MEDICINAL STRENGTH OF PAHALGAM VALLEY OF NORTHERN HIMALAYAN KASHMIR, INDIA

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ABSTRACT:

The medicinal properties of plant species have made an outstanding contribution in the origin and evolution of many traditional herbal therapies. These traditional knowledge systems have started to disappear with the passage of time due to scarcity of written documents and relatively low income in these traditions. Over the past few years however the medicinal plants have regained a wide recognition due to an escalating faith in herbal medicine in view of its lesser side effects compared to allopathic medicine and the necessity of meeting the requirements of medicine for an increasing human population. The Pahalgam valley of Kashmir is the Northern most part of the Himalaya. The vegetational wealth of Northern Himalaya is well known since ancient times due to varying topographic conditions of the region thrive on different types of vegetation. It has a rich medicinal plant flora of over one thousand documented species having medicinal value. Out of these more than 700 species are much in use in the country, mostly by local people living in the villages as a household remedy in several diseases. The forests and alpines are getting degraded with the increasing biotic pressure and in the process ground flora and shrubs which happen to provide bulk of the medicinal plants are also under strain. In the present study a field survey was made from May to October of 2011 in Pahalgam valley of Kashmir in order to refine the medicinal strength of above places. The altitudinal range, local name, part used, use/cure and status of some important medicinal plants are compiled based on the earlier publications as well as personal communication with local persons, rural folks and Hakims.

KEY WORDS: Medicinal plants, Pahalgam valley, northern Himalaya, biotic pressure, rural folks.
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References:


