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# Traditional Phytotherapy for Epilepsy, Fits and Hysteria by Yanadis of Cuddapah District, A.P.

**R.V. Reddy, N.V.N. Lakshmi and R.R. Venkata Raju**
Department of Botany, Sri Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur 515 003

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***ABSTRACT:*** *The present paper deals with the athnomedicobotany of crude drugs used by a seminomadic ethnic group, the Yanadis, found in Cuddapah disdtrict of Andhra Pradesh. This aboriginal group is considered to be the conservators of folklore medicine. Fourteen plant species available in the locality, used by this tribe to cure ailments like epilepsy, hysteria fits and insanity were collected. The valid scientific and vernacular names, plant parts used, therapeutic combinations, mode of administration were enumerated.*

## INTRODUCTION

In the present ethnobotanical studies much attention was paid on the Yanadis, a major aboriginal group in cuddapah district. This ethnic group is using forest products in their daily life as food, fodder, shelter or medicine, Topographically the Yanadis are concentrated in the divisions like western plains and eastern valley, covering the areas of Siddhavatam, Cuddapah and Rajampet taluks of cuddapah district. Type of vegetation, covering much of these areas, is of southern tropical dry deciduous forests (Champion & seth 1968). Principally yanadis are migrants of Nellore district and believed to have been derived from the chenchus of Nallamalai forests of Andhra Pradesh (Raghaviah 1962). The yanadis are short statures with dark skin colour platyrrhine nose, long head, prominent chin thick lips and scant air both on head and body. The settlement of the Yanadis is known as "Gudem" with 20 to 25 huts. The head man of the gudem is called pedda yanadi. The main occupation of the Yanadis is hunting and honey collection.

Generally these tribal people use medicine in the form of crude drugs, Pharmacologically, a drugs is defined as an agent which may initiate or alter responses of biological systems in such a way that the disease is eliminated ad health restores (Dutt 1877, Waring 1908). The district receiv4d less attention by ethnobotanista (Hemadri et al 1087, Reddy et al 1991, Nagaraju 1992, Reddy 1995).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Field trips were undertaken to cover different pockets of yanadis present in the remote and interior areas of the forests. In such pockets elder people were thoroughly interviewed for the required information on ailments like epilepsy, hysteria, fits and insanity. Te given information is carefully documented and vast discussions were made to know the clear symptoms of the ailments. Based on the collected information, crude drug samples were collected from the forests and one set of specimens were processed for herbarium (Jain & Rao 1977). The accurate taxonomic evaluation was done with the help of authentic sources. The identified sheets were deposited in "SKU" Herbarium, Krishnadevaraya University, Anantapur.

The identified crude druge were systematically enumerated with the help of family name, nomenclatural citation, brief description, vernacular names (E: English, H: Hindi. S: Sanskrit, T: Telugu), field numbers, plant parts used and mode of administration. The medical properties of plant crude drugs or plants, hitherto not reported, were indicated with an asterisk.

## SYSTEMATIC ENUMERATION

### AGAVACEAE

Sansevieria roxburghiana Schult & Schult f.in Roem & Schult. Syst. 7:357. 1829; FBI 6: 271; Fischer 1520 (1061).

Perennial succulent shrub with greenish flowers. Vern E: Indian bowstring hemp, H: murahri, S: muruva, T: Chaga. R.V. Reddy 7898.

Fits: Leaves ground with garlic and pepper,, extract given orally.

### ASCLEPIADACEAE

Caralluma umbellata Haw. Syn. Pl succ. 47.1812; FBI 4: Gamble 861 (605).

Xerophytic herb with bluish pink flowers Vern: T: Banda kundeti kmmulu, Kundeti Kommulu, R.V. Reddy 8638.

Epilepsy: Stem extract mixed with that of saccharum spontaneum ands stem bark of Butea monosperma with pepper, garlic kasturi and gorojanam, ground an given orally.

Sarcostemma Acidum (Roxb) Voigt Hort Sub Calc 542. 1945; FBI 4: 26; Gamble 838 (589)

Leafless twiner with white terminal umbels, Vern: E: Creeping ,milk hedge, H: Somlata, S: Soma T: Pandiri jemudu, Kondapaala RVR& RV Reddy 7897.

Epileptic/Hysteric fits: water solution of pulpy mesocarp given as nasal drops.

### CELASTRACEAE

Cassine glauca (Rottb) O. Kuntze Rev. Gen. P1 1: 114. 1891; FBI 1: 623; Gample 211 (152).

Evergreen tree with greenish flowers. Vern: E: Ceylon tea, H: Bakra jamrasi, S: Bhutphal, T: Neridi; RV Reddy 8428.
Epilepsy: Stem bark extract given orally.

### CUCURBITACEAE

*Citrullus colocynthis (L) Schrad. In Linnaea 12:814.1838; FBI 2: 620; Gamble 536 (378)

Perennial trailing herb with yellowish green globose fruits. Vern: E: Colocynth, Indian wild gourd, H: Indrayan, S: Indravaruni, T: Verripucha, Papara. RV Reddy 8521.

Hysteria: Mesocarp of fruit ground with garlic , pepper and turmeric mixture, given orally.

