Ethnobotanical Survey on Respiratory Disorders in Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh, India†

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Abstract

An Ethnopharmacological survey of the Eastern Ghats region of Andhra Pradesh, comprising Chittoor, Cuddapah, East Godavari, Guntur, Khammam, Krishna, Kurnool, Srikakulam, Visakhapatnam, Vijayanagaram and the West Godavari districts, was conducted during 2000-2005. Eighty-four species of folk drug plants belonging to 72 genera and 41 families were found to be used as a remedy for respiratory disorders by the rural people and forest ethnic people (Chenchus, Erukulas, Lambadas, Koyas, Kondareddies, Nukadoras, Yanadis). The scientific, vernacular and family names of these medicinal plants, along with the parts used and the mode of their administration are enumerated.

Key Words: Ethnobotany, Respiratory disorders, Eastern Ghats, India.

1. Introduction

The respiratory system includes the lungs and a system of tubes that link the sites of gas exchange with the external environment. It is susceptible to a number of diseases, and the lungs are prone to a wide range of disorders caused by pollutants in the air. The most common problems of the respiratory system are: asthma, bronchitis, common cold, cough and whooping cough. Asthma is a condition marked by recurrent attacks of paroxysmal dyspnoea, with wheezing, due to spasmodic contraction of bronchi, inflammation or allergy (Subhash Ranade et al. 1999).

In India, about 20 million people are estimated to suffer from asthma and about 150 million worldwide, according to the World Health Organization (WHO, 1998, Weiss et al. 1992). Common cold is a catarrh disorder of upper respiratory tract. It is associated with other diseases such as flu, sinusitis and cough. Many plants of folklore importance are used as a remedy for respiratory disorders for generations by rural population, forest ethnics have brought to light through ethnobotanical field studies. The present work is an endeavor in this direction and provides field data
on 84 useful taxa for the treatment of respiratory disorders by the forest ethnic people of the Eastern Ghats region of Andhra Pradesh, predominantly the Chenchus, Kondareddies, Koyas, Nukadoras. The Eastern Ghats are one of the richest floristic and phytogeographical regions of India. Eastern Ghats are located between 76°56’ and 86°30’ E longitudes and 11°30’ and 22°00’ N latitudes. Ethnobotanically, this region is not well known despite the contributions of Aruneekumar & Niteswar (1990), Hemadri (1987, 1994), Reddy et al. (1998), Prasad et al. (1999) and Raju (1995).

The present paper provides additional folklore information on 84 Angiosperms that belong to 72 genera and 41 families. Of these, the Asclepiadaceae and Papilionaceae are the dominant families, with six ethnomedicinal species each.

2. Material & Methods

The information on plants used for treating respiratory disorders of folklore origin were obtained during the course of ethnopharmacological surveys of Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh conducted in 2000-2003. For this purpose, local medicine men and elderly people whose empirical knowledge was respected by every one in the area were interviewed. Data on local name of folk drug plants, part used, method of preparation, dosage recommended, and precautions (if any) were recorded for each medicinal claim. Medicine men were requested to accompany the senior author in the field so as to facilitate the identification of different plant drugs specially employed by them to treat the disease. The information was also discussed with different medicine men in other localities to validate the claims as far as possible. Based on the information and material provided by medicine men, the weight measurements in dosage forms were determined by using a scale in either the field or camp. Names of all key informants were noted and are available on request. Botanical specimens of all folk drug plants were collected, identified and deposited at the herbarium of Laila Impex R & D Centre, Vijayawada, for further reference. The study involved an extensive literature search and herbarium examination.

3. Enumerations

The information collected on ethnomedicinal medicine employed for respiratory disorders in Eastern Ghats of Andhra Pradesh by the local tribal inhabitants and herbal practitioners is presented under the scientific names of the plants, which are alphabetically arranged. The author citation, name of family, vernacular names, collection number and medicinal uses are set in sequence.

