ETHNOBOTANICAL STUDIES ON SOME MEDICINAL PLANTS:
A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Plants have been used for thousands of years to treat health disorders and to prevent diseases including epidemics. The knowledge of their healing properties has been transmitted over the centuries within and among human communities. Through observation and experimentation, human beings have learned that plants promote health and well-being. The role of these herbal remedies is not only cost efficient, but also safe and virtually free from dangerous side effects. More or less of the medicinal herbs are thought to cure practically every human disease from head to tail. Natural drugs are better safe than synthetic western medicines; therefore peoples are coming back to the field of traditional medicinal plants. The village elders, farmers and tribal have tremendous knowledge about for health reasons started thousands of years ago and are still part of medical practice by folks of several parts of the Indian sub-continents as well as several other nations of the globe. This review article shade a small beam of light on some medicinal plants and it can be used for various human ailments. The documented medicinal plants can serve as a ground for further and future phytochemical and pharmacological fields.

KEY WORDS: Ethnobotany, Medicinal plants, Herbal medicine; Therapeutic use.

INTRODUCTION

Plants possess a long therapeutic history over thousands of years and even considered to be a hopeful source of medicine in the traditional health care system [1]. In recent year’s investigation found several plants of the ethno medicine posse’s interesting biological activities that could be of interest for all regions of the globe. The plants possess chemotherapeutic, bacteriostatic and antimicrobial agents [2]. Plants generally produce many
secondary metabolites which constitute an important source of microbicides, pesticides and many pharmaceutical drugs. Plant products still continue the principle source of pharmaceutical agents used in traditional medicine \[^{[3, 4]}\]. So, the interest in a large number of traditional natural products has increased \[^{[5]}\].

Therefore, the growing interest, both in the industry and in the scientific research, for aromatic and medicinal plants because of their antimicrobial and antioxidant properties. These attributes are due to many active phytochemicals including flavanoids, terpenoids, carotenoids, coumarins, curcumines etc. These bioactive principles have also been confirmed using modern analytical techniques. Phenolic components, present in essential oils, have been recognized to possess antimicrobial activity and some are classified as generally recognized as safe (GRAS) substances and thus could be practiced to prevent post-harvest growth of native and contaminant bacteria \[^{[6, 7]}\].

The role of medicinal plants for the treatment of various ailments as old as the history of man. Worldwide, about 80% of traditional medicines used in primary health care are derived from plants \[^{[8]}\]. Medicines derived from plants possess a potentially safer and more consistent medicine than synthetically produced drugs \[^{[9]}\]. India is a wonderful repository of cultural heritage of varied ethnic groups and it has a rich tradition of folk practices of utilization of wild plants \[^{[10]}\]. The All India coordination project on ethno biology reported the use of more than 10,000 wild plant species to meet chief healthcare, food, and other material requirements of tribal communities in India. Of these, approximately 8,000 wild plant species are used by them for medicinal purposes \[^{[11, 12]}\].

Today, due to high rate of anthropogenic disturbances in the form of cattle grazing, fuel-wood collection and fires, the many medicinal plants are facing threat of extinction and loss of genetic diversity. Identification of plant species and traditional knowledge of their therapeutic uses are important for the adequate utilization of herbal plant resources \[^{[13]}\]. Thus, the present review highlights the ethnobotanical studies on some medicinal plants in the scientific community, in specific, to researchers and students looking for the sources of knowledge of medicinal plants. Therefore, in the present study some medicinal plants are described as follows:

**Common Name:** Aloe

**Scientific Name:** *Aloe vera*
Family: Lilaceae

Description: Aloe is a short, stemless, perennial, succulent plant. Leaves are green to gray-green, fleshy, toothed on the margins. The inner leaf tissue contains Aloe gel. From the main stem pendulous tubular flowers appear on the flower stalk during the summer. They are green to bright yellow [14].

Parts Used: Mainly the central tissue of the leaf, which contains Aloe gel.

