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## Indigenous knowledge on medicinal plants used to treat hemorrhoids in selected areas of Madurai district, Tamil Nadu, India

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### Abstract

The aim of present investigation mainly focused on Indigenous knowledge on Medicinal plants used to treat hemorrhoids in selected areas of Madurai District. It has been shown that 29 medicinal plants belonging to 20 families used to cure hemorrhoids. The ancestral traditional knowledge of people who have been using the native plants for the preparation of drugs and methods of their administration along with doses were recorded, Collected through questionnaire as well as informal personal interviews during field trips. The practical knowledge of people in herbal medicines reveals that they are capable of curing Hemorrhoids.

**Keywords:** Indigenous knowledge, hemorrhoids, Madurai district

### 1. Introduction

Hemorrhoids, also called piles, are swollen veins in your anus and lower rectum, similar to varicose veins. Hemorrhoids have a number of causes, although often the cause is unknown. They may result from straining during bowel movements or from the increased pressure on these veins during pregnancy. Hemorrhoids may be located inside the rectum (internal hemorrhoids), or they may develop under the skin around the anus (external hemorrhoids). Hemorrhoids are very common. Nearly three out of four adults will have hemorrhoids from time to time. Sometimes they don't cause symptoms but at other times they cause itching, discomfort and bleeding. Occasionally, a clot may form in a hemorrhoid (thrombosed hemorrhoid). These are not dangerous but can be extremely painful and sometimes need to be lanced and drained. Fortunately, many effective options are available to treat hemorrhoids. Many people can get relief from symptoms with home treatments and lifestyle changes. Plants have been used for medicinal purposes long before prehistoric period. Ancient Unani manuscripts Egyptian papyrus and Chinese writings described the use of herbs. Evidence exist that Unani Hakims, Indian Vaidis and European and Mediterranean cultures were using herbs for over 4000 years as medicine. Indigenous cultures such as Rome, Egypt, Iran, Africa and America used herbs in their healing rituals, while other developed traditional medical systems such as Unani, Ayurveda and Chinese Medicine in which herbal therapies were used systematically. Traditional systems of medicine continue to be widely practised 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 civilisations, 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 practised in India. Recently, WHO (World Health Organization) estimated that 80 percent of people worldwide rely on herbal medicines for some aspect of their primary health care needs. According to WHO, around 21,000 plant species have the potential for being used as medicinal plants? In the present study an attempt has been made to collect medicinal knowledge and medicinal uses of plants to cure Hemorrhoids.

## 2. Experimental Methods

### 2.1 Details of the Study Sites

Madurai is located at 9.93°N 78. 12°E. It has an average elevation of 101 metres. The city of Madurai lies on the flat and fertile plain of the river Vaigai, which runs in the northwest-southeast direction through the city, dividing it into two almost equal halves. The Sirumalai and Nagamalai hills lie to the north and west of Madurai. Madurai lies southeast of the Western Ghats, and the surrounding region occupies the plains of South India and contains several mountain spurs. The soil type in central Madurai is predominantly clay loam, while red loam and black cotton types are widely prevalent in the outer fringes of the city.

### 2.2 Interview with informants

An extensive Survey was carried out in Madurai from June 2015-August 2015. The number of informants interviewed 12 (8Male, 4Female). The information of this study was collected through questionnaire method from the villagers,

elderly persons, traditional healers who are residing areas of the study to collect data on medicinal plants commonly used by them. This include different common human ailments, their occurrence, symptoms, regular mode of treatment including herbal ones, plants and plant parts used for the treatment.

### 2.4 Botanical identification of plants

All the medicinal plants recorded during the field visits were botanically identified by referring Flora of Tamil Nadu Carnatic <sup>[5]</sup> and An Excursion Flora of Central Tamil Nadu, India <sup>[6]</sup>.

## 3. Results and Discussion

The Details of collected plants are enumerated with their scientific name, family, local name, parts used, Diseases Cured were presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** The Details of collected plants are enumerated with their scientific name, family, local name, parts used, Diseases Cured were presented in Table.

