

Ethnomedicinal plants used by the people of Saurashtra to cure hiccup

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ABSTRACT

Results of ethnobotanical studies carried out in the Saurashtra region, Gujarat are presented. The usage of wild plants by the native people for the cure of hiccup is described. The use of 35 species, belonging to 20 families together with their local names have been enumerated.

Key words : Ethnomedicinal plants, Hiccup, Saurashtra.

INTRODUCTION

The tribals/aboriginal people live in remote areas, which remain cut off from main centers of civilization for many months at a stretch. They have to depend on the jungles for their needs especially for food and medicines. These people are very knowledgeable about the use of plants against various diseases. The tribals use the plants in a different, effective and novel manner. Scientific investigations of tribal practices especially their use of herbal medicines would open new area of knowledge.

Many tribals of different ethnic groups like Maldhari, Maher, Koli, Rabari, Bharvad, Charan and others inhabit Saurashtra region of India. There is no scientific and systematic documentation of plants used by them due to lack of communication, inner line permit, insurgency, remoteness of villages and nonacceptability of outsiders.

Ethnobotanical work of this region is known through Thakar(1910), Jain(1991), Kirtikar and Basu(1996), Shastri(1996), Dastur(1996), Bhatt *et al.* (2001).

Therefore, the present investigation has been carried out in Saurashtra region, Gujarat with a view to find out ethnomedicinal plants, particularly used in hiccup in addition

to other uses by aboriginal tribes.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was carried out in Saurashtra during 2002-2005. The ethnobotanical data was collected through interviews, discussions and observations in the following ways. Many remote villages were visited to interact with tribals living there. Care was taken that elders were part of each group, as they had more knowledge about plant uses. Information was recorded especially from native people, who were familiar with herbal medicines. Data were also collected through supplying questionnaires in their local language prepared by the translator (native people).

The specimens were identified with the help of local flora and preserved following standard methods at herbarium of Botany department, M. D. Science College, Porbandar.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present work deals with ethnomedicinal plants used by the people of Saurashtra as a remedy to overcome hiccup 35 species of 32 genera of 20 families are used by

Table 1 : List of plants used in hiccup.

| S. No. | Scientific Name | Family | Varnacular Name | Part(s) Used | Mode of administration |
|--------|--------------------------------------|----------------|-----------------|--------------|---|
| 1 | <i>Aconitium heterophyllum</i> Wall. | Ranunculaceae, | Ativish | Root | Powder of root is taken orally. |
| 2 | <i>Aloe vera</i> L. | Liliaceae | Kunvar Pathu | Leaves | Extract of leaves is taken orally. |
| 3 | <i>Anethum graveolens</i> L. | Apiaceae | Suwa | Fruit | Powder of fruit is taken orally. |
| 4 | <i>Apium graveolens</i> L. | Apiaceae | Ajmo | Seed | Extract of seed is mixed with salt is taken orally. |
| 5 | <i>Arundinella squarrosus</i> L. | Poaceae | Vala | Leaves | Extract of leaves is taken orally. |
| 6 | <i>Blumea lacera</i> Dc. | Asteraceae | Kapur | Seed | Powder of seeds is mixed with honey and taken orally. |
| 7 | <i>Cannabis sativa</i> L. | Cannabinaceae | Bhang | Seed | Powder of seeds is mixed with honey and taken orally. |
| 8 | <i>Cinnamomum Zeylanicum</i> Blume. | Lauraceae | Taj | Stem bark | Powder of stem bark is taken orally |
| 9 | <i>Cicer arietinum</i> L. | Fabaceae | Chana | Fruit | Powder of fruit is mixed with boiled milk and taken orally. |

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