Medicinal Use: Aloe has strong healing abilities when applied both internally and externally. Used internally, Aloe stimulates our immune system, helps stomach disorders by improving our digestive system and destroying abusive fungi and bacteria in the intestinal tract. Dried Aloe latex, a substance derived from the leaf, is a strong laxative. Aloe acts as a pain reliever, due to analgesics in salicylic acid. Used externally, Aloe softens the skin, acts as an excellent moisturizing agent, and has a same pH as the skin. It reaches the deepest body tissues, and therefore has the ability to restore them, proving to be extremely beneficial in the acceleration of the process of wound healing. It can as well be used on blemishes and dandruff. Aloe had also shown excellent results in treating facial edema [15].

Common Name: Asparagus

Scientific Name: Asparagus officinalis

Family: Lilaceae

Description: Plant is an herbaceous, perennial, growing up to 150 cm in height. It has stout stems, much branched, and feathery foliage. From an underground stem grow clusters of grass-like leaves (which are actually modified stems). Leaves are glabrous, reduced to small scales on the main stem. Flowers are whitish-green, small and bell-shaped. They are produced singly or in pairs on leaf axils. The fruits are small, red- berry, and 6-10 mm diameter [16].

Parts Used: Rhizome, young shoots

Medicinal Use: Asparagus is considered to be an antispasmodic, anti-inflammatory, diuretic, diaphoretic, demulcent, laxative and sedative. The plant is excellent for those who suffer from retention of liquids. It stimulates and strengthens kidney function, and provides an
excellent diuretic action. It also revitalizes bladder function, helps in cases of edema and swollen joints, and protects small blood vessels from rupturing. Asparagus stalks are high in antioxidants. It can also balance female hormonal levels, boost fertility and help pregnant woman against neural tube defects in infants. Fiber content in Asparagus makes it a good laxative $^{[16]}$.

**Common Name:** Hemp

**Scientific Name:** *Cannabis sativa*

**Family:** Cannabaceae

**Description:** Hemp is an annual plant, grows up to 5 meters in height. Its stem is erect, stiff and fibrous. Leaves are oppositely arranged near the bottom, and alternate near the top. They are palmately divided into 3-7 toothed leaflets. Flowers are very small and green, appearing in late summer $^{[17, 18]}$.

**Parts Used:** Flowers, leaves, seed.

**Medicinal Use:** Plant has a really long history of medicinal use. It has been traditionally utilized by different cultures in treatment of assorted types of ailments: asthma, cystitis, diarrhea, dysentery, gonorrhea, gout, epilepsy, malaria, fevers, etc. The whole works is thought to be anodyne, anti-inflammatory, antispasmodic, cholagogue, diuretic, emollient, hypnotic, hypotensive, laxative, narcotic, ophthalmic and sedative. Today, it is used as help in relieving side effects of cancer treatments. Since it increases the desire for food, it is also employed in the treatment of anorexia nervosa $^{[18]}$.

**Common Name:** Basil

**Scientific Name:** *Ocimum basilicum*

**Family:** Labiatae

**Description:** Basil is a low-growing (30-100 cm), and annual plant. It has a square, slightly hairy stem. Leaves are ovate, entire to slightly toothed, vary in color: from bright green to dark purple. Flowers also vary in color: white, pink or red, appears along the leaf axils $^{[19]}$.

**Parts Used:** Leaves, seed.
**Medicinal Use:** Basil is considered to be antibacterial, antifungal, antispasmodic, carminative, diaphoretic, digestive, emmenagogue, expectorant, stimulant, stomachic, refrigerant etc. The plant is generally used in treatments of problems concerning digestion and nervous system. The leaves are taken in cases of fevers, abdominal cramps, gastroenteritis, constipation, nausea and poor digestion. Tea made from the leaves is believed to obviate mild nervous tension, headaches and nausea. Water boiled with basil leaves is taken in case of sore throat. A decoction of the leaves acts as a helpful remedy in the treatment of respiratory disorders. Chewing of basil leaves on a daily basis can act as a significant protection against stress, ulcer and mouth infections. The plant is also useful in the reduction of blood cholesterol level\textsuperscript{[19]}.

