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TRADITIONAL USES OF MEDICINAL PLANTS

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ABSTRACT

Nature is always a golden sign to show the prominent phenomena of coexistence. Natural products from Plants, animals and minerals are the basis for treating human diseases. Medicinal plants are presently in demand and their acceptance is increasing progressively. Undoubtedly, plants play an important role by providing essential services in ecosystems – without plants, humans and other living organisms cannot live in a way living should be. Anyway, herbals especially medicinal herbs have constantly acted as an overall indicator of ecosystem health.

INTRODUCTION:

The plant kingdom represents a source of drugs and foods. There Fore, with the tendency in modern medicine to assimilate and re-assimilate natural remedies in common practice, under various forms, the potential of regional flora becomes important. India is proud to be rich in biodiversity possess about 80% of the estimated biodiversity in the world with around 12600 species. It is one of the 12 mega biodiversity centres with 2 hot spots of biodiversity in the western Ghats and north-eastern region.

Medicinal plant is an important element of indigenous medical systems in all over the world. The ethno botany provides a rich resource for natural drug research and development. Traditional use of herbal medicines implies substantial historical use, and this is certainly true for many products that are available as traditional herbal medicines. Medicinal plants have played an important role throughout the world in treating and preventing human diseases, medicinal plants are resources of new drugs and many of the modern medicines are produced indirectly from plants.

Some important traditional uses of medicinal plants:**1. Colouring agents of plant:**

Colouring agents are natural or artificial substances which are used to enhance the colour of food staffs, either because the food product has lost colour during industrial treatment or to make it look tastier and more attractive to the consumer.

2. Curcumin:

It is used in ice-cream, sauces, soups, cakes, desserts, pre-cooked meals, cheeses, drinks and condiments.

3. Riboflavin:

It is used in ice-cream, cakes, drinks, yoghurt.

4. Chlorophyll:

It is used in ice-cream, cakes, drinks, condiments and vinaigrettes.

5. Gin:

In 1650, Franciscus de la Boe, a Dutch doctor and professor at Leyden University discovered the diuretic and hepatic availities of the Juniper berry, and developed a medicinal tonic using liquors and said berries. He named it Genevieve. It also contains coriander, angelica, liquorices, cassia bark and orange and lemon peel.

6. Vermouth:

The word vermouth is the French equivalent to the Geran wermut or English Wormwood. It is a Fortified wine, with herbs and Spices. The main ones being angelica aloe juice, cinnamon, cloves, coriander, gentian, hyssop, Melissa, marjoram, sweet, thyme and absinthe.

7. Pharmaceutical forms of medicinal plants:

Pharmaceutical forms have an advantage over traditional forms of administering and this is basically their high quality.

1. Tablets
2. Capsules or Pills
3. Syrups
4. Elixirs
5. Ointments
6. Hydrophilic gels
7. Eye drops
8. Colutories
9. Nasal Sprays and drops

8. Natural products of medicinal plants:

Natural products are compounds consisting essentially of carbon derived from natural sources and that generally have very diverse and interesting properties.

1. Petroleum
2. Soap
3. Sugars
4. Sweeteners
5. Agrochemicals
6. Pesticides
7. Plant growth regulators
8. Flavours
9. Perfumes
10. Drugs
11. Antibiotics
12. Analgesics

9. Active constituents of medicinal plants:

Pharmacological activity in plant-based drugs is centered on the presence of chemical compounds which we call active compounds.

1. Heterosides
2. Anthroquinones
3. Cardiac glycosides

4. Cyandgenics
5. Coumarins
6. Phenols
7. Flavonics
8. Rananculosides
9. Saponosides
10. Sulphurides
11. Polyphenols
12. Phenoli acids
13. Cumarins
14. Flavonoids
15. Lignans
16. Tannins
17. Quinones
18. Terpenoids
19. Essential Oils
20. Iridoids
21. Lactones
22. Diterpones
23. Saponins
24. Nucilage
25. Gums

CONCLUSION:

The plant of medicinal plants that may be used are different types of seeds, root, leaf, fruit, skin, flowers of even the whole plant. The active compounds in most parts of the medicinal plants have direct or indirect therapeutic effects and are used as medicinal agents. Medicinal plants are used for treatment because they have certain properties, including synergistic actions. The constituents of the plant may interact with each other, and this interaction can be beneficial for both or adverse to either of them or eliminate the harmful effects of both. Plant-derived compounds can dramatically improve hard to treat illness, such as cancer. Plant components are also characterized by their ability to prevent the development of certain diseases.

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