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Herbal Remedies for Hair Disorders by the Tribals of East Godavari District, Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract

The present study deals with the documentation of ethnomedicinal plants used for curing hair disorders by the tribals of East Godavari district, Andhra Pradesh. The study resulted in the documentation of 35 medicinal plant species belonging to 34 genera and 24 families used for hair wash, alopecia, dandruff, cooling effect, hair tonic, lice killing and hair tonic. Fabaceae is the dominant family followed by Malvaceae, Combretaceae, Rubiaceae and Sapindaceae.

Key Words: Herbal remedies, Hair care, Tribals, East Godavari, Andhra Pradesh

Introduction

Human beings are using herbal products for their healthcare since time immemorial. Though plenty of modern allopathic drugs are available in the market people are attracted to the herbal products since they believe that they are safer and proved elixir in the treatment of various ailments. Though there are many studies on ethnomedicine exclusive studies on hair disorders are not many [1-3].

East Godavari district lies between 16° 3' and 18° 20' of N and 81° 30' and 82° 36' of E. The total geographical area of the district is 10, 807 km². The average rainfall is 1137.6 mm. The total population of the district is 49, 01, 420 of which 1, 91, 561 are tribal inhabitants comprising 3.91% of the total population. Konda Reddi, Konda Dora, Konda Kammara, Konda Kapu, Manne Dora and Valmikis are the main tribal communities inhabiting the forest areas. The tribals have their own language, heritage, religious practices and customs.

Material and Methods

The areas inhabited by different ethnic communities were surveyed during 2005-2007. The first hand information was obtained from aboriginals in 126 interior tribal pockets with good forest cover and cross checked with the local medicine men or vaidyas. The data generated from different villages and tribal tracts were carefully analysed, compared, verified and presented in this paper. The voucher specimens are deposited in the Herbarium of the Department of Botany, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam. Each plant is enumerated with a correct botanical name followed by the author, family, vernacular and English names.

Enumeration

Abrus precatorius L. Fabaceae VN: Guriginja E: Indian liquorice

Seed paste is used for hair wash.

Acacia sinuata (Lour.) Merr. Fabaceae VN: Sikaya E: Soap pod

Dandruff: Seed paste is massaged on the scalp once a day for one week.

Albizia amara (Roxb.) Boivin Fabaceae VN: Narlinga
 Leaf paste is used for hair wash.

Aloe vera (L.) Burm. f. Liliaceae VN: Musambaramu E: Indian aloe

Leaf juice is used for hair wash to stimulate growth of hair, for hair fall and dandruff.

Annona squamosa L. Annonaceae VN: Seethaphalam
 E: Custard apple

To kill lice: Fifty g of dried seed powder mixed in 250 ml of coconut oil is applied to the scalp twice a week to kill lice.

Anogeissus latifolia (Roxb. ex DC.) Wall. ex Guill. & Perr. Combretaceae VN: Chirumanu E: Gum ghatti

Wood ash is used as detergent and for hair wash.

Azadirachta indica A. Juss. Meliaceae VN: Yepa chettu
 E: Margosa tree

Dandruff: Leaf paste is applied on the scalp externally daily once for one hour before head bath for 3 days.

Carica papaya L. Caricaceae VN: Boppayi E: Papaya

Alopecia: Flower paste is applied on the scalp daily once regularly for one week for luxuriant growth of hair.

Ceiba pentandra (L.) Gaertn. Bombacaceae VN: Burugu E: White silk cotton tree

Tender leaves are used for hair wash.

Cleome viscosa L. Cleomaceae VN: Kukka vaminta E: Wild mustard

Eradication of lice: Seed paste mixed with coconut oil is used as hair oil.

Cochlospermum religiosum (L.) Alston
Cochlospermaceae VN: Konda gogu E: Yellow- flowered cotton tree.

Leaf decoction is used for hair wash.

Datura innoxia Mill. Solanaceae VN: Tella ummetha E: Downy thorn apple

Alopecia: Leaf juice is applied to the scalp one hour before washing the hair. This is continued for 10 days.

Eclipta prostrata L. Asteraceae VN: Guntagalaraku E: Trailing Eclipta

Hair tonic: Whole plant and leaves of *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*, seeds of *Trigonella foenum-graecum* taken in equal quantities are ground. Paste is boiled in 500 g of coconut oil for one hour and incubates for one week and then oil is filtered and used as hair oil.

Glycyrrhiza glabra (Retz.) DC. Fabaceae VN: Atimadhuramu E: Liquorice

Hair tonic: Root decoction is used as shampoo for growth of hair and also to control hair fall.

