Diarrhoea: Local Herbal Treatment from Sakoli Taluka of Bhandara District of Maharashtra State

Zingare Arun K

Dept. of Botany, M. B. Patel College, Sakoli-441802.
Email: arunzingare@yahoo.in

ABSTRACT

Sakoli taluka of Bhandara District is rich in plant diversity. Many tribal communities reside in the region. An ethnomedicinal survey was conducted on the treatment of various diseases in this area. During the investigations, 14 species of plants belonging to 14 families were recorded as being used for treatment of diarrhea, which were used by the tribal peoples as the traditional healing medicine for this ailment. A brief enumeration of the plants along with their mode of uses has been provided.

Key words: Diarrhoea; Sakoli; Ethnomedicine; Traditional Knowledge

INTRODUCTION

According to the World Health Organization, diarrhoea is the passage of three or more loose or liquid stools per day, or more frequently than is normal for the individual. It is usually a symptom of gastrointestinal infection and this can be caused by a variety of bacterial, viral and other parasitic organisms. Diarrhoea is one of the leading causes of death among children under five globally. More than one in ten child-deaths, about 800,000 each year, are due to diarrhoea (Bryce et al., 2005, UNICEF/WHO 2009). In India alone, about 0.4 million children die due to diarrhoea annually (Kumar and Vollmer 2011). Use of local wild plants against these kinds of ailments has always been an integral part of indigenous traditional knowledge. Traditional healers employ methods based on the ecological, socio-cultural and religious background of their people to provide health care (Anyinam 1995, Gesler 1992, Good 1980). Diarrhoea is the commonest ailment suffered by children in this area, especially in the interior part of the district where, local health care is not available. Not only the childrens but adults also suffer from this ailment in enormous amount especially during rainy season. To cure this ailment, there are numerous traditional methods or practices followed by the folk people and local tribal communities like Halba, Gond, Pradhan of the Sakoli taluka of Bhandara District (Eastern Vidarbha). This area has a rich floral diversity with enormous number of ethnomedicinal plants indicating rich heritage of traditional medicines (Zingare et al., 2012). Area of the district is under forest cover with recognized national parks and wildlife sanctuaries.
METHODOLOGY

An ethnobotanical survey was conducted indifferent tribal localities in the district during the years 2011 - 2012. Different communities of people were interviewed, local herbal practitioners like the Medicine men, vaidus, poojari and also with senior men and women using questionnaire (Jain 1995). These people have been using various plants for the treatment of diarrhoea especially in the rural areas. The information regarding mode of use, parts used, amount and periodicity of dosage and local name was collected from them. The voucher specimens were processed into mounted herbarium sheets following the conventional methodology (Jain and Rao 1977) and were deposited at the Departmental Herbarium.

Enumeration

In the enumeration, the names of 14 plants used by the ethnic people of Sakoli taluka for the treatment of diarrhoea and dysentery have been arranged alphabetically along with their correct botanical name, family, English and local name, parts used, and method of administration. [Abbreviations used: EN = English Name; LN = Local Name].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Acorus calamus Linn. [Acoraceae]; E N: Sweet sedge; LN: Wekhand.
Powdered dried rhizome is taken orally with a glass of luke-warm water, 3 - 4 times a day till cured.

Aegle marmelos (Linn.) Correa [Rutaceae]; E N: Bael Tree; LN: 'Bel';
Pulp of ripe fruit is chewed and swallowed 2 - 3 times a day.

Bauhinia variegata Linn. [Caesalpiniaceae]; EN: Buddhist bauhinia; LN: Shahara;
The dried roots and bark of stem are cut into small pieces and 2 - 3 spoonfuls of its extracted juice in water are administered thrice a day till cured.

Bombax ceiba Linn. [Bombacaceae]; EN: Red cotton tree; LN: Kate sawar.
Two spoonfuls of the powdered dried root is taken orally with water before bed.

Cannabis sativa Linn. [Cannabaceae]; EN: Hemp; LN: 'Ganja';
Dried flowers are smashed and taken in empty stomach once daily in the morning.

Centella asiatica (Linn.) Urb. [Apiaceae]; EN: Indian pennywort; LN: 'Bramhi';
The aerial parts are mixed with young shoots of Justicia adhatoda (in equal proportion) and 2 spoonfuls of the paste are taken with water against juvenile dysentery.

Holarrhena antidysenterica (Buch.-Ham.) G. Don [Apocynaceae]; EN: Easter Tree; LN: Kuda;
Three spoonfuls of bark and seed decoction in water are administered orally against diarrhoea and amoebic dysentery.

Justicia adhatoda Linn. [Acanthaceae]; EN: Malabar nut; LN: 'Adulsa';
The aerial parts are mixed with young shoots of Justicia adhatoda (in equal proportion) and 2 spoonfuls of the paste are taken with water against juvenile dysentery.

Mimosa pudica Linn. [Mimosaceae]; EN: Touch me not plant; LN: Lajalu;
3 - 4 spoonful of root-decoction is taken orally thrice a day.

Oxalis corniculata Linn. [Oxalidaceae]; EN: Yellow sorrel; LN: 'Ambali, Chicha';
7 - 8 grams of fresh leaves and shoots are chewed 3 - 4 times a day and its juice is sucked and swallowed.

Psidium guajava Linn. [Myrtaceae]; EN: Guava; LN: 'peru';
Young leaves are chewed for its juice. The semi-ripe fruits and the bark are also eaten to cure diarrhoea.

Punica granatum Linn. [Punicaceae]; EN: Pomegranate; LN: 'Daalimb';
Extract of unripe fruits is taken orally 3 - 4 times a day.

Rhododendron arboreum Smith [Ericaceae]; EN: Nepalese Rhododendron Tree; LN: Lalburansh'; Young leaves and corolla are chewed and swallowed during diarrhoea.

Terminalia chebula Retz. [Combretaceae]; EN: Chebulic myrobalan; LN: 'Hirda';
Powder of dried fruits and bark are administered orally with water in empty stomach.

Traditional health care system is helpful for saving the life of rural peoples where the modern health care
systems are not available and also in such regions where modern health care is not available at all.

In the present study, it was found that a total of 14 species of plants belonging to 14 families are being used as an antidiarrhoeal and antidysentric medicines by the tribal people of the Sakoli region. These traditional people have a strong belief in their practice and they have developed such knowledge through the centuries of their existence. But careful approaches should be followed before administering these drugs. The lack of proper documentation and the inroad facilities of the developed world are forcing depletion of this traditional knowledge, which has to be preserved for the future benefit of the human civilization. The documentation and digitalization of ethnic information is of utmost importance. However, the present study may create some awareness and precautions among the people which might help to conserve their rich and effective ethno medicinal knowledge in this botanically blessed region.

REFERENCES


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