S. No	Binomial Name	Family	Local Name (Tamil)	Uses
1	<i>Abutilon indicum</i> (L) Wild ex Del.	Mimosaceae	<i>Thuthi</i>	Leaf paste orally to cure hemorrhoids
2	<i>Acalypha indica</i> L.	Euphorbiaceae	<i>Kuppaimeni</i>	Dried whole plant is mixed with ghee to cure hemorrhoids
3	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i> L.	Amaranthaceae	<i>Naayuruvi</i>	Prickly chaff bus works well for Hemorrhoids
4	<i>Aegle marmelos</i> corr.	Rutaceae	<i>Vilvam</i>	The fruit is used to treat Hemorrhoids
5	<i>Allium cepa</i> L.	Liliaceae	<i>Vengayam</i>	Bulb juice is mixed with little bit of sugar and ghee for daily to cure hemorrhoids
6	<i>Aloe vera</i> (L).Burn.f	Liliaceae	<i>Kathalai</i>	Leaf gel is applied externally on to a affected area. It reduces severe pain and itching.
7	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i> L.	Amaranthaceae	<i>Mullukkirai</i>	Extraction of whole plant used to treat hemorrhoids
8.	<i>Azadirachta indica</i> A.juss	Meliaceae	<i>Vembu</i>	Leaf oil is used to treat piles
9.	<i>Bauhinia variegata</i> L.	Caesalpinaceae	<i>Mantharai</i>	Dried buds are used to treat Hemorrhoids
10.	<i>Calotropis procera</i> (Ait)	Asclepidaceae	<i>Erukku</i>	Root paste is applied to treat hemorrhoids
11.	<i>Carica papaya</i> L.	Caricaceae	<i>Pappali</i>	Latex and fruit is used to cure hemorrhoids. Papaya fruit is applied externally to the affected areas
12.	<i>Cassia auriculata</i> L.	Caesalpinaceae	<i>Aavaarai</i>	Leaves boiled with milk is applied to treat hemorrhoids
13.	<i>Cissus quadrangularis</i> L.	Vitaceae	<i>Pirandai</i>	Stem paste is used to cure Hemorrhoids
14.	<i>Citrus limon</i> (L).Burm.f.	Rutaceae	<i>Narthangaai</i>	Fruit juice is mixed with ginger juice, Mint and Honey consume it once in a day
15.	<i>Coriandrum sativum</i> L.	Apiaceae	<i>Kothamalli</i>	Whole plant extract mixed with sugar or Honey is taken twice a day
16.	<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> L.	Cyperaceae	<i>Korai</i>	Rhizome powder is used to treat hemorrhoids
17.	<i>Datura metal</i> L.	Solanaceae	<i>oomatham</i>	Tender leaf paste is applied externally.
18.	<i>Eclipta prostrate</i> L.	Asteraceae	<i>Karisalanganni</i>	Leaf paste mixed with sugar is taken twice a day
19.	<i>Euphorbia hirta</i> L.	Euphorbiaceae	<i>Amman patcharisi</i>	Leaf extract is used to cure Hemorrhoids
20.	<i>Gloriosa superba</i> L.	Liliaceae	<i>Kanthai</i>	Tuber powder is used to treat hemorrhoids
21.	<i>Mimosa pudica</i> L.	Mimosaceae	<i>Thottal suringi</i>	Whole plant is mixed with leaves of Eucalyptus and boiled for a long time and decoction used in piles
22.	<i>Landana camera</i> L.	Verbenaceae	<i>Unnichi</i>	Fresh leaves extract is mixed with honey is a remedy for hemorrhoids.
23.	<i>Maduca indica</i> J.F Gmel.	Sapotaceae	<i>Illupai</i>	oil is extracted from seed used in hemorrhoids
24.	<i>Musa paradisiaca</i> L.	Musaceae	<i>Vaalai</i>	Fruit is taken daily to treat hemorrhoids
25.	<i>Pongamia pinnata</i> Pierre	Fabaceae	<i>Pungam</i>	Bark and flower is used internally to cure Bleeding piles
26.	<i>Tamarindus indica</i> Linn	Caesalpinaceae	<i>Puliamaram</i>	Leaf juice is useful in Bleeding Piles
27.	<i>Solanum nigrum</i> L.	Solanaceae	<i>Manathakkali</i>	Fruit is given to treat hemorrhoids
28.	<i>Alpinia galangal</i> (Linn.) swartz.	Zingiberaceae	<i>Perarathai</i>	The decoction of the leaves used against piles
29.	<i>Cyanodon dactylon</i> (Linn.) Pers.	Poaceae	<i>Arugampillu</i>	Fresh juice of whole plant with honey used against Piles

