

Less – Known Medicinal Uses of Plants Among the Rural Women of Shahjahanpur District, U.P.

S.C.SHARMA

Postgraduate Department of Botany, G.F. College, Shahjahanpur - 240001

Received: 30.7.98

Accepted: 12.10.99

ABSTRACT: *During the present study a valuable phytotherapeutic information on the various ailments of women was collected from the district, Traditionally the rural women prefer plant medicines than the modern medicines for their diseases including abortion, menstrual trouble, conception disorders, sterility, delivery problems etc, prevailing among them, Eighteen medicinal plants have been reported after making interview of medicine of the villages. The plants are arranged in alphabetical order according to the botanical names followed by family, vernacular names and herbarium number.*

INTRODUCTION

Traditional medicines are still under practice in Indian villages and have been developed through experience of man generation. The villagers primarily depend on locally available plant for health care and treatment of diseases prevailing in men, women and children. Ethnobotany is emerging a new branch which deals with the treatment of various ailments among the rural of tribal women e.g abortion, menstrual trouble. Leucorrhoea, delivery problems etc. A little work has been done on the medicinal plants related with the treatment of ailments among women (Chopra et al., 1956; Kirtikar and Basu, 1981, Dey 1984).

The district of Shahjahanpur lies between 27° 31' and 28° 29' N longitude occupying terai belt of Upper Gangetic plain. It has a total area of 4581 Sq.km. and is situated at an elevation of 182 m msl. The district is generally open plain endowed with high state of cultivation. The general level of the district is often disturbed because of the valleys caused by numerous rivers. The north part (Purwa tehsil) has an unreclaimed sal forest which forms a

continuous belt from Pilibhit to Lakhimpur-Kheri districts. The western part of Jalalabad tehsil also includes 'bankati' which denotes the dhak jungle in numerous patches. The soil is mainly composed of genetic alluvium which shows a succession of sand and loam varying in depth. The climate is typically monsoonic the average annual rainfall is about 1411 mm. The maximum temperature (41°C) is recorded in May and minimum (7°C) in January. Perusal of literature revealed that there are a few records on the medicinal plants of Shahjahanpur district (Sharma, 1985; Sharma et al 1989; Sharma, 1991, 1993, 1995) but little attention has been paid for the ailments of women. Keeping in view, the present investigation has been taken.

METHODOLOGY

Author made frequent visits to the villages situated in remote areas of the district. He collected authentic information on plants used for medicine by the local inhabitants for curing the diseases among women. The local medicine man (Vaidyas, Hakims,

sadhus, Bhagats and old men and ladies) were personally interviewed as suggested by Jain (1989) for the plants used in health care of women.

The plants specimens collected during field work were deposited at the herbarium of P.G. Department of Botany, G.F. College, Shahjahanpur. The plant species are arranged in alphabetical order according to the botanical names followed by family and vernacular names and herbarium number. The therapeutic uses of plants are described as collected from the folklore.

ENUMERATION

Abbreviation used: PSD = Flora of Shahjahanpur district.

1. Abrus precatorius Linn. Family: Papilionaceae vernacular name: Ghunghchi Rati FSD: 395

There seeds are ground and the mixing with old GUR 3 balls are made. All 3 balls are given with hot water. It will give relief in deliver pain

2. Achyranthes aspera Linn. Family: Amaranthaceae vernacular name: Latjira, Aunga, Apamarg FSD: 110

Six inches long piece of the root is taken. Its one end is tied with thread which is held in hand and other end is placed at the mouth of uterus. The child dead or alive will come out at the mouth of uterus. The child dead or alive will come out at the time of delivery. The root should immediately be taken out otherwise the uterus might be armed.

3. Adhatoda zeylanica Medic Family: Acanthaceae vernacular name: Adusa TSD: 140

Juice of the root is mixed with one in equal amount. One spoon is given twice a day for 15 days in leucorrhoea.

4. Allium cepa Linn. Family: Liliaceae Vernacular name: Piaz FSD: 1003

Juice of the bulb is taken. It is warmed and then 4 spoons are given twice a day for the menstrual trouble.

5. Argemone mexicana Linn. Family: Papaveraceae vernacular name: Pili Kateri, Satyanashi PSD: 320

Juice of the leaf is prepared. One spoon twice a day for 15-20 days is given in leucorrhoea.

6. Cassia tora Linn. Family: Caesalpiniaceae Vernacular name: Chakore FSD: 52

Three young seedling of the plants after washing are chewed by a pregnant women time less deliver.

7. Citrullus colocynthis (Linn) schrad family: Cucurbitaceae Vernacular name : Indrayan FSD : 577

Juice of the fresh fruit is made. Cotton dipped in juice is placed over the mouth of uterus for timely and easy deliver.

8. Cynodon dactylon (Linn) pers. Family: Poaceae vernacular name: Db FSD: 24

The grass is pounded and then filtered to obtain juice. Half cup juice with sugar is taken daily for a week to stop the excessive bleeding during the menstruation.

9. Datura metel Linn. Family: Solanaceae Vernacular name: Dhatura FSD :211

About six inches long root is tied over the waist of a pregnant woman to check the abortion.

