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## Ayurvedic knowledge as the basis for selection of medicinal plants for tackling modern day diseases

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*Ayurveda*, the system of traditional medicine native to India (since ~1000 B.C.) is practiced globally as a form of complementary and alternative medicine (Shukla et al., 2013, *Mol. Biol. Rep.* 40, 3255–3262). Plant-based drugs (*Audbhid*) find an important place in *Ayurveda*. The complexity that needs to be tackled is that many of the modern day diseases need to be correlated to *Ayurveda* based on their symptoms mentioned in *Ayurveda* since they were described by different names in ancient *Ayurvedic* texts (Shukla 2013, INSA Ayurvedic Biology Symposium Lecture, pg 44-45). One such example is that of cancer and its remedies mentioned in *Ayurveda* (Katiyar et al., 2012, *AYU* 33, 10-19). Three disease conditions mentioned in *Ayurveda* possibly correlate with modern day description of cancer. These are namely, *Arbuda*, *Granthi* and *Gulma*. Logically, plants recommended for curing these three would have higher probability of hit rates in anti-cancer drug discovery. Fifty three herbs have been found to be described in *Ayurveda* to cure these disease states and they shared *tikta-katu rasa*, *laghu-ruksha-tikshna* attributes (*Gunas*), *katu vipaka*, *ushna virya* and *kapha-vata shamana* (Katiyar et al., 2012, *AYU* 33, 10-19). Further second round screening of *Ayurvedic* texts to enumerate other herbs having these specific properties led to identification of thirteen more plant species having potential anti-

cancer activity. However, it must be kept in mind that *Ayurveda* follows a holistic approach for preventive / curative disease management and these selected plants may also possess alternative therapeutic properties apart from anticancer activity. This approach described by Katiyar et al. could be used to pinpoint medicinal plant remedies for other modern day diseases too. This traditional-modern synergistic approach could effectively increase the pace of new drug discovery. This presentation would discuss this funnel approach for selection of medicinal plants as remedies for modern day diseases based on traditional knowledge.