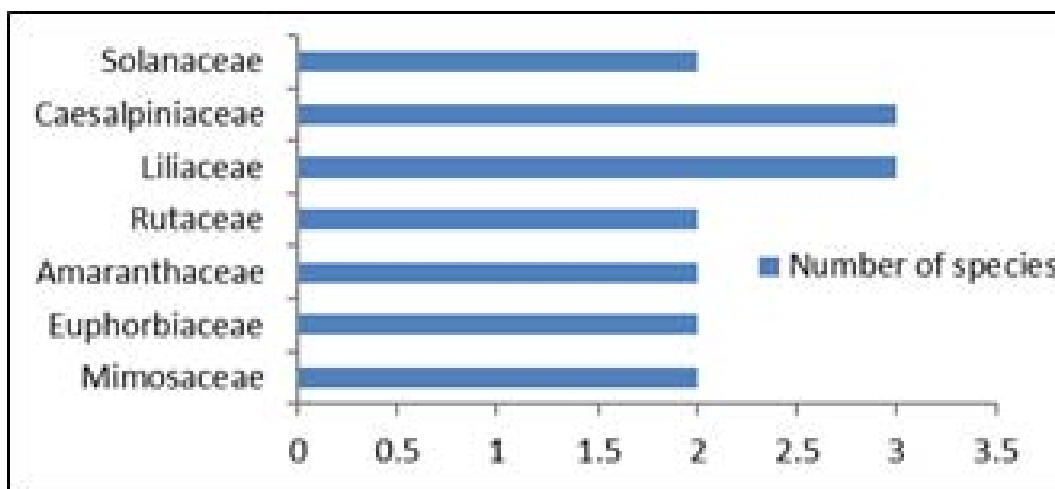


Fig 1: Number of families used to treat Hemorrhoids

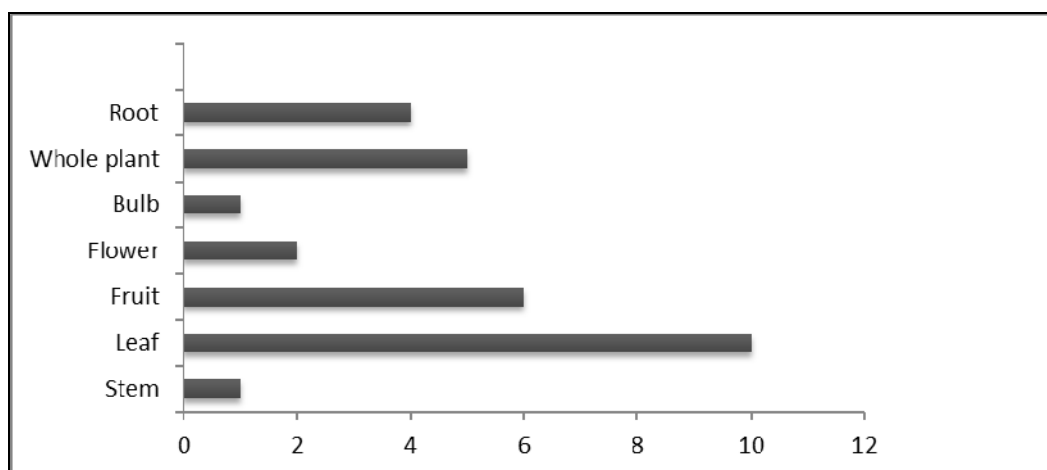


Fig 2: The plant parts Used to treat Hemorrhoids

The present study enumerated that there are 29 medicinal plant belonging to 20 families. It is more evident that the plant species belonging to the family Mimosaceae, Liliaceae, Amaranthaceae, Solanaceae, Euphorbiaceae, Rutaceae, and Caesalpiniaceae are maximum population than any other plant species. Different parts of Medicinal plants such as Leaves, Stem, Leaf juice, root, Fruit, and seed are being used for treating Hemorrhoids. The Leaves of medicinal plants such as *Abutilon indicum*, *Aloe vera*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Alpinia galanga*, *Tamarindus sativus*, *Lantana camera*, *Euphorbia hirta*, *Eclipta prostrate*, *Datura metal* and *Cassia auriculata* are used to treat hemorrhoids.

### Conclusion

The value of Medicinal plants to Human livelihoods is essentially infinite. They obviously make fundamental contribution to human health. Medicinal plants can be symbolically very important to people. They can be held in special religious, nationalistic or ideological esteem. This can be advantageous for conservation efforts, given that it is an acknowledgement, well rooted in culture, of the worth of a sizeable proportion of the world's flora. Many of the threats to medicinal plant species are similar to those causing endangerment to plant diversity generally. The most serious proximate threats generally are habitat loss, habitat degradation and over-harvesting. Conservation and New harvesting methodologies should be necessary to medicinal plants from Extinction.

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