**Common Name:** Ginger

**Scientific Name:** *Zingiber officinale*  
**Family:** Zingiberaceae

**Description:** Plant is herbaceous, perennial, aromatic, with erect stem, warty and branched rhizome. The leaves are long, lanceolate to linear-lanceolate, green in color. Flowers are produced in a dense spike, yellow green with purple endings\textsuperscript{[20]}.

**Parts Used:** Root (rhizome).

**Medicinal use:** Ginger is an old herbal medicine and is recommended for different ailments: abdominal bloating, cough, diarrhea, rheumatism. Ginger considers being helpful in the treatment of various inflammatory joint diseases. Now a day, Ginger is accepted as a remedy for different forms of nausea, vomiting problems, motion, morning sickness and problems with indigestion. Ginger is also considered helpful in treatments of headaches, menstrual pain, sore throat, fevers, and ulcerative colitis. Some gastrointestinal problems, such as gases and heartburn, can also be alleviated with Ginger\textsuperscript{[20, 21]}.

**Common Name:** Fig

**Scientific Name:** *Ficus carica*  
**Family:** Moraceae
Description: Fig plant is a large, deciduous shrub or a medium sized tree, growing up to 10 meters in height. It has a smooth grey bark and numerous spreading branches. Leaves are alternate and palmate, deeply lobed with 3-7 main lobes, and irregularly toothed along the margins. Fruit (actually the flower of the tree) is obovoid, turbinate or pear-shaped, 3-5 cm long, with green to deep purple skin and small flowers are situated on the inner wall. Its wall is thin, tender, and fleshy and is usually pink, rose or pale yellow. Numerous seeds can be of different sizes: large, medium or minute.

Parts Used: Stem, leaves, fruit

Medicinal Use: Plant is considered to be a laxative, emollient, expectorant and analgesic. It is commonly used in preparations of laxative syrups, combined with Senna and carminatives. A decoction of the fruit is used in cases of colds, soothing the mucous membranes of our respiratory tract. White, milky juice extracted from the stems and leaves is employed for removal of warts.

Common name: China Rose

Scientific Name: Hibiscus rosa-sinensis

Family: Malvaceae

Description: China Rose is an evergreen, herbaceous plant. It has ornamental, large, dark-red flowers. They are firm, trumpet-shaped and odorless, with single and double set of petals.

Parts used: Whole plant

Medicinal use: China Rose flowers, roots and leaves, are anodyne and emmenagogue. They regulate menstruation and stimulate blood circulation. Flower extract has been traditionally used for liver disorders, high blood pressure and as an aphrodisiac. Young leaves and flowers are used in case of headache. Decoction of leaves, root and fruits are helpful in treatments of arthritis, boils and coughs, and the fruit is employed externally in cases of sprains, wounds and ulcers. China Rose tea is rich in vitamin C.

Common Name: Peppermint

Scientific Name: Mentha piperita
Family: Labiatae

Description: Peppermint is a herbaceous, perennial, hybrid plant, being the result of a cross between Spearmint (*Mentha spicata*) and Watermint (*Mentha aquatica*). It has a fleshy rhizome with fibrous roots. Leaves are opposite, green, oval and toothed along the margins. Flowers are small and violet in color. Both leaves and flowers have a characteristic of aromatic fragrance[25].

Parts Used: Leaves, flowers

Medicinal Use: Peppermint is believed to possess astringent, antiseptic, emetic and stimulant qualities. It possesses a long history of medicinal use, particularly in the discussion of digestive ailments. Tea made from the leaves and flowers can be an excellent cure for the treatment of indigestion, cramps, gas, nausea, vomiting and colic. It has a soothing effect on the stomach, and can also be an appetite stimulant. Topical application of Peppermint oil can reduce arthritis, rheumatism and chronic joint pain. Due to its antiseptic properties, peppermint can be helpful in the relief of toothache and in treatments of cavities. Peppermint vapours and inhalers are very helpful in cases of nasal and sinus congestions, laryngitis and bronchitis[25].