Asthma

1. Acacia pennata (Linn.) Willd. (Mimosaceae) ‘Korintha’ LIH 6521
   Fresh stem sap sucked once daily until cured.
2. Achyranthes aspera Linn. (Amaranthaceae) ‘Korruchu’ LIH 6623
   A pinch of the plant is mixed with sufficient quantity of honey and taken twice daily until cured.
3. Aegle marmelos (Linn.) Correa (Rutaceae) ‘Maaredu’ LIH 6537
   Four tender tips are chewed and the sap swallowed once daily for 40 days.
4. Annona squamosa Linn. (Annonaceae) ‘Seethapalamu’ LIH 6798
One tea-cup of water is poured over five gm. of stem bark and 5 crushed leaves, and boiled until only 
½ cup remains. This extract is taken once daily for a fortnight.

5. *Anogeissus latifolia* (Roxb.ex DC.) Wall. ex Guill (Combretaceae) ‘Tiruman’ *LIH* 6543
Two to three inches of stem bark are chewed and the sap is swallowed once daily until cured.

Four to five gm. of dry leaf powder is taken once daily until cured.

7. *Bauhinia variegata* Linn. (Caesalpiniaceae) ‘Devakanchanum’ *LIH* 6669
A teaspoon of flower paste is taken twice daily for a fortnight.

Fifty gm. of the stem bark of this species plus that of *Syzygium cumini* (Linn.) Skeels (Naeredu, Jinna
chettu) are crushed with 3-4 peppers and mixed in a liter of water. Forty to fifty ml. of this extract is
taken once daily until cured.

The stem bark of this species along with that of *Terminalia bellirica* and the roots of *Adiantum
lunulatum* Burm. (Pitta kaalu) are crushed in equal proportions and taken in a size of red gram once
daily for three months.

10. *Caesalpinia bonduc* Linn. (Caesalpiniaceae) ‘Gacha’ *LIH* 6502
Four to five gm. of seed powder are taken with honey twice daily for 2-3 months.

Five to six drops of flower extract are administered once daily until cured.

12. *Cassia fistula* Linn. (Caesalpiniaceae) ‘Rela’, ‘Rella’ *LIH* 6548
Eight to ten gm. of fresh fruit pulp is administered twice daily for 3-4 months.

13. *Chloroxylon swietenia* DC. (Flindersiaceae) ‘Billudu’ *LIH* 6728
Twenty to thirty gm. of fresh stem bark are crushed with 1-2 leaves of *Wrightia tinctoria* and 6-7
peppers. The extract is boiled and a half teaspoon of this decoction is taken twice daily for 23
months.

14. *Cissus quadrangularis* Linn. (Vitaceae) ‘Nalleru’ *LIH* 6678
One to two inches of dry stem are crushed with 2-3 peppers and garlic. The extract is taken once
daily for two months.

15. *Cissus vitiginea* Linn. (Vitaceae) ‘Aavaguda’ *LIH* 6813
Four to five teaspoons of dry fruits are crushed with 2-3 inches of *Chloroxylon swietenia* DC.
(Billudu) stem bark. A teaspoon of this extract is administered with a glass of goat milk once daily
until cured.

16. *Cleome gynandra* Linn. (Cleomaceae) ‘Vaminta’ *LIH* 6560
Twelve to fifteen leaves are crushed with 8-10 peppers and pinch of copper sulphate and boiled in a
glass of water. A half glass of this extract is taken once daily until cured.

17. *Clerodendrum serratum* Linn. Moon (Verbenaceae) ‘Gantu bharagi’ *LIH* 6503
Two to three teaspoons of a root decoction of this species is taken with a pinch of black pepper and
salt once daily until cured.

A teaspoon of tuber paste is administered once daily for 45 days.