### EUPHORBIACEAE

Acalypha indica L. Sp. Pl 1003; FBI 5: 416; Gamble 1330 (930).

Erect herb up to 50 cm tall with greenish flowers Vern: E: Indian acalypha, H: Kokali, S: Arittamanjari, T: Pippali, Pippinta RV Reddy 8530.

**EPILEPSY:** leaves ground with garlic, pepper and leaves of Leucas aspera, extract given orally.

**Fits** : Lead extract given as nasal drops.

***Insanity :** Leaves ground with Kasturi given orally on empty stomach.

*Euphorbia nivulea Ham. Trans. Linn. Soc Lond. 14: 286; 184; FBI 5; 255; Gamble 1277 (893).

Armed deciduous tree wit depply fissured bark. Vern: E: Dog's tongue, T: Akujemudu, Bonthajemudu. RV Reddy 8686.

**Fits**: Leaves along with shoot of Euphorbia tirucalli, Leaves of Ruta Chapalense, heated slightly on fire, ground the extract given orally.

*E. tirucalli.L. Sp. Pl 452.1753; FBI 5: 253; Gamble 1276 (893)

Tree up to 3 m tall with terets branchlets and copious milky latex. Vern: E: Round milk-hedge, H: Barkithohar, S: Dugdhika, T: Sannagalli. RV Reddy 8687.

**Fits:** Shoots along with leaves of Euphorbia nivulea an leaves of Ruta Chapalense heated slightly on fire, ground, the extract given orally 3 times daily.

Sapiem insigne (Role) Trimen Cat Pl Ceylon 83. 188; FBI15: 471; Gamble 1346 (941).

Deciduous tree with thick and fleshy branchlets. Vern: E: Tiger's milk spruce, : Khindra, T: Devasurupi. RVR & RV Reddy 6650.

**Epilepsy:** Latex ground with fruits of carum copticum given orally

Tragia involucrate L. Sp. Pl 980 . 1753; FBI 5: 465; Gamble 1332 (931).

Twiner with stinging hairs and yellowish green flowers. Vern: E:E: Indian stinging nettle, H: Barhanta, S: Vrishchikapatri, T: Teetakantheraku. RV Reddy 8642.

**Epilepsy:** Shoot extract given orally.

**MENISPERMACEAE**

*Cissampelos pareira L. Spl.PL 1031. 22; FBI :103, Gamble 30 (21).

Twiner with wiry branches. Vern: E: Velvet leaf, H: Harjori, S: Ambastaki, T: Adavi bankatheega, Vishaboddi. RV Redd 8033.

**Grandmal epilepsy**: Leaves ground with Kasturi and turmeric, applied all over the surface of the body.

**SCROPHULARIACEAE**

Bacopa monnieri (L) Wettst. In Engl. & Prantl Pflanzenf. 4(3b): 77. 1891: FBI 4: 272; Gamble 953 (669).

Prostrate or spreading herbs with purple flowers Vern: E: Indian Pannywort, H: Safed chamni, S: Brahmi, T: Neeli Sambrani, RVR 137.

**Epilepsy, Insanity**: Plant extract given orally.

**SOLANACEAE**

Datura metal L. Sp. 179.1753; FBI 4: 242; Gamble 949 (660).

Tomentose sub-shrub with white flowers Vern : E: Downy-Thorn Dhatura, H: Kala Dhatura, S: Dhuthura, T: Nalla Ummetta. RV Reddy, 8646.

**Insanity**: Leaf juice mixed with assafoetida, Given orally.

**VERBENACEAE**

Gmelina arborea Roxb Pl.Cor.t.246.1815; FBI 4:484; Gamble 1097 (768).

Unarmed tree up to 6 m tall with yellowish flowers. Vern: E: White teak, H: Gambhar, S: Gambhari, T: Gumartek RV Reddy 8699.

**Epilepsy**: Shoot decoction given orally.

**CONCLUSION**

The information collected from tribal pockets is original and is very important for economic exploitation of crude drugs. Some plants, used for epilepsy (Acalypha India), Hysteria (Citrullus colocynthis), Insanity (Datura metal) are well known to the villagers of remote areas. Other plans are either less known or the therapeutic combinations are totally new for the non-tribals. Out of these fourteen species, nine species are recommended for epilepsy, one for hysteria, five for fits and tree for insanity.

Symptoms of diseases given by them exactly tally with the symptoms given by the modern system. According to the modern science hysteria is a state where wild uncontrolled emotions are observed due to disturbance in the nervous system. Epilepsy is also a nervous disorder with convulsions and unconscipusness. All the above symptoms are observed along with fainting and paralysis in fits. Whereas insanity is a condition of extreme mental illness, yanadis have a clear idea about the se of specific crud drugs of these ailments and have acquired knowledge through time immemorial b trial and error methods. Now, due to rapid urbanization and infiltration of non-tribals and cultural diffusion and because of the influence of modern culture on the younger generation, their traditional system of medicine and cultural heritage are on the verge of extinction. Hence, an attempt has been made in this investigation to document their information n herbal remedies before it is completely lost.

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