10. Diplylocyclos palmetus (Linn) Jeffrey family: Cucurbitaceae Vernacular name : Shivlingi PSD: 74

Nine seeds with cow's milk are swallowed by a women before just meeting to have conception. It may be repeated for 3 days.

11. Embllica officinalis Gaertn. Family: Euphorbiaceae vernacular name: Amala FSD: 645

Dry fruit is made into a powder. One spoon of the powder mixing with the one in equal amount is given twice a day for leucorrhoea.

12. Euphorbia nerifolia Linn. Family: Euphorbiaceae Vernacular name: sehand, Thoohar FSD: 652

Stem after drying in shade is burnt. Te as is mixed wit sugar in equal amount. Two gram is given to a woman for a week for anti fertility. Conception will not occur throughout her life.

13. Ficus benghalensis Linn. Family: Moraceae Vernacular name: Bargad, Vat FSD: 592

Young twigs are made into a paste and twenty one small balls are made. Three balls are taken daily for a week to have conception.

14. Mentha arvensis Linn : Family: Lamiaceae vernacular name: pudina FSD: 1001

Young vegetative parts are dried in shade and ten made a powder. Ten gm. Of the powder with water is taken before the meeting for antifertility.

15. Michelia champaca Linn. Family: Magnoliaceae vernacular name: Champa FSD: 221

Decotion of the stem bark is given twice a day for 15 days in leucorrhoes

16. Ricinus communis Linn. Family: Euphorbiaceae vernacular name: Andi, Erand FSD: 1002

Three seeds are taken. After removing their seeds coats they are given to woman for anti-fertility. She will not conceive for tree years.

17. Sarace indica Linn. Family: Caesalpiniaceae Vernacular name: Ashok FSD: 710

Bark powder is made. It is boiled in milk till milk becomes half. It is then made cold. It is given a woman for 4 days in leucorrhoea.

18. Withania somnifera (Lin) Dunal family : Solanaceae vernacular name: Asgandh, Ashwaganda FSD: 147

Dry roots are made in to powder and 6 gm of the powder with the cow's milk is taken daily for one month to increase the fertility in woman for conception.

DISCUSSION

The present findings indicated tat rural woman are will acquainted wit the wild resources around them. They seem to depend upon the plants for curing various diseases including abortion, sterility

conception disorders, menstrual troubles, leucorrhoea etc. prevailing among them. Traditionally they do not go to a doctor or a clinic but depend upon herbal treatment suggested by the old ladies or experienced men of the village.

In the present investigation 18 medicinal plants have been reported which are used to cure different ailments prevailing among the women at shahjahanpur district. The species like Datura metel Linn. Is used to check the abortion. For antifertility Euphorbia Deriifolia Linn., Mentha arvensis Linn. And Ricinus communis Linn. Are given Diplocyclos palmatus (Linn) Jaffrey, Ficus benghalensis Linn and withania somnifera (Linn) Dunal are used for the conception. The delivery disorders are treated with Abrus precatorius Linn., and used for the conception. The delivery disorders are treated with Abrus precatorius Linn., Achyranthes aspera Linn., Cassia tora Linn. And citrullus colocynthis (Linn) schrad. For menstrual trouble Allium cepa Linn and cynodon dactylon (Linn) Per are given.

REFERENCES

1. Chopra, R.N. Chopra I.C. and Nayar S.L. Glossary of the Indian Medicinal Plants, C.S.I.R., New Delhi (1956)
2. Dey K.L The indigenous drugs of India international Book distributors, Dehradun (1984).
3. Jain S.K. Methods and Approaches in Ethnobotany. Ed. S.K. Jain scientific publishers, Jodhpur (1989).
4. Kirtikar, K.R. and Basu, B.D. Indian Medicinal Plants Vols I to IV Allahabad (1981)
5. Sharma, S.C. observations on wild medicinal ferns of shahjahanpur district (U.P., India) Ind Bot. Cont 2: 119-121 (1985)
6. Sharma S.C., Sarbhai, R. and Ahmad, S.A., Medicinal hydrophytes of shahjahanpur (U.P) Vegetos 2(2): 235-239(1989).

In leucorrhoea Adhatoda zeylanica Medic, Argemone mexicana Lin., Michelia champaca Linn and Saraca indica Linn. Are given.

During the survey of the district it is found that the knowledge of the plants and their uses is limited to a few old ladies and men and passes one generation to another. The information on medicinal plants having therapeutic value for women presented in this paper were not recorded earlier in well know literature (chopra et al., 1956; Kirtikar and Basu, 1981; dey 1984). These findings after proper assessment and phytochemical investigation may help to establish a crude drug industry.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Author is thankful to the principal, G.F. College, shahjahanpur for encouraging and providing facilities for this work

7. Sharma S.C Traditional herbal medicines form shahajajanpur district, Uttar Pradesh - I vegetos 4(1&2): 76-80 (1991).
8. Sharma S.C Traditional herbal medicines form shahajajanpur district, Uttar Pradesh - II vegetos 6(1&2): 09-14 (1993).
9. Sharma S.C Endangered and threatened Medicinal plants shahajajanpur district, Uttar Pradesh Ind J. Appl. & Pure Biol 10(2): 169-175 (1995)