Common Name: White Mulberry

Scientific Name: *Morus alba*

Family: Moraceae

Description: Plant is a deciduous tree growing over 20 m in height. In its cultivated form, it is pruned into a low-growing shrub. It has a light brown to gray bark, smooth and divided into narrow, scaly ridges. The leaves are glossy and light green, alternately arranged and cordate at the base, but very variable in form. They can vary from unlobed to palmate, even on the same tree. The flowers hang on short, pendulous catkins. They are small and greenish in color. When the flowers are pollinated, they are transformed into a berry-like, collective fruit. Fruit varies in color, from white, lavender to even black[26].

Parts used: Fruit, leaves, stems, bark.
**Medicinal use:** White Mulberry is considered to be antibacterial, astringent, diaphoretic, hypoglycaemic, odontalgic, and ophthalmic. Its leaves are usually used in treatments of colds, sore throats, flu, eye infections and nosebleeds. Recent researches in Japan showed that leaves contain substances that inhibit intestinal enzymes from passing sugar into the bloodstream. Leaf extract could inhibit the oxidation of LDL-cholesterol, act as a carbohydrate blocker and reduce the concentration of the arterial plaque. With these actions, the possibility of stroke is greatly diminished. Stem is very beneficial in cases of rheumatic pains, spasms and high blood pressure. A tincture made from the bark can easily relieve toothache. The fruit is used in the treatment of urinary incontinence, diabetes, dizziness, tinnitus and hypertension. It is also a mild laxative and can be applied in cases of constipation\[^{26}\].

**Common Name:** Clove

**Scientific Name:** *Syzygium aromaticum* syn. *Eugenia carophyllata*

**Family:** Myrtaceae

**Description:** The Clove tree is an evergreen that grows to a height ranging from 8-12 m, having large square leaves and sanguine flowers in numerous groups of terminal clusters. The flower buds are at first of a pale color and gradually become green, after which they develop into a bright red, when they are ready for collecting. Cloves are harvested when 1.5-2 cm long, and consist of a long calyx, terminating in four spreading sepals, and four unopened petals which form a small ball in the center\[^{27}\].

**Parts Used:** The dried flower buds.

**Medicinal use:** Cloves are used as a carminative, to increase hydrochloric acid in the stomach and to improve peristalsis. Cloves are also said to be a natural anthelmintic. The essential oil is used in aromatherapy when stimulation and warming are needed, especially for digestive problems. Topical application over the stomach or abdomen are said to warm the digestive tract. The use of a Clove in toothache is also said to decrease pain. It also helps to decrease infection in the teeth due to its antiseptic properties. Clove oil, applied to a cavity in a decayed tooth, also relieves toothache. Cloves may be used internally as a tea and topically as oil for hypotonic muscles, including for multiple sclerosis\[^{21,27}\].
Common name: Dill

Scientific Name: *Anethum graveolens*

Family: Umbelliferae

Description: Plant is an annual, growing up to 1.5 m in height. It has fern-like, pinnately divided, feathery leaves, about 0.3 m long. Flower stems are stiff and hollow. Flowers are borne in large, compound umbels. They are small and numerous, yellow in color, with tiny petals rolled inward. Fruit is a flat pod, bitter in taste and the whole plant is strongly aromatic.[28]

Parts used: Whole herb

Medicinal Use: Dill plant is considered to have antispasmodic, anti-cancer, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, diuretic and carminative properties. Dill oil is very useful in cases of hyperacidity, flatulence, indigestion and indigestion related diarrhea. Its daily consumption promotes digestion and alleviates or prevents constipation. Dill leaves can be used as a poultice in cases of blood boils and ulcers. Combined with sesame oil, they can help ease swollen joints. Seeds are very helpful in the treatment of bad breath and respiratory problems (such as colds, influenza, bronchitis etc.). Monoterpenes and flavonoids, found in Dill’s essential oil are responsible for its anti-microbial action. Dill is also used as a herbal remedy for insomnia, and can be helpful for lactating women, since it increases milk flow [28].

Common Name: Fennel

Scientific Name: *Foeniculum vulgare*

Family: Umbelliferae

Description: Fennel is a perennial, umbelliferous plant. It has thick, white root stalk and hollow, striated stems. Leaves are feathery, deeply cut, alternate and triply pinnate. Flowers are yellow, produced in large terminal umbels [29].

