

ETHNO-MEDICINAL USES OF PLANTS TO CURE SKIN DISEASE IN GARHWAL HIMALAYA

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ABSTRACT

In the present ethno-botanical study, 77 plant species have been pointed out from different parts of Garhwal Himalaya which are used in the treatment of various dermal ailments. The study is based on the queries made to the local inhabitants involved in indigenous uses of plants in health care system. Various dermal problems cured by these plants are itching, ringworm, eczima, hypersensitivity, prickly heat, leucoderma, leprosy, scabies and other ailments.

Keywords: Ethno-medicinal plants, skin disease.

INTRODUCTION

Garhwal Himalaya (29° 45' N-31° 27' N latitude and 77° 45' E- 27°-7' E longitude) has been continuing potent source of variety of healing herbs. Due to its unique topography, ethnic uses of plants are in traditions of people of this area. Garhwal includes seven districts- Dehradun, Hardwar, Pauri, Chamoli, Tehri, Uttarkashi, and Rudraprayag representing mountains, lower hills, tarai-Bhabar belt and plain area. Many of the plant species have been used to cure various types of dermal ailments. Plants used in dermal ailments are also described in "Kandughnani" varga one of the Charak's 50 Mahakashya.

The ethnic uses of plant species of Garhwal Himalayas including the efficacy of native herbal medicine have been well documented in the work of Uniyal (1968), Sharma et.al. (1979), Gaur et.al. (1980), Nautiyal (1981), Rajwar (1984), Negi et.al. (1985), Dhasmana (1986), Negi and Pant (1991), Aswal (1993&1996) Ghildiyal et.al.(2006). But there is paucity of literature on the plant used to cure skin diseases in Garhwal Himalaya.

METHODOLOGY

The present study has been conducted in two steps:

Step. I: A survey was made in different parts of Garhwal Himalaya. Local inhabitants, particularly old persons were consulted for the ethno-botanical uses of the plants used in various dermal ailments.

Step. II: Plants pointed out by local inhabitants were collected and identified botanically with the help of flora- Forest flora of the Chakrata, Dehradun and Saharanpur forest Divisions Uttar Pradesh (Kanjiyal, 1928), Herbaceous flora of Dehra Dun (Babu, 1977), Flora of District Garhwal : North West Himalaya(Gaur, 1999), Flora of Chamoli (Naithani, 1984 & 1985)., Collected plants were preserved in the herbarium of Govt. P.G. College Kotdwar (Garhwal).

ENUMERATION

In the present study 77 plant species have been found to be used in the treatment of various skin diseases in different part of Garhwal Himalaya and are enumerated with their botanical names, vernacular names and families and their uses in various diseases are as under:

In the treatment of Itching:

1. *Cassia angustifolia* Vahl., Sanay, Caesalpiniaceae, *Picrorhiza kurru* L., Kutki, Scrophulariaceae and *Trachyspermum ammi* (1) Sprangue, Ajwain, Apiaceae. The powdered mixture of the seeds is given with water.
2. *Cassia tora* Linn. Chaksu, Fabaceae

Leaves extractions are applied on affected part of the body.

3. *Cynodon dactylon* (Linn.) Pers. Doob ghass, Poaceae and *Curcuma domestica* Voleton. Haldi, Zingiberaceae. The mixture paste of both plants is applied externally.
4. *Phyllanthus emblica* Linn. Amla, Euphorbiaceae and *Brassica campestris* Linn.Brassicaceae.

Boiled fruit paste mixed with sarson oil and applied externally.

5. *Picrorhiza kurroa* Linn. Kutki, Scrophulariaceae.
The powder of small branches is used orally with water.
6. *Swertia chirayita* (Roxb ex Fleming)Karsten, Cirayata, Gentianaceae.
The quath of branches is used orally.
7. *Tinospora cordifolia* (Willd) Hook F. and Thomson, Giloy, Menispermaceae.
The juice of fresh leaves is applied externally.

In the treatment of ringworm :

1. *Carica papaya* Linn. Papita, Caricaceae

The prepared paste of fresh leaves and young shoot is applied over boils.

11. *Syzygium aromaticum* (L.) Merr. and L.M.Perry, Laung, Myrtaceae.

The paste of fruit is applied on small boils.

12. *Tagetes erecta* Linn., Genda, Asteraceae.

To make the boils rupture.

13. *Tamarindus indica* Linn., Imli, Caselpinaceae.

Fresh leaves are grind and prepared paste is applied externally to make the boils rupture.

14. *Triticum aestivum* Linn., Genhun, Poaceae. and *Sasceharum officinarum* Linn., inn., gur, Poaceae.

Both of these plants are powdered and mixed with washing soap and roasted soil of chullha and paste is prepared with water. The paste of these all raw materials makes the boil rupture.

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