



# REVIEW OF RESEARCH

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## TREATMENT OF SOME SKIN DISEASES USING TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE OF MEDICINAL PLANTS FROM THE SACRED GROVES OF RATNAGIRI DISTRICT (MS-INDIA)

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### ABSTRACT:-

*Skin is an organ providing contact with the environment and protecting the human body from unfavorable external factors. Skin diseases are numerous and frequently occurring health problems affecting all ages from the neonates to the elderly and harm in number of ways. A survey of medicinal plants of different rural and forest areas of Ratnagiri district was conducted. It was found that tribals, local inhabitants and folk practitioners are using native plant originated drug preparations for the treatment of various skin ailments. About 15 plant species belonging to different families are described along with the method of drug preparation, mode of administration, probable dosage and duration of treatment. The aim of the study is not only to prescribe herbal remedies for skin diseases in human beings but also to draw attention for the need towards detailed study on medicinal plants, which could provide novel remedies for other dreadful diseases.*

**KEY WORDS:** Medicinal plants, Traditional medicine, Skin diseases, Tribal's, Folk practitioners.

### INTRODUCTION:

Herbal and natural products of folk medicine are practiced for centuries in almost all cultures worldwide. However, in most of the countries, especially those in the African continent, Asia and South and Central America, the majority of the population (roughly 80%) still relies to a great extent on herbal medicine for their primary healthcare 1,2. The World Health Organization (WHO) has estimated that as many as 80% of the world population is dependent on traditional medicine for their primary health needs<sup>3</sup>. The traditional system of medicine have a heritage of community acceptance, and the experience and knowledge of local herbalists, who can utilize enormous diversity of plants, which is much sought after patronised<sup>4</sup>. India is one of the largest producers of medicinal herbs and is rightly called the botanical garden of the world as it is sitting on a gold mine of well-recorded and traditionally well practiced knowledge of herbal medicine. Since ancient times, exploitation of plants continues till the day for the benefit of mankind<sup>5</sup>. Although named differently in different states of India and managed by local people for various reasons, all sacred forests are islands of biodiversity protecting a good number of plant and animal species including some rare, threatened and endemic taxa. Sacred groves, in general, are repositories and nurseries of many of the local ayurvedic, unani, tribal and other folk medicines which are the original sources that slowly entered into the modern medicines after careful screening. Protection of a large number of medicinal plants in sacred forests of different parts of India are some of the well documented studies.

At present, about 65% of the Indian population is dependent on the traditional system of medicine<sup>7</sup>. Many hundreds of world-wide medicinal plant species are used in the traditional medicine as a treatment for skin diseases caused by bacteria, fungi and viruses. Skin diseases include several conditions like eczema, leucoderma, ringworm, scabies and many not with distinctly specified conditions<sup>6</sup>.

The Ratnagiri district comprises nine tehsils namely, Dapoli, Mandangad, Khed, Chiplun, Guhagar, Sangameshwar, Ratnagiri, Lanja and Rajapur. It is situated in the western part of Maharashtra, covering an area of 5,448 km<sup>2</sup> within 17°35 and 18°25 N latitude and 76°42 and 77°39 E longitudes (Map.no.1). It has a very rich heritage of herbal medicinal plants. The rural population prefers it more than allopathic medicine. They use herbal medicine for an effective cure with a confidence as it does not have any side effect at the optimum level. There are reports on traditional knowledge on medicinal plants of many regions<sup>8-12</sup>. However, extensive and systematic work on medicinal plants is yet to be done in Ratnagiri district.

## METHODOLOGY

During the period from May, 2017 to April, 2018, a detailed survey was undertaken to identify the plants with their medicinal properties against the skin diseases. The information on the use of medicinal plants was gathered by direct interaction with *Vaidus*, local healers, and villagers in study area. The collected data is tabulated in a specific format which includes local name, scientific name, diseases treated, parts used, method of preparing the drug, mode of application, probable dosage and duration of treatment. Preliminary data was recorded by observing the plants in field. These plant species were identified with the help of International Code of Botanical Nomenclature. Standard methods were followed with regard to the collection of plant materials, drying, mounting, preparation and preservation of herbarium sheets. Herbarium specimens have been deposited in the department of Botany, R. K. T. College, Ulhasnagar, Thane (M. S., INDIA).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study region is rich with variety of plants and animals. In the present study, a total of 15 plant species belonging to different families were identified on the basis of their ethno-medicinal importance revealed by local people. For each species the information about botanical name, local name, plant parts used, and usage were recorded. The ethno-medicinal information collected from traditional healers and local people is tabulated in the table no.1.