Parts Used: Fruit
**Medicinal use:** Fennel is most commonly used in treatments of gastrointestinal disorders. It has shown to be extremely helpful in reliefement of abdominal cramps, gas, indigestion and bloating. It is very successful as an appetite suppressant. Fennel extracts are known to have estrogenic properties, and therefore are very helpful in coping with hormonal imbalances caused by menopause. Due to its calming effect, it can also be included in treatments of asthma, coughs and bronchitis [29].

**Common Name:** Grape vine

**Scientific Name:** *Vitis vinifera*

**Family:** Vitaceae

**Description:** Plant is a liana with twining bark, growing to 35 m tall. The leaves are alternate, palmately lobed, broad and large, green in color. Near the leaves small tendrils appear, giving support to the shoot growth. Flowers are arranged in clusters, growing opposite leaves along the shoots. The fruits are berries, 6 mm diameter in wild species, and up to 3 cm long in cultivated plants. Berries, usually called grapes, can be black, red or green-yellow [30].

**Parts Used:** Leaves, grapes, seeds

**Medicinal Use:** Grape vine has astringent, anti-inflammatory, detoxifying and antisclerotic properties. Seeds and leaves are astringent. The leaves have been used in traditional medicine to stop hemorrhages and minor bleedings. Ripe fruit can influence the kidneys, promoting urine flow. Along with a nourishing diet, grapes can greatly help people suffering from anemia and exhaustion. Grapes are also useful in cases of small-pox, neuralgia and insomnia [30].

**Common Names:** Lemon, Citron

**Scientific Name:** *Citrus medica*

**Family:** Rutaceae

**Description:** Plant is a slow-growing shrub or a small tree. It has small, thick branches and tiny spines, growing in the leaf’s axils. Leaflets are ovoid to lanceolate, with almost wingless
petioles. Flowers are four to five petaled, purple or pink in color. Fruit is oblong, obvoid or oval, narrowing toward the top. Its skin is thick, fleshy and very aromatic [31].

**Parts Used:** Fruit, leaves, seeds.

**Medicinal Use:** From ancient times, citron is used as herbal remedy for seasickness, pulmonary and intestinal disorders, dysentery and halitosis. It can be a very useful herbal remedy for diarrhea. It eliminates gastric acidity, stimulates functioning of the liver. It is also helpful in cases of flatulence and vomiting. Citron can be very useful in cases of headaches, especially migraines [31].

**Common name:** Yellow sweet clover

**Scientific Name:** *Melilotus officinalis*

**Family:** Fabaceae

**Description:** Yellow sweet clover is a herbaceous annual or biennial plant. It can grow up to 2 meters in height. It has erect, channeled and furrowed stems, usually pubescent near the tip. Leaves are alternate and compound, with oblong and serrated leaflets. Flowers are small and yellow, grouped in terminal and axillary racemes [32].

**Parts Used:** Whole plant

**Medicinal Use:** Plant is considered to be an antibacterial, anticoagulant, astringent, laxative, carminative and emollient. It is very helpful in removing gas from the digestive system and in inducing urination. The plant can improve blood circulation, and be of great help in treatments of varicose veins and hemorrhoids. It can also be helpful in treatments of wounds, cuts and bruises. The plant is beneficial in cases of nervous tensions, painful menstruation, insomnia and palpitations [32].

**Common Name:** Onion

**Scientific Name:** *Allium cepa*

**Family:** Liliaceae
**Description:** Onion is a biennial plant, growing from a subterranean bulb. It can grow up to 70 cm in height. It has an erect stem and an umbel of soft, white to pink flowers on its top. Its underground bulb carries small, shallow roots [33].

**Parts Used:** Shoots, bulb

**Medicinal Use:** Plant is considered to have anthelmintic, antioxidant, antiseptic, carminative, diuretic, expectorant, febrifuge and vulnerary properties. Onion is said to help in cases ranging from the common cold to heart disease and diabetes. In traditional medicine, Onion had been used for colds, coughs, flu and bronchitis. During winter times, onion juice sweetened with honey can be used as prevention against cold. It is also said that chewing on fresh Onion can kill germs in the mouth and soothe toothache. Recent studies are showing its beneficial effect in the treatment of high blood pressure and high blood cholesterol. It can be a good prevention against cardiovascular disease, and even certain head and neck tumors. It can also be used as prevention against osteoporosis and in treatment of blisters, boils and topical scars [33].

