

FOLK-LORE MEDICINES FOR JAUNDICE FROM COIMBATORE AND PALGHAT DISTRICTS OF TAMIL NADU AND KERALA, INDIA

A. S. SANKARANARAYANAN

Etnobiology Project, International Institute of Ayurveda, Coimbatore – 641 045, India.

Received: 20 October, 1986

Accepted: Revised Manuscript 22 July, 1987

ABSTRACT: *Ethno-botanical explorations with regard to the folk-lore medicine in Coimbatore district of Tamil Nadu and Palghat district of Kerala for jaundice was carried out. Out of twenty remedies thus gathered two are found to be new reports and a few others have got interesting combination. The specimens are identified at Botanical Survey of India, Coimbatore and deposited in the Herbarium of Ethnobiology department of International Institute of Ayurveda, Coimbatore. Two newly reported plants for Jaundice namely *Alysicarpus vaginalis* DC. and *Justicia tranquebariensis* L. f. have been taken for phytochemical screening and pharmacological studies. The botanical name of the plant, local name, Sanskrit name and the part of the plant employed are given in table I.*

INTRODUCTION

The Palghat District of Kerala State and Coimbatore District of Tamil Nadu State lie adjacent to each other in the boundary of respective States in between 10° 27' to 11° 48' latitude and 76° 08' to 77° 52' longitude. During the ethnobiological and socio-cultural studies by the author in the tribal and rural villages of these districts, details on twenty medicinal preparations/drugs made out from locally available plants and animals to cure jaundice are gathered. Tribal medicine men and rural Vaidyas were contacted and interviewed to collect the data. Frequent visits were made to the scattered villages namely Alathur, Thathamangalam, Nelepilli, Pattivasal, Thadagam, Poochiyoor, Somayanoor and tribal hamlets Kottathurai, Palamalai, Mankarai and Anaikkatty for confirmation of the information's gathered.

First-hand information's on different parts of 28 plants, 2 animals and one mineral thus obtained are given in Table I along with the

local names of the plants/animals as spelt by the medicine men. The herbs were identified at Botanical Survey of India, Coimbatore and deposited in the Ethnobiology department of International Institute of Ayurveda, Coimbatore. Two of the presently reported herbs namely *Justicia tranquebariensis* L. f. and *Alysicarpus vaginalis* DC are not found to be reported in any of the literature. As a substitute for *Alysicarpus vaginalis* D.C. tribal of Kottathurai use *Alysicarpus monilifer* DC. The combination of the drug, the method of administration and the locality of the practice of the specific drug are brought out in this paper. This gives a clue to the further investigation on reports of new plants and drugs of interesting combinations.

Enumeration

1. Unripe fruit of *Luffa acutangula* Roxb. is ground into a paste, mixed with

unboiled cow's milk and is given internally.

