

Herbs used in traditional tamil medicine (ttm) known as siddha medicine

J Raamachandran

Siddha Medical Practitioner, India

The TTM known as Siddha medicine is the oldest system of India developed by Tamils almost 5000 years ago. If it is old it is equally scientific in approach. This system has extensively analyzed various herbs for curing illness either as a single drug or in composition of many herbs. The Siddhars approached the well being of the people in a unique way. The priority is for prevention and next only cure. It is in this regard the Tamil developed and gave to the world the concept "Food is Medicine", a slogan that the world has accepted now [1,2]. Disease may arise due to two factors: one is internal and the other is external. By internal we mean that a person may invite himself the diseases by eating wrong food or at wrong time or eating only selective food to suit his tongue etc. According to the Siddha medicine system, diet and lifestyle play a major role in health and in curing diseases. The herbs are broadly divided into two major groups. One that can be used as part of a diet and the others should be used in a restricted sense as part of medicine. Well, Eclipta alba can be used as part of diet for proper care of liver; Centella asiatica for memory; Solanum trilobatum for lungs; Turmeric for anti-inflammation etc. [3,4,5]. Preparation of food using the above is quite normal in Tamilnadu. Whereas, Adathoda vasica, Withania somnifera, Terminalia chebula etc can all be used only when there is problem related to throat, blood pressure and constipation respectively. The use of Acorus Calamus as a bangle for newly born children will help them against zymotic diseases. [Fig.1] The ethnic people who live in remote places in the hilly regions still use only herbs to cure various ailments such as diabetes, dysentery, fever, headache, rheumatism, snakebite, cough, etc. It is evident that the ethnic people still value traditional medicines as a way of meeting their medical needs. The knowledge of herbs and their use has been handed over to them over ages. Well it is happy to note that people start looking herbs for their cure as these herbal medicines have no side-effects when taken as prescribed. The TTM uses almost 1000 herbs for various diseases and few will be discussed in the presentation.

raamachandranj@live.com