

FOLKLORIC PLANT REMEDIES FOR RHEUMATISM

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ABSTRACT: *Investigations were carried out on folkloric plant remedies among the tribal communities of Thrissur district, majority of which are the Malayans. This paper describes the common plant remedies for rheumatism. Preparation and mode of use of twelve plants either as single or in combination with other plants are given in detail.*

INTRODUCTION:

Studies on varied economic uses of plants among the primitive human societies bring to light numerous little known uses of plants, some of which have the potential of wider usage in modern medicine. About 80m percent of India's population live in villages and a considerable proportion comprises of tribals living in remote forest areas, to explore the rich potential mine of such knowledge among the Malayan tribe of Thrissur district, kerala a survey was conducted.

Malayans form the majority of the tribal population of Thrissur District. Five locations from this district were selected asked on the availability of informants and specimens. They were chimminy, Marottichal, Sholayar, vazhachal and Vazhani. Information were gathered from selected reliable informants from each locality. For the correct identification and future reference, voucher specimens were collected.

Rheumatism is a popular term for any of various painful conditions of the joints and muscles, characterized by inflammation, stiffness etc., including rheumatoid arthritis, bursaitits and neuritis, Information on 15

plant species used against such conditions, could be gathered. They constitute common plants used around their dwellings, the plants used and the details about the preparation of the medicine and mode of use are described below.

The data are presented in the following order: Latin name, name of the family within brackets, vernacular name, locality and the mode of use.

Adhatoda beddomei.

C.B Clarke (Acanthaceae) 'Adalodakam' Vazhachal.

Fomething the rheumatic parts with the leaves gives relief from pain.

Annona squamosa Linn(Annonaceae), Aatha' Chimminy

Maccriated leaf pulpis locally applied over painful swelling of the joints.

Calotropis gigantean (Linn), R.B.i ex Ait (Asclepiadacea) 'Erukku', Marottichal
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Capsicum annum Linn (Solanaceae)
'Cherukanthani' Vazhani

A piece of cloth saturated with an infusion of fruits is applied over rheumatic swelling and covered with banana leaves.

Datura stramonium Linn (Solanaceae)
'Ummathu' Sholayar

Poultice of fresh leaves with equal quantity of rice flour is applied over rheumatic swellings.

Entada phaseoloides Herrill (Fabaceae)
'Kakkamvally' Chimminy Sholayar.

Endosperm is crushed and dispersed in water and allowed to settle. Rice gruel prepared in the supernatant liquid is taken daily in the morning with coconut gratings for rheumatic pains.

Leucas aspera spring (Lamiaceae) 'Thumba'
Vazhachal

Leaf paste with black pepper is applied for rheumatic swellings

Pongamia glabra Vent (Fabaceae) 'Ungu'
Chimminy

Pterocarpus santalinus Linn f. (Fabaceae)
'Rathachandanam' Sholayar

Wood paste applied over the swellings due to rheumatism

Ricinus communis Linn (Euphorbiaceae)
'Avanakku' Chimminy

Leaves used to foment the swellings on joints due to rheumatism

Sasamum indicum Linn (Pedaliaceae) 'Ellu'
Marottichal

Seeds along with ginger is taken daily for rheumatism.

Zingiber officinate Rose (Zingiberaceae)
'Inchi, Marottichal

Rhizoma juice taken with sesame seeds for rheumatism.