2. Bark of *Glycyrrhiza glabra* L. is ground into powder mixed with equal quantity of sugar and is given internally together with two ounces of leaf juice of *Adhatoda vasica* Nees followed by half teaspoon of honey.
3. Equal quantities of shoot of *Amaranthus polygamus* L. and root of *Tribulus terrestris* L. and root of *Tribulus terrestris* L. are taken and made into paste. Two teaspoon-fuls of this paste is mixed with cow's milk and given internally on empty stomach.
4. A hand full of tender leaves of *Bridelia stipularis* Bl. together with a piece of fresh rhizomes of *Curcuma longa* L. are ground into a paste, mixed with cow's milk, and is given seven times at three hour interval. The patients is asked not to take fruits of *Cucurbita pepo* L and *Capsicum annum* L. during the treatment.
5. Roots of *Phyllanthus fraternus* Webst. are powdered along with camphor and two teaspoons of this powder is given internally thrice a day. The leaf of the plant is also pasted and administered internally in the afternoon. Patient should avoid water and salt. Milk is recommended for drinking during the treatment. This regimen is continued for three days.
6. Equal quantities of leaves of *Lawsonia intermis* L., *Recinus communis* L. and *Centella asiatica* (L.) Urban are ground into paste by mixing with jaggery and husk of rice. Three lumps of ghooseberry size of this paste are given internally at sun-rise. The quantity of administration may vary depending upon the intensity of the disease. Boiled rice may be taken in without any ingredients. During the second day of treatment broth with salt is given as food but during the following week the patient has to avoid salt. As soon as the colourless urine is observed oil bath is prescribed, using coconut oil.
7. Young leaves of *Justicia tranqubariensis* L. are kept over-night is filtered pure water and the infusion is given internally early in the morning.
8. Shell of the conch, *Turbinella rapa* is made into paste with tender coconut water is given internally twice a day. One square inch shell is prescribed at a time.
9. Fresh Juice of young shoots of *Leucas aspera* Spreng, is used as nasal drops early in the morning for three days.
10. Flowers of *Azadirachta indica* A. Juss. are roasted and a spoon-ful is given internally thrice a day. To minimize the bitter taste sugar is added.
11. Five grams each of powder of silicate of magnesia and oxide of iron dried fruits of *Emblica officinalis* Gaertn, rhizome of *Curcuma longa* L. and fresh paste of bark of *Coscinium fenestratum* Collor. are mixed with breast milk. This is allowed to remain in the open eye for two minutes twice a day. Patient has to avoid salt and chilli till he/she is cured.
12. The following powdered drugs are mixed in equal quantity: Fruits of *Terminalia bellirica* Roxb., *Terminalia chebula* Retz. and *Emblica officinalis* Gaertn root-lets of *Helliborus nigher* L., leaves of *Adhatoda vasica* Nees. and

Tinospora cordifolia (Willd.) Miers ex Hook. f. et Thoms. and bark of *Azadirachta indica* A. Juss. one teaspoon-ful of this combination is given internally twice a day together with honey.

13. A spoonful of powdered cotyledons of *Ziziphus jujuba* Mill & Lamk is mixed in buttermilk and administered internally twice a day.
14. Two spoonfuls of paste made of fresh leaves of *Ziziphus jujuba* Mill & Lamk. is given internally together with buffalow's milk twice a day.
15. A handful of leaf buds of *Mangifera indica* L. are ground into a paste mixed in fresh toddy and given internally twice a day.
16. Flower buds of *Hibiscus rosainensis* L. are kept in a tumbler of pure water for an overnight. Early in the morning the

infusion thus obtained is administered internally.

17. A glassful of urine of white goat is administered internally for three days on empty stomach.
18. Two spoonfuls of paste obtained by grinding leaves of *Evolvulus alsinoides* L. together with bulbs of *Allium capa* L. is mixed with cow's milk and given internally twice a day.
19. Shoots of *Alysicarpus vaginalis* DC or *A. monilifer* DC are ground into a paste. Two teaspoons of this paste is mixed in white goats milk and given internally twice a day.
20. A handful of tender leaves of *Ricinus communis* L. (red variety) are made into paste mixed in tender coconut water and administered internally twice a day for three days.

TABLE I

Single Drugs and Drug Combination Used in the Treatment of Jaundice

| Sl. No. | Latin Name | Local Name | Sanskrit Name | Part of the Plant / Animal | Locality of the report | Medium of administration |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <i>Single drug</i> | | | | | | |
| 1 | <i>Alysicarpus vaginalis</i> DC. Sub: <i>A.monilifer</i> DC | Pachathalai | - | Shoot | Kottathura & Mankarai | Milk of white goat |
| 2 | <i>Azadirachta indica</i> A. Juss | Veppu | Nimba | Flower | Palamalai | Ghee & Sugar |
| 3 | <i>Capra acquagrus</i> Gmelin* | Velladu | Mesha | Urine | Kalayanoor & Thadagam | - |
| 4 | <i>Hibiscus rosa – sinensis</i> L. | Chemparuthi | Japapushpa | Flower buds | Chinnampathy | Pure water |
| 5 | <i>Justicia tranquebariensis</i> Lf. | Pinnakkupootu | - | Leaf | Somayanoor | Filtered water |
| 6 | <i>Leucas aspera</i> Spreng. | Thumpai | Dronapushpi | Leaves | Poochiyoor | Not for internal administration |
| 7 | <i>Luffa acutangula</i> Roxb. | Peecham | Koshataki | Unripened fruit | Thathamangalam | Cow's milk |
| 8 | <i>Mangifera indica</i> L. | Mavu | Amra | Young leaves | Mannarghat | Fresh toddy |
| 9 | <i>Recinus communis</i> L. | Amanakku | Eranda | Young leaves | Anaikkatty | Tender coconut water |
| 10 | <i>Turbenella rapa</i> * | Chanku | Shanka | Shell | Palghat | Tender coconut water |
| 11 | <i>Ziziphus jujuba</i> Mill & Lam. | Elantha | Badari | Cotyledons | Palamalai | Buttermilk |
| 12 | <i>Ziziphus jujuba</i> Mill & Lam. | Elantha | Badari | Leaves | Mottiyur | Buffalow's milk |

