



A REVIEW

Medicinal and Aromatic plants: “Natural bio-chemicals and medicine factories”

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Abstract : Since thousands years back approximately around 900 BC, medicinal plants are considered as a source of many biomolecules with therapeutic potential. Herbal medicines are considered as safer, better, physiologically compatible and cost-effective. The oldest evidence of medicinal and aromatic plants depicts that with the emergence of human civilization, plants have been considered as the main source to heal and cure various serious ailments. It has been proven that the secondary metabolites e.g. alkaloid, glycosides, flavonoides, steroids etc present in the medicinal plants possesses ability to prevent occurrence of some of the diseases, means medicinal plants acts as a “preventive medicine”. Medicinal plants have a paramount importance and a great interest due to its pharmaceutical, cosmetic and nutritional values. Some plants are also considered as an important source of nutrition and are known to have a variety of compounds with potential therapeutic properties. India is the principal repository of large number of medicinal and aromatic plants or we can say India is one of the rich mega-biodiversity countries of the world. Medicinal plants are “backbone” of traditional medicinal system (TMS). Crude drugs are usually dried parts of medicinal and aromatic plants (MAPs) such as roots, stems, wood, bark, seeds, fruits, flowers, leaves, rhizomes, whole plant etc. that form the essential raw material for the production of medicines in various systems of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, Tibatian, Tribal and Homeopathy. According to the survey of the World Health Organization (WHO), about 80% of the world population are using herbs and other traditional medicines for their primary healthcare and have established three kinds of herbal medicines: raw plant material, processed plant material, and herbal products. Now days, variety of available herbs are used throughout the world and they continue to promote good health. As the benefits from medicinal and aromatic plants are recognized, these plants will have a special role for humans in the future. The present review on medicinal and aromatic plants revealed similar combination of studies.

Key Words : Medicinal, Aromatic plants, Herbal medicines, Phytoconstituents

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