19. Datura metel Linn. (Solanaceae) ‘Nallumetta’ LIH 6631

Five to ten gm. of stem powder is placed on Ficus benghalensis Linn. (Marri chettu) leaves, which are then wrapped and smoked in the form of a cigar once daily until cured.

20. Dendrophthoe falcata (Linn.f.) Ettighs. (Loranthaceae) ‘Badanika’ LIH 6738

Ten to twelve gm. of stem bark powder is taken twice daily for one month.

21. * Desmodium biarticulatum (Linn.) F.V. Muell. (Papilionaceae) LIH 6550

Powder from the whole plant is burnt and the smoke inhaled twice daily until cured.

22. Desmodium gangeticum (Linn.) DC. (Papilionaceae) ‘Dayyam jada’ LIH 6505

A half cup of root decoction is taken once daily for 2-3 months.


Two to three teaspoons of a decoction of the whole plant is taken once daily until cured.

24. Garuga pinnata Roxh. (Burseraceae) ‘Garugu’ LIH 6565

The leaves of this species along with those of Justicia adhatoda and Vitex negundo are crushed in equal quantities, made into pills the size of pigeon peas and taken twice daily until cured.

25. Hibiscus rosa-sinensis Linn. (Malvaceae) ‘Mandaara’ LIH 6517

Many pure red colored petals of the flower are crushed in a half cup of butter milk, 2-3 black peppers and a pinch of salt. The paste is taken as a chutney once daily for 1 month.


A half teaspoon of fresh leaf juice is taken once daily until cured.


Twenty to twenty-five ml. of the stem bark of this species is extracted and administered once daily for 1 month.


Two to three leaves of this species are crushed along with those of Wrightia inctoria, piper longum Linn. (Pippallu) and Allium sativum (Vellulli paya). One-half teaspoon of this extract is taken once daily until cured.


One to two teaspoons of powder ground from the whole plant is taken with honey once daily for a fortnight.


A teaspoon of root powder mixed with a pinch of pepper powder and fried zinger is taken with honey once daily until cured. A teaspoon of fruit paste can also be taken with goat milk twice daily for three months.

31. Tylophora Indica (Burm.f) Merr. (Asclepiadaceae) ‘Mekameyani aku’ LIH 6558

One to two tender leaves are chewed and the sap swallowed in an empty stomach in early morning once daily until cured. Two to three leaves may also be crushed with 1-2 peppers and garlic. This extract is taken once daily for 2-3 months.

Three to four drops of leaf juice are applied as nasal drops once daily until cured.

**Bronchitis**

1. *Abutilon hirtum* (Lam.) Sweet (Malvaceae) ‘Banka benda’ *LIH 6751.*
   
   One to two teaspoons of the leaf decoction of this species is taken once daily for one whole week.

   
   Two to three teaspoons of the root decoction from this species are taken twice daily for one whole week.

   
   Five to six gm. of leaf powder of this species are mixed with a sufficient quantity of zinger paste. This extract is taken once daily until cured.

4. *Corallocarpus epigaeus* (Rottl. & Willd.) CB.Clarke ‘Paamu donda’ *LIH 6793*
   
   A teaspoon of tuber paste from this species is taken once daily until cured.

5. *Melia azedarach* Linn. (Meliaceae) ‘Turka vepa’ *LIH 6593*
   
   Two to three handfuls of the steamed leaves of this species are tied on the abdomen and chest twice daily until cured.

6. *Ocimum tenuiflorum* Linn. (Lamiaceae) ‘Tulsi’ *LIH 6509*
   
   Ten to twelve ml. of leaf juice from this species are taken daily for one whole week.

   
   One to two inches of fresh stems from this species are crushed with 3-4 salt crystals

**Cold and Cough**

1. *Anisochilus carnosus* (Linn.f.) Wall. ex Benth. (Lamiaceae) ‘Kodipunju chettu’ *LIH 6504*
   
   Two teaspoons of extract from the tender shoots of this species are administered twice daily for 3 days.

