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Phytotherapy treatment for insect bite in Uttar Pradesh, India

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Abstract

The present article highlights a brief description of *Achyranthes aspera* Linn. belongs to Amaranthaceae family is provided along with its medicinal use to insect bites.

Keywords: Insect bite, *Achyranthes aspera*, Chirchita, Phytotherapy

1. Introduction

The Indian system of Ayurvedic medicines has played an important role in our country in providing medical care since antiquity. This system of medicine is as old as our history and has formed an integral part of the Indian tradition since time immemorial.

During survey on the medicinal plants of Uttar Pradesh, the author came across common population of *Achyranthes aspera* (Chirchita) at University Road area, Meerut and Baghpat districts. Uttar Pradesh is divided into two geographical regions, which are Southern hills and Plateau and Ganga Plain. The Western Uttar Pradesh situated in the Northern part of India and it includes six regions (Meerut, Saharanpur, Moradabad, Aligarh, Bareilly and Agra). During the major part of the year climate of W.U.P. is influenced largely by the prevalence of dry air of the continental type, the summer being intensely hot and winter cold.

Uttar Pradesh has a very ancient and colorful history. The region finds mention in the great epics, the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*. Uttar Pradesh lies between 23°52' and 29°45' North Latitudes, to 77°04' and 84°38' East Longitudes. The Uttar Pradesh region covers a surface area of 240,928sq km and ranks fifth in terms of area and the most populous state of the India. Uttar Pradesh comprises 75 districts. Uttar Pradesh is one of the border states of India and is bounded in the north by Uttarakhand, in the north-west by Haryana, in the south-west by Rajasthan, in the south by Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, in the south-east by Jharkhand and in the east by Bihar.

In this region, soil mostly loamy and in some area it is sandy loam, silty loam and clay loam occasionally meet within the area. The rainfall varies considerably from year to year. The maximum rainfall recorded during the monsoon in the month of July-September. Climatically the year may be divided into four seasons. The cold season from near the end of November to the beginning of March is followed by hot season, which continues till about the end of June, when the south-west monsoon arrives, the monsoon season lasting till September end and the next two months forming the transitional period. The air is dry for the most part of the year. In April and May, these are usually the driest months.

2. Methodology

The present paper is based on the survey and collection of the data from the native informants, who are Vaidhya or Hakim (Ayurvedic medicine practitioners) and rural people who have knowledge about Ayurvedic medicine with their local name. Oral interviews were held in villages and information recorded at the spot.

Medicinal plants were collected and preserved for the future use. The plants were pressed in old newspapers and blotting sheets for dehydration in strong ply board. The Species were changed to fresh sheets after an interval of 24 hours to 2-3 days depending on the weather conditions until the specimens were completely dry. The plant species were identified with the help of available floras. Doubtful medicinal plants are confirmed at the herbaria of Forest Research Institute (F.R.I.) and Botanical Survey of India (B.S.I.) Dehradun.

Species is commonly found in forest edges and boundaries of cultivated field areas in most part of Uttar Pradesh. It is widely grown as herb or under shrub.

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There is no method to preparation of medicine reported by earlier researchers. Perusal of literatures on medicinal plants. Singh 1993 [4], Tomar and Singh 2005 [6], Tomar and Singh 2006 [7], Tomar 2007 [8], Dhiman and Dhiman 2008 [1], Tomar 2008 [9], Prachi *et al.* 2009 [3], Singh *et al.* 2009 [5], Tomar 2009 [10], Jain and Suryavanshi 2010 [2], Tomar 2011 [11], Tomar 2015 [12], Tomar 2015 [13] and Tomar 2015 [14]. In this present study a brief description of species is provided along with its medicinal use.

This method to preparation of remedy has been recorded for the first time by the author to cure insect bite and described here:

2.1 Medicinal use

Paste of the fresh leaves (2-3) is applied over the insect bites.

2.2 Dose

The same dosage is applied three to four times a day for a week or until to relief his pain.

2.3 Description of Species

An erect or subscandent herb or undershrub. Leaves large, ovate, acute or acuminate, glabrous or nearly so. Flowers greenish-white, deflexed, in terminal spikes elongating in fruit. Bracts and bracteoles persistent, ending in a spine. Utricle oblong. Seeds subcylindrical, brown.



Achyranthes aspera Linn.

Herbarium No. 317, 104

Locality: Meerut, Baghpat

3. Results and discussion

The species has been identified as *Achyranthes aspera* Linn. The species occurs very common and plant grows in waste field. It is found frequently in sandy loam soil as a erect herb. Therefore, study was conducted and revealed that *Achyranthes aspera* Linn. is used as Ayurvedic medicines in some part of Uttar Pradesh.

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