**Common Name:** Garlic

**Scientific Name:** *Allium sativum*

**Family:** Liliaceae

**Description:** Garlic is a bulbous perennial plant growing up to 1 meter in height. It grows from an underground bulb which sends shoots up in the air. Garlic bulb is divided into papery white cloves (their number range from six to twenty). The leaves are long and flat, opposite and erect, with a crease down the middle. Flowers are white and starry [34].

**Parts Used:** Bulbs, sometimes leaves

**Medicinal Use:** Garlic has a very long folk history of medicinal use. It has been cultivated for more than 5000 years and is considered to be an anthelmintic, antiasthmatic, anticholesterolemic, antiseptic, antispasmodic, cholagogue, diaphoretic, diuretic, expectorant, febrifuge, stimulant, stomachic, tonic and vasodilator. With these properties, it is considered an extremely beneficial medicinal plant. Garlic is very helpful in cases of bacterial and fungal infections. It can be helpful in cases of ringworms, candida, vaginitis and thrush. It helps
detoxify our body and suppresses the growth of certain tumors. Garlic is also an excellent antioxidant, and can help prevent heart disease. It is also considered helpful in lowering the blood pressure, cholesterol levels and in regulating blood sugar levels. In addition, Garlic can slow the development of artheriosclerosis and act as a powerful antiseptic for treating wounds \[34\].

**Common Name:** Black Mustard

**Scientific Name:** *Brassica nigra*

**Family:** Brassicaceae

**Description:** Black Mustard is an annual plant, grows up to 2 meters in height. It has a branching, angular stem with large, alternate leaves. The upper leaves are smaller and broadly elliptic; the lower ones are broader, pinnately lobed and obovate. The flowers are yellow in colour and the blooming period occurs during the summer, and lasts about 1-2 months \[35\].

**Parts Used:** Seeds

**Medicinal Use:** Black Mustard is an appetizer, digestive, diuretic, emetic, irritant and stimulant. Used internally, it can promote appetite. Grounded seed is applied externally to the skin in cases of rheumatism, sciatica, peritonitis, neuralgia, and numerous internal inflammations. It reduces skeletal and muscular pain. Herbal tea or grounded seed sprinkled on bath water is helpful in cases of fevers, colds and influenza \[35\].

**Common Name:** Coriander

**Scientific Name:** *Coriandrum sativum*

**Family:** Apiaceae

**Description:** The plant is annual, growing up to 50 centimeters in height. Leaves are bright green, broadly lobed near the base, and longer and thinner on the flowering stems. Flowers are white to pale pink, produced in small, short-stalked umbels \[36\].

**Parts Used:** Whole plant
Medicinal Use: Coriander is considered to be a stimulant, diuretic, carminative and tonic. It is considered to be very helpful in treatments of different types of digestive dysfunctions. It helps in cases of indigestion, ulcerative colitis, typhoid fever and diarrhea. Coriander water is said to lower cholesterol levels if used on a regular basis. Excessive menstrual flow can be reduced with help of boiled coriander seeds. Used externally, coriander juice can help in the treatment of dry skin and could be effective in removal of pimples and blemishes. A decoction made from dried plant is an excellent eye tonic [21, 36].

Common Name: Carrot

Scientific Name: *Daucus carota* subsp. *sativus*

Family: Apiaceae

Description: Carrot is a root vegetable, usually orange in colour, though purple, red, white, and yellow varieties exist. It has a crisp texture when fresh. The most commonly eaten part of a carrot is a taproot, although the greens are edible as well. It is a biennial plant which grows a rosette of leaves in the spring and summer, while building up the stout taproot, which stores large amounts of sugars for the plant to flower in the second year. The flowering stem grows to about 1 meter (3 ft) tall, with an umbel of white flowers that produce a fruit called a mericarp by botanists, which is a type of schizocarp [37].