2. *Calotropis gigantea* (Linn.) R.Br. (Asclepiadaceae) ‘Jilledu’ *LIH 6515*
   
   Four to five drops of a flower extract from this species are administered twice daily for 3-4 days.

3. *Careya arborea* Roxb. (Barringtoniaceae) ‘Tharrepu chettu’ *LIH 6542*
   
   Two to three inches of stem bark from this species are crushed with 2-3 peppers. This mixture is administered with honey once daily for 3 days.

4. *Cissampelos pareira* Linn. (Menispermaceae) ‘Banka tiga’, ‘Chiruboddi’ *LIH 6581*
   
   Four to five inches of the roots of this species are crushed with a plant of *Androprahis panichulata* (Burm.f.) Nees (Nelavemu) and the fruits of *Balanites roxburghii* planch. (Gaare chettu) (10-12 gm. each). This extract is taken once daily for one whole week.

5. *Evolvulus alsinoides* (Linn.) Linn. (Convolvulaceae) ‘Vishnukrantha’ *LIH 6511*
   
   Fifteen ml. of a decoction made from a whole plant of this species is administered thrice a day for three days.

6. *Glycosmis pentaphylla* (Retz.) DC. (Rutaceae) ‘Gilugu’ *LIH 6516*
   
   Two teaspoons of a decoction made from the stem bark of this species are administered with a pinch of pepper powder twice daily for three days.

7. *Helicteres isora* Linn. (Sterculiaceae) ‘Nultada, Adavi Chamanti’ *LIH 6552*
The stem bark of this species along with that of *Tamilnadia uliginosa* (Retz.) Tirveng. (Kantula chettu) and a whole plant of *Bacopa monnieri* Wettst. (Sambranı chettu) (10 gm. each) are burnt, and the smoke inhaled once daily for three days.

The fruit of this species is chewed with common salt. The sap is then swallowed twice daily for two days.

9. *Leuas aspera* (Willd.) Link (Lamiaceae) ‘Tummi kKura’ *LIH 6506*
Five to six inches of the roots of this species are crushed with pinch of zinger, musk and pepper. This extract is administered twice a day for 3-4 days.

10. *Mukia maderaspatana* (Linn.) Roem. (Cucurbitaceae) ‘Chedupulla’ *LIH 6567*
An extract made up from a fistful of the whole plant of this species crushed with 10-12 gm. of zinger, pepper and a pinch (or half teaspoon) of musk is administered twice a day for three days.

A half cup of the decoction made from the stem of this species is administered once daily for three days.

12. *Trachyspermum ammi* (Linn.) Sprague (Apiaceae) ‘Kapparilla aku’ *LIH 6560*
Five to six ml. of a leaf extract made from this species is administered twice a day for three days.

13. *Vitex negundo* Linn. (Verbenaceae) ‘Vavili’ *LIH 6601*
The dry leaves of this species are burnt and the smoke is inhaled twice daily. Also, the slightly warmed leaves of this species may be placed on the forehead of a sick person until cured.

14. *Ziziphus oenoplia* (Linn.) Mill. (Rhamnaceae) ‘Pariki’ *LIH 6535*
Five to six fresh leaves of this species are chewed with a pinch of zinger, and the sap swallowed twice a day for three days.

**Cough**

1.* Alysicarpus vaginalis* (Linn.) DC. (Papilionaceae) ‘Musaraaku’ *LIH 6561*
One teaspoon of the root powder of this species is mixed with a pinch of pepper powder and common salt. This mixture is administered twice a day for 3-4 days.

2.* Anisochilus carnosus* (Linn.f.) Wall. ex Benth. (Lamiaceae) ‘Pedda gandhara’ *LIH 6850*
One to two teaspoons of an extract made from the tender tips of this species are administered once daily for three days.

3. *Azadirachta indica* A.Juss. (Meliaceae) ‘Vepa’ *LIH 6577*
Five to six leaves of this species are crushed with 1-2 peppers and the extract is administered once daily for three days.