Grewia tiliifolia Vahl Tiliaceae VN: Tada chettu

Leaf paste is used for hair wash.

Helicteres isora L. Sterculiaceae VN: Nulikaya E: East-Indian screw tree

Leaf paste is used for hair wash.

Hibiscus rosa-sinensis L. Malvaceae VN: Dhasani E: Bimlipatam-Jute

Hair tonic: Leaves with fruits of *Terminalia chebula*, *Phyllanthus emblica*, leaves of *Eclipta prostrata*, *Lawsonia inermis* and seeds of *Trigonella foenum-graecum* are taken in equal quantities and soaked in 2 Kgs of coconut oil for 20 days, filtered and applied to the scalp for vigorous growth of hair.

Limonia acidissima L. Rutaceae VN: Elikkaya E: Dog wood apple

Tender fruit pulp is used for hair wash.

Kydia calycina Roxb. Malvaceae VN: Konda patti

Hair tonic: Stem bark with that of *Albizia amara* taken in equal quantities are ground and the paste is used as shampoo.

Lawsonia inermis L. Lythraceae VN: Gorintaku E: Henna

Hair tonic: Leaves with those of *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*, *Eclipta prostrata* and seeds of *Abrus precatorius* are taken in equal quantities and ground. Paste is soaked in sesame oil for 5 days and used as hair oil.

Madhuca indica J. F. Gmel. Sapotaceae VN: Ippa chettu E: Indian butter tree

Oil extracted from seeds is used as hair oil.

Maytenus emarginata (Willd.) Ding Hou Celastraceae VN: Danti

Leaf paste is used for hair wash.

Murraya koenigii (L.) Spreng. Rutaceae VN: Karivepaku E: Curry leaf

Hair tonic: Leaves with that of *Lawsonia inermis* are taken in equal quantities and ground into paste. It is boiled with sesame oil and cooled. It is applied to the hair regularly.

Nyctanthes arbortristis L. Nyctaginaceae VN: Pagadamalti E: Night jasmine

Alopecia: Two spoonful of seed powder mixed with a spoonful of honey is taken orally twice a day for 15 days. Meanwhile the paste is applied on the scaly patches.

Phyllanthus emblica L. Euphorbiaceae VN: Usirica E: *Phyllanthus herb*

Hair tonic: Fruit juice mixed with sesame oil is applied to the scalp for long hair.

Sapindus emarginatus Vahl Sapindaceae VN: Kunkudu E: Soapnut

Fruits used as substitute for soap for washing hair, jewels etc.

Schleichera oleosa (Lour.) Oken. Sapindaceae VN: Busi chettu E: Lac tree; honey tree

Seed oil is used as hair oil.

Sesamum indicum L. Pedaliaceae VN: Nuvvulu E: Sesame

Seed oil is used as hair oil.

Strychnos potatorum L. f. Loganiaceae VN: Induga, Chilla E: Clearing nut tree

Seed paste is used as detergent and for hair wash.

Tamarindus indica L. Fabaceae VN: Chinta E: Tamarind

Crushed tender fruits are used for hair wash.

Terminalia arjuna (Roxb. ex DC.) Wight & Arn.

Combretaceae VN: Tella maddi E: Arjun mytralan

Wood ash and leaf paste are used as hair wash and detergent.

Terminalia coriacea (Roxb.) Wight & Arn. Combretaceae VN: Nallamaddi

Leaf paste is used for hair wash.

Trigonella foenum-graecum L. Fabaceae VN: Menthulu E: Fenugreek

Seed paste is used for hair wash.

Vigna radiata (L.) Wilczek Fabaceae VN: Pesara E: Black gram

Leaf paste is used for hair wash.

Ziziphus mauritiana Lam. Rhamnaceae VN: Regu chettu E: Indian jujube

Lather from leaves is used for hair wash by women.

Results and Discussion

The present study gave detailed information on 35 plant species belonging to 34 genera and 24 families used as herbal remedies for hair disorders by the tribals of East Godavari district. The dominant family which contributed more species for curing hair disorders is Fabaceae (7 species) followed by Malvaceae, Rutaceae, Sapindaceae and Combretaceae (2 each) and the rest represented by one species each. *Aloe vera*, *Eclipta alba*, *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis* and *Phyllanthus emblica* are used for hair care in both Eastern and Western Ghats [1-3] and are also used by the tribals of the present study area for the same purpose. Most of the species are used for hair wash for curing dandruff, alopecia, cooling effect, hair tonic, eradication of lice, hair fall etc. These detergents used by the tribals are natural remedies with no side-effects and cheap with good results. However, scientific validation is required to prove their efficacy and ultimately to develop newer herbal shampoos for hair care.

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