

To study the status of ethno medicine to cure abdominal pain and acidity through home remedies in Valsad district, Gujarat

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ABSTRACT

The status of ethnomedicine to cure abdominal pain through home remedies in Valsad district of Gujarat state was tried through personal contact with the tribal people. The formula used by the healers of the arid to cure abdominal pain and acidity has been described here. Their formula is proved very much important as it became quite successful in curing disease even after the patients were not successfully cured in the hospital.

Gohil, T.G., Alpesh B. Thakor and Rao V. H. (2011). To study the status of ethno medicine to cure abdominal pain and acidity through home remedies in Valsad district, Gujarat, *Ann. Pharm. & Pharm. Sci.*, 2 (1 & 2) : 54 -56.

Key words : Abdominal pain, Acidity, Ethnomedicine

INTRODUCTION

Gujarat is proud of being pioneer in having first state level flora viz., Flora of Gujarat State (Shah, 1978). In fact the pioneering work was the identification and status survey of medicinal plants (Umadevi, 1988, Umadevi *et al.*, 1989). Umadevi (1988) listed about 748 taxa having medicinal importance plants.

Gujarat state is divided into six zones. Among this, zone 1 consists of South Gujarat, which includes Valsad, Navsari and Dangs Districts. This area receives moderately high rainfall varying from 1500 to 2000 mm/annum, the forest type of the zone is predominantly moist and deciduous. They have reported 923 medicinal plant species from this zone. In terms of density of species diversity (No. of species per 100 sq.km.), the Zone ranks first in the state with 13.17 species/ 100 sq.km.

The ethnobotany of Valsad is known through the works of Patel (1971); Contractor (1986); in fact these

workers have studied the flora of the area. While surveying the floristic components the information came in incidentally, such information is appended with the botanical description of the taxon. The exclusive ethnomedicinal study of the area was carried out by Gopal (1989). All the earlier data lacked the detailed recipe and the dosage.

Present work has attempted to fill in this lacuna.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Survey was carried out for Valsad district and surrounding area. A questionnaire was prepared in english and Gujarati consisting of different questions for the details of plants and people who were giving the information but practically it was not possible to collect all the details at the spot, prior information like name of the person, village, age, caste and the recipe were noted. Tantrik's, Bhuva's, Bhagat's, and the professional medicinal healers were contacted. Many of them did not entertain us and bluntly told us that they would not give us any information, many of them gave us the interviews but were not ready to tell us the plants which they utilized, many could not explain us the details of the plants which they utilized and many told us such a vernacular names that it was not possible for us to know their botanical source as they were not having the samples. But there were many people who gave all the information

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and also showed plants and gave the samples too.

The questionnaire, which was used as a major tool is appended here.

The questionnaires prepared for the data collection was as follows:

Information of the person:

Name:
 Village:
 Age:
 Community:
 Giving treatment to: Human/ Animal or both.
 Learnt from whom: Ancestors or self-practicing.
 Questionnaire for the recipe:
 Local name of plants used:
 Particular character of plants:
 Used for : Animal/Human/ both.
 Used for which disease:
 Which part of plant is used?
 Use as single or mixed with:
 Recipe:
 Used fresh/ dry or stored material:
 Anupan: (Adjuant) honey, milk, ghee, curd, lukewarm water, or simple water.
 Administration: oral/tropical/ smoke/nasal/ anal etc.
 Side effects if any.

Recipes to cure abdominal pain:

Take out the juice of *Raphanus sativus* L. and add some black salt to it, drink this in the morning to cure stomach ache.

Lick the ripe *Mangifera indica* and immediately drink milk on it. It will smoothen the inner linings of intestine and will cure the stomach ache.

Take some part of root of *Cyperus rotundus* L. and crush it with water and give it to the patient suffering from abdomen pain.

Make the decoction of *Garcinia indica* L. add a pinch of *hing* and rock salt and drink when it is hot.

