

Medicinal plants used in gynaecological disorders in Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh, India

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The Chittoor district is located in the southern most region of Andhra Pradesh. It spreads over an area of 15, 152 sq. kms with a forest area of 4,512,40 sq. kms with total population of 37.35 lakhs of which 25 lakhs people are living in rural areas and 8-10 lakhs are in urban areas and the density of population is 247 sq.km. It lies between 12°37' - 14°8' of North latitude and between 78°33' - 79°55' of Eastern latitude. The district is bounded by Nellore district of Andhra Pradesh and Chengal pattu district of Tamil Nadu on the east, Kolar district of Karnataka on the west, Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh on the north, North Arcot and Dharmapuri district of Tamil Nadu on the south. The temperature varies from minimum of 19°C-21°C to a maximum of 31°C-45°C. Rainfall is received by the south-west monsoon and north-east monsoon.

The tribes of the area are Yanadi, Yerukula, Sugali and Nakkala. Tribes Yanadi and Yerukula are dominant in the east division, while majority of Sugali tribes are concentrated in the west division. These people and the people of some rural areas depend upon the local plants for the treatment of various diseases. The traditional use of medicinal plants of this district are very popular as reported in the literature. (Kirtikar and Basu, 1975; Sudarsanam, 1987; Madhava Chetty and Narayana Rao, 1989; Venugopal 1992; Rao *et al.*, 1997; Yoganarasimhan, 2000 and Swami Ramdev, 2005.) Twenty two plant species belonging to eighteen families have been collected from different areas of the district. Ethnomedicinal information was gathered during field study, from knowledgeable persons, yanadis, yerukulas, old experienced people,

through conversation and discussion. The plants are arranged alphabetically followed by family, local name, part used, mode of preparation and administration wherever possible and the uses are based on traditional knowledge.

– *Aerva lanata* (L.) Juss. F: Amaranthaceae

Local name : Konda pindi

Whole plant is used in the form of powder or decoction for urinary infections during menopause for 2-3 months.

– *Ailanthus excelsa* Roxb. F: Simaroubaceae

Local name : Peddamanu,

Leaf juice or fresh juice of bark is given along with rice water with honey to prevent pains after delivery (past partum treatment)

– *Aloe vera* (L.) Burm.f. F: Liliaceae :

Local name : Kutikalabanda

2-3 g of the gum is taken along with sugar orally for relieving pain during menstruation.

– *Amaranthus tricolor* Linn. F : Amaranthaceae

Local name : Dantukoora, Thotakoora

Leaf decoction used in menorrhagia from 1st day of menstruation to 5th day.

– *Apium graveolens* Linn. F: Apiaceae

Local name : Vamu

The fine powder of the fruit is made into paste and generally taken orally in delayed menstrual periods.

– *Aristolochia bracteolata* Lan. F: Aristolochiaceae

Local name : Gadidhagadapa

8-10 leaves and 4-8 pepper made into paste and is taken to relieve pains during menstruation.

– *Aristolochia indica* Linn. F: Aristolochiaceae

Local name : Nalla eswari, Eswari

15-20 g of root paste is taken from the 4th day of menstruation continually for 3-4 days, it will act as herbal contraceptive.

– *Bauhinia racemosa* Lam. F: Caesalpinaceae

Local name : Pacchhari chettu, Arichettu.

The decoction of the bark taken orally ½ glass thrice in a day to control the menorrhagia.

– *Carica papaya* Linn. F: Caricaceae

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Local name : Boppaya

Latex is smooth muscle relaxant and promotes breast milk by increasing the prolactin levels.

– *Coriandrum sativum* Linn. F: Apiaceae

Local Name: Daniyalu

Fruit decoction relaxes the uterine and pelvic muscles to ease delivery.

– *Costus speciosus* (Koen.) J.E.Sm. F: Costaceae

Local name : Changala gadda, Kevukinne

20 g of tuber is eaten by the tribal women to prevent pregnancy or conception from 1st day of menstruation to 7 days.

– *Cassia occidentalis* Linn. F: Caesalpiniaceae

Local name : Kasintha, Kasinda

Paste of root and 5g of haridra taken once a day for about 5-6 days controls the leucorrhoea and conception is also prevented.

– *Dalbergia sissoo* Roxb. ex. DC. F: Fabaceae

Local name : Sissoo, Eridi

Leaf powder and sugar candy made in to a paste and taken in the morning in menorrhagia for a period 7-10 days.

– *Dodonaea viscosa* (L.) Jacq. F: Sapindaceae

Local name : Bandaru, Banderu

Paste of leaves and jaggery taken from the 1st day of menstruation to 5th day causes abortion, when the foetus is 6-8 weeks of age.

– *Euphorbia hirta* Linn. F: Euphorbiaceae

Local name : Nanubalu, Chukka chettu

½ cup of leaf juice added with pinch of pepper powder is taken orally for relieving pain during menstruation for a week.

– *Leucas aspera* (Wild.) Link. F: Lamiaceae

Local name: Tummi

8-10 leaves, added with pepper (4 or 5) and garlic (1 or 2) and made into paste is taken in the evenings for control of dysmenorrhoea.

– *Phyllanthus amarus* Schum. and Thorn F: Euphorbiaceae

Local name : Nelausiri

5g of whole plant paste in butter milk is taken twice a day to control menorrhagia from 1st day of menstruation to 6th day.

– *Santalum album* Linn. F: Santalacane

Local name: Sri gandhamu

One spoon of wood powder mixed with equal amount

of musterd powder is given twice daily for 3 to 4 days from the 4th day of menstruation for conception

– *Saraka asoca* (Roxb.) de Wilde. F: Caesalpiniaceae

Local name : Asoka chettu

A tea cup of decoction of the bark is taken twice a day about two weeks, to check the menorrhagia.

– *Soymida febrifuga* (Roxb.) A. Juss F: Meliaceae

Local name : Somi, Sevamanu

5-6 g of bark powder is taken twice a day to relieve pains during menstruation

– *Sphearanthus indicus* Linn. F: Asteraceae

Local name : Bodatharamu

2-3 teaspoon of whole plant powder is given in rice gruel to induce labour pains in a gap of one hour.

– *Terminalia bellerica* (Gaertn.) Roxb. F: Combretaceae

Local name : Thandra

3-4 tea spoons of fine powder of fruit is given twice a day for about seven days from 1st day of menstruation for conception.

Conclusion:

The total number of plant species utilized in studied region is 22 from eighteen families. The common dosage forms includes decoction, paste, juice, and powder. A decoction is prepared by boiling the plant parts in water for 10-15 min. Most of the herbal remedies are taken orally.

It can be concluded that the local and tribal people of the district have very good knowledge on the use of medicinal plants. But such knowledge of medicinal plants is restricted to a few persons in a rural area. Therefore, it is urgent that suitable requirements are needed in order to protect the traditional knowledge in particular area with reference to medicinal plant utilization and it was found that traditional ethno-medicine still persists among the tribals of the district. Even though majority of people give their first choice to modern medicine.

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