4. *Caralluma adscendens* (Roxb) Haw. (Asclepidaceae) ‘Kundetikommulu’ *LIH 6539*
Two to three inches of the stem of this species are crushed with a sufficient quantity of pepper, zinger and salt, and the extract administered twice a day for two days.

5. *Careya arborea* Roxb. (Barringtoniaceae) ‘Tharrepu chettu’ *LIH 6542*
Two to three inches of the stem bark of this species are crushed with 2-3 peppers, and the mixture
taken with honey once daily for five days.


Five to six gm. of the seeds of this species are crushed with 1-2 peppers and garlic. This extract is administered twice a day for three days.

7. *Cissus quadrangularis* Linn. (Vitaceae) ‘Nalleru’ *LIH* 6586

Two to three inches of the tender shoots of this species are crushed with a pinch of cumin and pepper, and the extract administered once daily for three days.

8. *Citrullus colocynthis* (Linn.) Schrad. (Cucurbitaceae) ‘Yerri pucha’ *LIH* 6571

The roots of this species together with those of *Tylophora indica* and the leaves of *Securinega leucopyrus* (Willd.) Muell. Arg. (Tella pulcheru) are crushed in equal quantities (30 gm. each) along with 10-12 peppers. One teaspoon of this extract is administered twice a day for five days.

9. *Dillenia pentagyna* Roxb. (Dilleniaceae) ‘Revadi’ *LIH* 6520

One to two inches of the stem bark from this species are crushed with a pinch of common salt. This extract is administered once daily for three days.

10. *Evolvulus alsinoides* (Linn.) (Convolvulaceae) ‘Vishnukrantha’ *LIH* 6587

Ten to fifteen ml. of a decoction made from the whole plant of this species are taken 2-3 times a day.


Four to five teaspoons of a decoction made from the stem bark of this species are administered once daily for 2-3 days.


A half teaspoon of powder from the dry leaves of this species is taken with honey once daily for five days.


Two teaspoons of leaf juice from this species is mixed with an equal quantity of onion juice and a pinch of salt. This mixture is administered once daily for three days.


Twenty to twenty-five fresh leaves of this species are chewed with 3-4 pieces of rock salt. This sap is swallowed once daily for five days.

15. *Sesbania grandiflora* (Linn.) Poiret (Papilionaceae) ‘Avishe’ *LIH* 6533

Four to five gm. of a paste made from the seeds of this species are administered twice a day for three days.


Fifty ml. of a decoction made from the roots of this species are administered twice a day for three days.


A. Five to six inches of the dry root of this species are crushed with those of *Citrullus colocynthis* and pinch of pepper powder. This extract is administered once daily for 2-3 days.

B. A fistful of the leaves of this species are crushed with a sufficient quantity of pepper and garlic. This extract is fed to cattle once daily for five days.

18. *Terminalia chebula* Retz. (Combretaceae) ‘Karaka’ *LIH* 6518
A half teaspoon of powder made from the fruit of this species is taken with honey once daily for one whole week.

19. Tylophora indica (Burm.f.) Merr. (Asclepiadaceae) ‘Mekameyanaku’ LIH 6684
Two to three tender fresh leaves of this species are crushed with 1-2 peppers. This extract is administered once daily for 2-3 days.

20. Ziziphus xylopyrus (Retz.) Willd. (Rhamnaceae) ‘Gotti’ LIH 6521
One to two inches of the fresh stem bark of this species are chewed with 1-2 peppers, and the sap swallowed once daily for five days.

Whooping cough

1. Achranthes aspera Linn. (Amaranthaceae) ‘Uttareni’ LIH 6710
Twenty to thirty gm. of a dry plant powder from this species are crushed with 2-3 peppers and pinch of musk. This extract is administered twice a day for one whole week.

