

Topic: Medicinal Plants of Bihar

B.Sc. Botany (Hons.) II

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The term “medicinal plant” include various types of plants used in herbalism ("herbology" or "herbal medicine"). It is the use of plants for medicinal purposes.

The any part of the herbs plant like fruit, seed, stem, bark, flower, leaf, stigma or a root, as well as a non-woody plant. Earlier, the term “herb” was only applied to non-woody plants, including those that come from trees and shrubs. These medicinal plants are also used as food, flavonoid, medicine or perfume and also in certain spiritual activities.

Plants have been used for medicinal purposes long before prehistoric period. Traditional systems of medicine continue to be widely practiced on many accounts. Population rise, inadequate supply of drugs, prohibitive cost of treatments, side effects of several synthetic drugs and development of resistance to currently used drugs for infectious diseases have led to increased emphasis on the use of plant materials as a source of medicines for a wide variety of human ailments.

Among ancient civilizations, India has been known to be rich repository of medicinal plants. The forest in India is the principal repository of large number of medicinal and

aromatic plants, which are largely collected as raw materials for manufacture of drugs and perfumery products. About 8,000 herbal remedies have been codified in AYUSH systems in India. Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha and Folk (tribal) medicines are the major systems of indigenous medicines. Among these systems, Ayurveda and Unani Medicine are most developed and widely practiced in India.

Treatment with medicinal plants is considered very safe as there is no or minimal side effects. These remedies are in sync with nature, which is the biggest advantage. The golden fact is that, use of herbal treatments is independent of any age groups and the sexes.

Medicinal plants such as *Aloe*, *Tulsi*, *Neem*, *Turmeric* and *Ginger* cure several common ailments. These are considered as home remedies in many parts of the country. It is known fact that lots of consumers are using Basil (*Tulsi*) for making medicines, black tea, in *pooja* and other activities in their day to day life.

Importance of some herbs with their medicinal values

- Some herbs are also having antibiotic properties. Turmeric is useful in inhibiting the growth of germs, harmful microbes and bacteria. Turmeric is widely used as a home remedy to heal cut and wounds.
- Many herbs are used as blood purifiers to alter or change a long-standing condition by eliminating the metabolic toxins. These are also known as 'blood cleansers'. Certain herbs improve the immunity of the person, thereby reducing conditions such as fever.
- Some herbs are used to neutralize the acid produced by the stomach. Herbs such as marshmallow root and leaf. They serve as antacids. The healthy gastric acid needed for proper digestion is retained by such herbs.
- Certain medicinal herbs have disinfectant property, which destroys disease causing germs. They also inhibit the growth of pathogenic microbes that cause communicable diseases.
- Calmative herbs, which provide a soothing effect to the body.

Certain aromatic plants such as Aloe, Golden seal, Barberry and Chirayata are used as mild tonics. The bitter taste of such plants reduces toxins in blood. They are helpful in destroying infection as well.

Important medicinal plants of Bihar:

- i. Tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*)
- ii. Aloe (*Aloe vera*)
- iii. Shatawari (*Asparagus racemosum*)
- iv. Safed musali (*Chlorophytum borivilianum*)
- v. Stevia (*Stevia rebaudiana*)
- vi. Ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*)
- vii. Sarpagandha (*Rauvolfia serpentine*)
- viii. Gurmar (*Gymnema roseus*)
- ix. Kalmegh (*Gloriosa paniculata*)
- x. Sadabahar (*Catharanthus roseus*)

ix. Brahmi (*Centella asiatica*)

x. Pippli (*Piper longum*)

xi. Neem (*Azadirachta indica*)