 hours again dipped in human semen for 24 hours. Semen of unmarried youth is only used. Youth consuming tobacco are rejected. Then these are thoroughly boiled with cow's milk. After wards ,boiled seed are washed and mixed with sesum oil. This is kept in a bottle and bottles are buried under ground for 4 weeks. After 4 weeks oil is used externally on male genitals to increase stamina.



Figure: Ratti Seed



Figure: Karayal Seed

Along with many herbs traditional healers also use insects and mites for treatment a few among them are as follows;

Trombidum sp

Climax lectularius

Helicoverpa armigera

Pholuris sp

Oecophylla smaragdina

Aspidomorpha miliaris

Termites

Process- The excreta of full fed insects and mites are used as folk medicines for the treatment of complicated diseases. Recent development in the field of herbal treatment has become the need of the day but the contribution of traditional healers of chhattisgarh and their knowledge should be considered as reference.

Interaction with traditional healers and verdicts of patients being cured confirms the use of herbs for the treatment of many diseases. Besides allopathy, Homeopathy and other alternative medical science, traditional healers treat diseases with challenge and conquer.

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