Parts Used: Root, leaf and seed

Medicinal Use: According to the clinical reports, beta-carotene can significantly lower the risk of heart attacks and strokes in women. Carrots are used in herbal medicine, to treat problems such as intestinal parasites, persistent diarrhea, different digestive problems as well as high cholesterol problems. The most beneficial effect of eating carrots is perhaps in its ability to improve eyesight and to help in the maintenance of visual acuity. Carrots possess large amounts of the vitamin A, which is a source of retinal, the compound that combines with different proteins to form the visual pigments found in the retinal rods and cones - the main visual receptors in the eye. Carrot also has great diuretic properties - carrot based herbal remedies have been used to counter disorders such as cystitis and stones in the kidneys and gallbladder. Carrot seeds possess a diuretic and carminative effect on the body. The seeds and the leaves can be used as an herbal remedy to bring relief from flatulence and gassy colic;
these two also form an effective remedy for settling the digestive system and to quite cut down stomach complaints [37].

**Common Name:** Black Mulberry

**Scientific Name:** *Morus nigra*

**Family:** Moraceae

**Description:** Black Mulberry is a deciduous tree, growing 10 to 13 meters. It has a dense head of branches, springing from a rough trunk. The leaves are thick, blunt toothed and lobed, with short, stiff hairs on the upper surface. Berry-like black fruits have a unique and refreshing, sweet taste [38].

**Parts Used:** Fruit.

**Medicinal use:** Traditionally, Black Mulberry has been used in cases of kidney disorders, fatigue, anemia and premature hair graying. Now it is commonly used for its antioxidant and laxative properties. It is considered to be beneficial in cases of urinary incontinence, vertigo and constipation. It is also used as a blood tonic [38].

**Common Names:** White Lotus, Waterlily

**Scientific Name:** *Nymphaea alba*

**Family:** Nymphaeaceae

**Description:** Plant is an aquatic, perennial, grows from an underwater stem. It has large and round, leathery leaves (30 centimeters in diameter). Beautiful multi-petaled, white flower, with bright yellow stamen in the center, appears during the spring. Seeds are smooth, olive green in color [39].

**Parts used:** Rhizome, flowers

**Medicinal Use:** Plant is considered to be an astringent, antiseptic, anesthetic, anaphrodisiac and sedative. It can be used in the treatment of bronchial congestion, and it can disperse the stagnated mucus from the chest. A decoction made from the root is beneficial in the treatment of diarrhea caused by irritable bowel syndrome, and also in the treatment of dysentery. White
Lotus flowers are considered to reduce sexual drive and to have a soothing and sedative effect on the nervous system. Therefore, they can be used in the treatments of insomnia and different sorts of anxieties [39].

**Common Name:** Garden nasturtium

**Scientific Name:** *Tropaeolum majus*

**Family:** Tropaeolaceae

**Description:** Plant is sprawling, succulent, annual, grows up to 1 meter. Leaves are large and round, green to glaucous green on the upper side, paler green below. Flowers are five-petaled, trumpet-shaped flowers. They vary from yellow to orange red. The fruit is 2 cm broad and segmented [40].

**Parts Used:** Whole herb.

**Medicinal Use:** Plant has strong antibiotic, antiseptic and antibacterial effects. It also acts as an expectorant, diuretic, and emmenagogue. Internally, it is used in treatments of urinary infections, and the infections of the respiratory tract (bronchitis, angina, flu, common cold). Traditionally, Nasturtium has also been used as a stimulant for hair growth. Used externally, Nasturtium acts as an excellent antiseptic in treatments of wounds and skin eruptions [40].

**Competing Interests**

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

**CONCLUSION**

As a consequence of increasing demand for the herbal drug treatment of various ailments, plant drugs from Ayurvedic system are being explored globally. Most of the medicines are prepared from herbs and the use of the whole plant or leaves is most common for preparing medicines. However, an increased human activity due to urbanization and industrialization is posing a threat to the plants which are used as medicines. Therefore, there is an urgent need to spread awareness among people by promoting measures such as controlled grazing, reforestation, proper land management to promote the sustainable use of medicinal plants. This review acts as a ready reference for some medicinal plants for the betterment of mankind.
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