| Drug combinations | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|---|-----------|--------------|
| 13. | a. <i>Allium cepa</i> L. b. <i>Evolvulus alsinoidis</i> L. | Venkayam Krishnaktanthi | Palandu Vishnukranti | Bulb Leaves | } | Karamadai | Cow's milk |
| 14 | a. <i>Amaranthus polygamus</i> L. b. <i>Tribulus terrestris</i> L. | Chirucheerai Njerinjil | - Gokshura | Leaves Root | | } | Alathur |
| 15 | a. <i>Bridelia stipularis</i> Bl. b. <i>Curcuma longa</i> L. | Cherukolpanichi Manjal | - Haridra | Leaves Rhizome | } | | Pattivasalla |
| 16 | a. <i>Centella asiatica</i> (L.) Urb. b. <i>Lawsonia inermis</i> L. c. <i>Ricinus communis</i> L. | Kodangal Mayilanchi Amanakku | Mandookaparni Mendhi Eranda | Leaves Leaves Leaves | | } | Nalepilli |
| 17 | a. <i>Emblica officinalis</i> Gaertn. b. <i>Curcuma longa</i> L. c. <i>Coscinium fenestratum</i> Collor. d. Silicate of Magnesia and oxide of Iron | Nellikai Manjal Maramanjil Kavi | Amlaki Haridra Daruharidra - | Fruit Rhizome Bark Grain | } | | Palghat |
| 18 | a. <i>Glycyrriza glabra</i> L. b. <i>Adhatoda vasica</i> Nees | Irattimaduram Atalotakam | Yashtimadhu Vasa | Stem Leaves | | } | Kollangode |
| 19 | a. <i>Phyllanthus fraternus</i> Webst. b. <i>Cinnamomum Camphora</i> Nees | Kilanelli Karpooram | Bhumyamlaki Karpoor | Root Volatile oil | } | | Kottathurai |
| 20 | a. <i>Terminalia bellirica</i> Roxb. b. <i>Terminalia chebula</i> Retz. c. <i>Emblica officinalis</i> Gaertn. d. <i>Helliborus niger</i> L. e. <i>Adhatoda vasica</i> Nees | Kadukka Tannikka Nelkkai Kadukurohini Atalotakam | Vibhitaka Haritaki Amlaki Krishnabhedi Vasa | Fruit Fruit Fruit Root lets Leaves | | } | Somayanoor |

| | | | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|-------------------|--------|---|------------|-------|
| | f. <i>Tinospora cordifolia</i> (Willd.) Miers ex Hook. f. et. Thoms. | Amruthu | Guduchi Leaves | Leaves | } | Somayanoor | Honey |
| | g. <i>Azadirachta indica</i> A. Juss. | Veppu | Nimba | Bark | | | |

* Animal product

SUMMARY

The ethno-medico-botanical studies have often led to the discovery of specific and important drug plants. The present study reveals 12 single drug plants and eight combinations used to cure jaundice. Phytochemical investigations of these drugs may give interesting results.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author is grateful to the Department of Environment, Government of India, New Delhi for providing financial assistance under MAB Programme.

REFERENCES

1. Gamble J. S. : Flora of the presidency of Madras Vol. 1 -3 Bishensingh Mahindra Pal Singh; New Delhi (1923).
2. Chopra *et. al*: Glossary of Indian Medicinal Plants. CSIR (1956).