



Plants of Ethnomedicinal Importance in Dog Bites

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ABSTRACT

*The present paper deals with the documentation of 10 ethnomedicinal plants used effectively by the tribals of Akole in dog and other animal bites. Except *Achyranthes aspera* no reports against dog, rat and animal bites for other nine plants were found. Therefore the reports may be new for these nine plants against dog and animal bites. Though tribal vaidyas of Kalsubai and Ratangad use these ethnomedicinal plants in the treatment of dog and different animal bites, there is need for further scientific research whether that plant really works or not. Certain remarkable drugs can be obtained by such research.*

KEYWORDS: ethnomedicinal, tribal, dog bites, drugs

INTRODUCTION

Ethnobotany may be the knowledge that prehistoric man had gained by observations and experimentations. It is the multi-disciplinary science that brings to light many less known or unknown uses of plants, of which some may have wide medicinal potential. Ethnomedicine, a part of ethnobotany deals with the study of ethnic beliefs, concepts, knowledge and practices in the midst of the tribal for checking or curing diseases. It has become an important area of research in medicine, conservation of biodiversity and socio economic development of the region. The developed countries have started realizing the potentialities of long-established system of medicine. In the recent years people have augmented their interest in the aboriginal system of medicine. Desirability among them is rising for herbal remedies. Ethnomedicine has acquired a new life due to the innovative discoveries of some amazing plant uses. The drugs like morphine, atropine, guggulin, vinblastin, vincristine, ephedrine, quinine and colchicines used in current system of medicine are also developed from ethnomedicine.

Kalsubai (1646m) the highest peak of Maharashtra state (Westernghats) and Ratangad (1297m), second highest lies in the Akole taluka of Ahmednagar district. The area is prosperous with botanical and ethnomedicinal wealth. Along with its historical consequence the area also consists of a hemadpanthi temple of Lord Shiva known, as Amrutheshwar. Tribals like Mahadevcoli and Thakars inhabit this area. Forest is of moist deciduous type including some semi evergreen patches. It has a great impact on tribal life, as they derive food, fodder and medicine from it.

The present paper deals with the documentation of ethnomedicinal plants used by the tribals of Akole in dog and other animal bites.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Frequent field tours were conducted to the areas of Kalsubai and Ratangad during the year (2005-2007). Plant species used in opposition to various dog and animal bites were scrutinized with the help of tribals having practical knowledge about the plants. A questionnaire was prepared containing the information about the tribals, their living style, source of income, ethnomedicinal uses of plant species and their style of treatment. Photographs were taken during various field visits with Nikon 3-mega pixels digital camera. Plants were correctly identified with the help of [1-3]. Ethnomedicinal uses documented were compared with the existing literature [4-9].

About 10 plant species having ethnomedicinal significance are listed in the present paper. Tribals of Kalsubai and Ratangad effectively use these ethnomedicinal plants in the treatment against different animal and dog bites.

Table 1 List of ethnomedicinal plants used in various animal and dog bites

Sr. No.	Name of the Plant Species	Vernacular Name	Plant Part Used	Method
1.	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Aghada	Plant	External
2.	<i>Alangium salvifolium</i>	Ankul	Root	External
3.	<i>Asparagus racemosa</i>	Shatavari	Tuber	External
4.	<i>Lobelia nicotifolia</i>	Dhota	Root	External
5.	<i>Mangifera indica</i>	Amba	Seed	Oral
6.	<i>Merremia gangetica</i>	Undirkani	Tuber	External
7.	<i>Pongamia pinnata</i>	Karanj	Bract	Oral
8.	<i>Sarcostemma brevistigma</i>	Ran-sheer	Root	External
9.	<i>Tephrosia purpurea</i>	Unhali	Seed	Oral
10.	<i>Tridax procumbens</i>	Tantani	Leaf	External

Tribals apply black pepper along with the fresh paste of *Achyranthes aspera* on mad dog bites. Nadkarni [10] reported the use of seeds in animal bites whereas Jain [8] showed the use of roots in rat bites and scorpion stings.

CONCLUSIONS

Except *Achyranthes aspera* no reports against dog, rat and animal bites for other nine plants were found. Therefore the reports may be new for these nine plants against dog and animal bites. Though tribal vaidyas of Kalsubai and Ratangad use these ethnomedicinal plants in the treatment of dog and different animal bites, there is need for further scientific research whether that plant really works or not. Certain remarkable drugs can be obtained by such research.

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