

Medicinal plants recipes used for the treatment of various types of fever in *Garuda Purâna*

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ABSTRACT

Garuda Purâna, an ancient scripture written in Sanskrit language, contains medicinal information. *Acara Kanda* is the division which discusses many human disease and their Ayurvedic treatment. There are many medical topics have been discussed in *Acara Kanda* division of *Garuda Purâna* which resemble those explained in Ayurvedic medicinal system. Many medicinal plants are explained with their Ayurvedic medicinal values at various places in the *Purâna*. After collecting and analysing the medicinal data, it is found that this scripture mentions 26 plants species that have been interestingly used till modern days to cure various types of fever. In the present paper there 26 plants species belonging to 23 genera and 21 families are described. Botanical names followed by family, local names, Sanskrit name, habit and used plant parts have been furnished in the enumeration.

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INTRODUCTION

The Sanskrit editions of *Garuda Purâna*, translated in English by Dutt (2007) consists of 3 divisions, namely *Acara Kanda*, *Preta Kanda* (*Dharma Kanda*) and *Brahma Kanda* (*Moksa Kanda*). Among the 3 divisions *Acara Kanda* is the division which discusses diseases and their curative medicines. It has 240 chapters. This division mentions a large number of medicinal uses of plants and the name of trees, shrubs, herbs, and climbers are scattered throughout its text. Description of the diagnosis and medical treatment of all the diseases are discussed in detail in *Acara Kanda* which resemble those explained in Ayurvedic medicinal

system [1, 2]. In some verses of chapter 170 in *Acara Kanda*, the text recommends uses of some species of plants to cure various types of fever. Ethnobotanical investigation of such an ancient text may help to trace the man-plant relationship in India since the hoary past [1, 2, 3].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The information has been gathered from ancient Indian literature [1,2]. The *Acara Kanda* division of *Garuda Purâna* mentions a large number of medicinal uses of plants and the name of trees, shrubs, herbs, and climbers are scattered in different verses of chapter 170. In this study the plants are arranged alphabetically followed by family, habit, Sanskrit names, part used, dosage and mode of administration to cure various types of fever have been furnished.

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The medicinal plants which are described in *Garuda Purâna* and used for herbal therapy of various types of fever are enumerated. To indicate the source of information the numbers of the respective chapter and verse, with a stop between them, have been provided in brackets along with the datum. Some of these recipes are described here.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Water cooked with Musta (Motha) (*Cyperus rotundus* L., Cyperaceae, Sedge), Parpataka (Pittapapada) (*Fumaria parviflora* Lamk, Fumariaceae), Ushira (*Vetiveria zizanioides* (L.) Nash., Poaceae; Grass), Chandana (*Santalum album* L., Santalaceae; Tree), Udichya (*Pavonia odorata* Willd, Malvaceae; Herb) and Nagara (*Zingiber officinale* Rosc., Zingiberaceae; Herb), and subsequently cooled down should be given to a fever-patient for the alleviation of heat and thirst. [Ach. Kh. Ch. 170.1]
2. A febrifuge decoction of Nagaram (*Zingiber officinale* Rosc., Zingiberaceae; Herb), Devadaru (*Cedrus deodara* (Roxb. ex D. Don) G. Don, Pinaceae; Tree), Dhanyakam (*Coriandrum sativum* L., Apiaceae, Herb), Vrihati (*Solanum nigrum* L., Solanaceae; Herb) and Kantakari (*Solanum surattense* Burm. f., Solanaceae; Herb) should be given to a fever patient. [Ach. Kh. Ch. 170.2]
3. A decoction (Pachanam) of the Aragvadha (*Cassia fistula* L., Caesalpiniaceae, Tree), Abhya (Pippalimool) (*Piper longum* L., Piperaceae; Climber), Musta (*Cyperus rotundus* L., Cyperaceae, Sedge), Kutaki (*Picrorhiza kurrooa* Royle ex Benth, Scrophulariaceae, Herb) and Granthika (*Terminalia chebula* Retz., Combretaceae; Tree) proves efficacious during the immature stage of fever attended with colic. [Ach. Kh. Ch. 170.3]
4. A compound of Madhu (Honey), Saindha namak, Vacha (*Acorus calamus* L., Araceae; Herb), Kali mircha (*Piper nigrum* L., Piperaceae; Climber) and Pipali (*Piper longum* L., Piperaceae; Climber) taken in equal parts and pounded together should be given as an errhine for rousing up the patient from an unconscious state. [Ach. Kh. Ch. 170.4]
5. A purgative decoction of Trivridhishala [Nishoth (*Ipomoea turpethum* (L.) R.Br., Euphorbiaceae, Climber) – Indrayan (*Citrullus colocynthis* L.; Cucurbitaceae; Climber)], Triphala (*Terminalia chebula* Retz., Combretaceae; Tree, *Phyllanthus emblica* L., Euphorbiaceae; Tree and *Terminalia bellerica* (Gaertn.) Roxb., Combretaceae, Tree), Katuki (*Picrorhiza kurrooa* Royle ex Benth, Scrophulariaceae, Herb) and Aragvadha (*Cassia fistula* L., Caesalpiniaceae, Tree), saturated with an alkali, proves curative in all types of fever. [Ach. Kh. Ch. 170.5]
6. A decoction of Sonth (*Zingiber officinale* Rosc., Zingiberaceae; Herb), Amrita (*Tinospora cordifolia* (Willd.) Miers. ex Hk. f. & Th., Menispermaceae, Climber), Musta (*Cyperus rotundus* L., Cyperaceae, Sedge), Raktachandana (*Pterocarpus santalinus* Linn. f., Fabaceae; Tree), Khas (*Vetiveria zizanioides* (L.) Nash., Poaceae; Grass) and Dhanyakam (Dhaniya) (*Coriandrum sativum* L., Apiaceae, Herb) administered with the addition of sugar and honey, cures tertian ague. [Ach. Kh. Ch. 170.6]
7. A Ghritam properly cooked with the expressed juice and paste of Guduchi (*Tinospora cordifolia* (Willd.) Miers. ex Hk. f. & Th., Menispermaceae, Climber), Triphala (*Terminalia chebula* Retz., Combretaceae; Tree, *Phyllanthus emblica* L., Euphorbiaceae; Tree and *Terminalia bellerica* (Gaertn.) Roxb., Combretaceae, Tree) and Vasak (*Justicia adhatoda* L., Acanthaceae; Shrub), and Draksha (*Vitis vinifera* Dunal., Vitaceae;

Climber) and Bala (Variyara) (*Sida cordifolia* L., Solanaceae, Herb) acts as a good febrifuge. [Ach. Kh. Ch. 170.9].

8. A decoction of Amla (*Phyllanthus emblica* L., Euphorbiaceae; Tree), Haritaki (*Terminalia chebula* Retz., Combretaceae; Tree) and Pipali (*Piper longum* L., Piperaceae; Climber) –Chitta (*Plumbago zeylenica* L., Plumbaginaceae; Shrub) cures all forms of fever. [Ach. Kh. Ch. 170.10]

The historical and mythological evidences support that Ayurveda existed and was practiced through many Centuries in Indian subcontinent. Vedas and Puranas are authentic literatures of Indian culture and tradition which existed in ancient times and which influenced the subsequent civilizations. The causative factors, pathogenesis and the treatment of many diseases were dealt elaborately in a number of chapters in *Acara Kanda* division of *Garuda Purâna* which resemble those

explained in Ayurvedic medicinal system. The text also suggests some areas of future phytochemical research.

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