

## Sacramental belief prevailing in Valsad district

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Sacramental belief means using particular plants in particular nakshatra or particular time, or just keeping the plants with patient can also cure the patient. There are many sacramental beliefs which are prevailing in this area where people use medicinal plants or other things which they believe can cure the disease.

Humanity, since eternity has lived with different forces of nature, including plants and animals. The only goal of primitive life would have been to survive and proliferate through progeny. The accumulated quantum of knowledge lead humanity towards modernization. The modernization brought in many novelties. The society controlled, resisted, accepted and at times rejected novelties. All the changes had to face the ups and downs in the society. Whenever “new” was accepted the advocates of “new” normally condemned the “old”. The “old” suffered. However, the old also survived because any system would always have at least some minority as its proponent. The system of healing also treaded through such path of ups and downs. The older system was “Ayurveda”. The great science, which served this country for eons. Ayurveda suffered oblivion during the reigns of foreign rulers, almost for 400 years. The modern healers used molecule based medicines either derived from plants or synthesized *in vitro*.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

During our work we had visited the site several times, especially on Saturday and Sunday, on which generally victims or sufferers from disease go to “Bhuvas” and ‘Bhagats” to be cured. We met many field workers, farmers and senior citizens of the area to collect the information in the field of Ethnobotany. They were proved very rich with the knowledge. They told us many uses of several plants. There are many sacramental beliefs which

are prevailing in this area where people use medicinal plants or other things which they believe can cure the disease like, by plucking the roots, cutting the branches or collecting the leaves at particular time or nakshatra, or just keeping the plant attached to the body can cure many diseases. Many healers prescribed the plants which patients do not have to intake but just tie and the disease is supposed to be cured. The other major sacramental belief is to pluck the parts of the leaves in particular nakshatra but some healers told that by publisising this, the users won’t cut the plants at any time or as and when required and we can save the plants.

### Sacramental notes:

#### Fever:

Pluck the roots of *Ipomoea turpethum* (L.) R. Br. (Nasotar) in Pushya Nakshatra and tie it with red thread. Tie it on hand and it will cure fever.

Pluck the roots of *Achyranthes aspera* L. var. *aspera* (Aghedi) in Pushya Nakshatra and tie it with red thread. Tie it on hand and it will cure fever.

#### Insomnia :

Keep the roots of *Abrus precatorius* L. (Safed chanothi) below head, one will get very long and sound sleep.

Tie the roots of *Hygrophila auriculata* (Schum.) Heine (Ankhro) on the body and go to sleep. One will get better and long sleep.

#### Easy delivery :

Bring the plant of *Datura metel* L. (Dhatura) on Sunday and tie a small branch to the pregnant lady.

Select and mark the roots of *Celastrus paniculatus* Willd. (Malkakdi) on Sunday before 12.00. O clock in the morning. At 4 inch from bottom of the root tie a black thread, then remove it and tie it to woman’s back. Tie it till one gets labour pain. On delivery it should be removed. If one wants second child then one should throw it in sea in full tide, if one throw’s in ebb one would not get second child.

Take the roots or nodes of *Ipomoea sinensis* (Desr.) Choisy (Suthaidi) and tie it in pure cotton cloth. Tie this

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