The results of the present study provide evidence that medicinal plants continue to play an important role in the healthcare system of this tribal community.

## CONCLUSION

The present study reveals that the plants are still a major source of medicine for the people of the study area. The local peoples in and around the studied sacred groves have much knowledge of using plants as a medicine throughout their lifespan. They also pass their knowledge to next generation. The present study clearly demonstrates once that people and plants coexist for mutual benefit. Till date they are following their customs and beliefs. This kind of study will be helpful to explore the knowledge and utilization of medicinal plants without affecting the plant life as a whole. There is an urgent need to document all information's about the uses of medicinal plants from the traditional healers for future research. Due to rapid destruction of sacred groves in various ways urgent attention should be initiated to preserve these cultural heritage sites in their existing condition.

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Map. No.1. Ratnagiri Tehsil Map.



Table No. 1. Enumeration of Plant species against skin disease in sacred groves of Ratnagiri district.

Sr. No.	Scientific name of plant	Local name of plant	Disease treated	Plant parts used	Method of preparation of drug	Mode of application	Probable dosage	Duration of treatment
1	<i>Azadirachta indica</i> .A.Juss.	Kaduneem	Dandruff	Leaves, seeds	Dried seeds or wet leaves are ground in water to make paste.	Topical	Once in a week	30 to 40 days
2	<i>Acacia sinuta</i> (Lour.)Merr.(Sigakai)	Shikekai	Fungal infection	Pods	Decoction of pods by using hot water.	Topical	Alternate days	One month
3	<i>Annonasquamosa</i> L.	Sitaphal	Eczema	Seeds	Young seeds are ground in water to make paste.	Topical	Twice a day	One month
4	<i>Jasminum auriculatum</i> Vahl.	Jai	Ring worm infection	Roots	Roots are ground in water to make paste.	Topical	Twice a day	15 to 20 days
5	<i>Madhuca longifolia</i> (L.)J.F.M acbr.	Mahua	Rheumatism	Seeds	The oil is extracted from seeds by crushing.	Topical with joint massage	Twice a day	One month
6	<i>Aloe vera</i> Linn.	Korphad	Wound healing, Bacterial and fungal	Leaf juice	Leaf juice has antibacterial, antiviral, antifungal, and wound healing properties;	Topical	Twice a day	Two months

			infections		reduces scars, lesions and useful in acne vulgaris.			
7	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i> (L.) R.Br.	Rui	Swelling	Root bark powder, leaf paste	Root bark powder soaked in buttermilk is applied on dark patches for 21 days. Leaf paste is applied on swelling portion till it cures.	Topical	Twice a day	21 days
8	<i>Celosia argentea</i> Linn	Kurdu	Affected part	Seeds paste	Seeds paste is applied on the affected part till it cures.	Topical	Twice a day	One month
9	<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> Linn.	Nagarmotha / Lavale	Affected part	Paste of tuber	Paste of tuber and 2-3 beetle leaves is applied for 3-4 days on the affected parts.	Topical	Twice a day	15 days
10	<i>Lantana camara</i> Linn.	Ghaneri	Cuts and wound	Leaf paste	Leaf paste is applied on cuts and wounds for 7-8 days.	Topical	Twice a day	7 – 8 days
11	<i>Lawsonia inermis</i> Linn.	Mehendi	Cuts and wounds	Leaf decoction and leaf paste	Leaf decoction is drunk to smooth face skin. Leaf paste is also applied on cuts and wounds for 7-8 days.	Topical	Twice a day	7 – 8 days
12	<i>Mangifera indica</i> Linn.	Amba	Affected area	Gum resin	Gum resin mixed with coconut oil is applied on the affected part for 7-8 days.	Topical	Twice a day	7 – 8 days
13	<i>Curcuma longa</i> Linn.	Halad	Septic and wounds	Rhizome paste	Rhizome paste is used externally for septic and wounds for 5-6 days.	Topical	Twice a day	5 – 6 days
14	<i>Oscimum sanctum</i> Linn.	Tulasi	Ring worm	Leaf paste	Leaf paste is applied on the skin to cure ringworm.	Topical	Twice a day	20 – 30 days
15	<i>Butea monosperma</i> (Lam) Taub.	Palas	Inflammation	Flowers	Decoction of flowers applied on the affected area of inflammation and other skin diseases	Topical	Once in a day	6 – 7 days

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