Dry the flowers of *Madhuka indica* L. in sun for 1 to 2 days. Then soak them in water for 3 days. Take 1 litre of water and boil it, add the flowers which were soaked. Boil for 1 to 2 hours to get fermented drink. Allow it to cool and fill it in bottle. Drink 2 spoons with water for 2 times a day for 1 month.

Fry a small piece of *Ferula asafoetida* L. in castor oil and mix well. Take it with milk. In children it can be rubbed over the abdomen till it turns dry. Asafoetida powder can also be mixed in a glass of butter milk and taken to cure abdominal pain.

Swallow 1 teaspoon *Carum copticum* Hiern. seeds with a warm water and a pinch of salt.

Mix 1-teaspoon pure ghee with a pinch of *Ferula asafoetida* L. and swallow with warm water.

Mix *Carum copticum* Hiern. with lemon juice and dry in the sun. Bottle it and have a teaspoon when needed.

Grind 2 teaspoons each *Carum copticum* Hiern., and dried *Zingiber officinale* L. into a fine powder. Add a little black salt. Take 1 teaspoon of this mixture with 1 teacup warm water frequently.

Five to ten grams of *Phyllanthus emblica* L. powder mixed with butter milk should be taken for 1-2 days.

Mix powdered *Anethum graveolens* L. and black salt in equal proportion. Take a spoonful with warm water. This will help to release gas from stomach and relieve the pain.

Recipes to cure acidity:

Mix triphala churna with churna of bark of *Oroxylum indicum* (L.) Vent. and *Tecoma undulata* G. Don, properly. Take 1 spoon of this powder with 1 cup of water.

Take 1 inch size of bark of *Oroxylum indicum* (L.) Vent. tree, crush in water. Strain it and remove the residue. Drink the juice once a day for 5 days.

Take the roots of *Achyranthes aspera* L., crush and give this with water.

Take one leaf of Aloe vera and cut it into pieces and remove the gel. Boil the gel in water and drink the mixture early in the morning. Prefer not to eat anything before and after taking this mixture.

Add the juice of a lemon in a glass of warm water. Divide into three portions. Take every one hour in the evening for a few days at a stretch. Sip slowly and retain the juice in the mouth for some time, do not gulp.

Smash bananas, add milk and take during breakfast regularly for a few days.

In case one gets foul belches and feels burning sensation in the chest region, take 5 g of honey and add 5 g of *Terminalia chebula* (churna), and drink the mixture with water.

Mix a spoonful of honey with few drops of lemon juice and drink with water.

Take 5 g of honey, add 5 g of *Terminalia chebula* L. and water in it. Have it once in a day after having food.

Terminalia chebula L. is considered the best medicine to cure acidity. Take 2g of *Terminalia chebula* L. mixed with 2g of jaggery, along with water after dinner. Continue this for at least a week to cure acidity.

Boil a spoonful (5 g) of *Asparagus* sp. with a cup of milk and a cup of water, when water from cup of water

evaporates add sugar candy, cool it and drink.

Take 1 teaspoon *Trigonella foenum-graecum* L. seeds powder along with milk or buttermilk twice a day for a few days.

Add ginger juice in a honey and make the patient lick it twice a day. In case honey not available then you can replace by 10 g of old jaggery. Administer orally about 5 g of this combination each time.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The present work is the result of about one year extensive fieldwork and interviewing about 20 tribal men and women who were herbal practitioners. They have learned this use of herbal plants either from their ancestors or by the other experienced people. At many places the Guru shisya parampara is still in practice. At many places we were not able to get the voucher specimen, and those recipes are not included, but many were helpful in giving the details. It was found that these healers were having their regular visitors and they were famous for giving the medicine for the disease abdominal pain and acidity. Many people from big cities visited them after the patients were not successfully cured in the hospital, and they were happy to get it cured by using the regular dosage of medicine given by these healers. It was seen that large numbers of visitors who use to come through the references were happy to get cured, and the other important thing which was observed that these practitioners were not charging

any amount but the product of anupan has to be purchased.

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