2. Albizia odoratissima (Linn.f.) Benth. (Mimosaceae) ‘Chinduga’ LIH 6547
A fistful of fresh leaves from this species are crushed with a sufficient quantity of pepper, garlic and salt, and the mixture fried in a sufficient quantity of cow ghee. This extract is taken twice a day for two days.

3. Ardisia solanacea Roxb. (Myrsinaceae) ‘Chavalakura’, ‘Kondamamidi’ LIH 6557
Five to six inches of the peeled tender fresh stems of this species are chewed twice daily for three days.

4. Butea monsperma (Lam.) Taubert (Papipionaceae) ‘Moduga’ LIH 6562
The ash from one seed of this species is taken with ¼ teaspoon of honey once daily (at bedtime) for three days.

5. Cassia occidentalis Linn.(Caesalpiniaceae) ‘Kasinda, Adavi chennagi’ LIH 6580
The roots of this species along with those of Capparis zeylanica Linn. (Adonda) (10-15 gm each.) are crushed with 5-6 peppers and a pinch of jaggery. This mixture is administered twice a day for three days.

6. Cassia tora Linn. (Caesalpiniaceae) ‘Tagarisha, Tanthem’ LIH 6524
Ten gr. of the fresh root paste of this species are administered along with 1-2 peppers twice daily for three days.

7. Euphorbia tirucalli Linn. (Euphobiaceae) ‘Gundujemudu’ LIH 6756
The leaves of this species are chewed with raw salt. This sap is swallowed twice daily until the patient is cured.

8. Nyctanthes arbor-tristis Linn.(Nyctanthaceae) ‘Jaji, Paarijaatham’ LIH 6782
One to two leaves of this species are chewed and the sap is swallowed once daily until the patient is cured. Alternatively, the leaves of this species along with the fruits of Terminalia chebula and the stem bark of Anogeissus latifolia are crushed in equal quantities, and are made into pills the size of pigeon peas. These are taken twice daily for one whole week.

9. Pergularia daemia (Forssk.) Chiov. (Asclepiadaceae) ‘Juttupaaku’ LIH 6822
The tender tips of this species are crushed with those of Melia azadarach and ocimum tenuiflorum
(100 gm. each), along with 12-15 peppers and garlic. One teaspoon of this extract is administered twice a day for one whole week.

10. *Solanum americanum* Miller (Solanaceae) ‘Kamanch’ *LIH 6885*

Twenty to thirty ml. of the leaf juice of this species are taken with a sufficient quantity of sugar once daily until cured.

11. *Solanum pubescens* Willd. (Solanaceae) ‘Usthi’ *LIH 6553*

A half teaspoon of a decoction made from the stem bark of this species is administered with 3-4 gm. of pepper powder once daily for a fortnight.

12. *Terminalia bellirica* (Gaertner) Roxb. (Combretaceae) ‘Taani,Taandra’ *LIH 6554*

One teaspoon of powder made from the fruit pulp of this species is taken with a pinch of turmeric twice daily for one whole week.


Fifty gr. of the roots of this species together with an equal quantity of the roots of *Hemidesmus indicus* (Linn.) R.Br. (Aaavu sugandhi paala), *Gmelina asiatica* Linn. (Chudru kaaya) and *Celastrus paniculatus* Willd. (Maneru tiga), are crushed with 10 gm. of asafetida and black cumin. The paste is then slightly warmed in an earthen pot and made into small pills that resemble jowar seeds. Four to five pills are then taken once daily for a fortnight.

### 4. Results & Discussions

In the present work, 84 plants were studied that could offer some active ingredients for respiratory problems. Usually a single drug was used except in 15 cases. The medicine is prepared from leaves (31), stem and stem bark (25), root and tuber (19), flower, fruit and seed (12), whole plant (8) and stem sap (1). The plant species represent 72 genera and 41 families, consisting of 29 trees, 11 shrubs, 17 climbers (climbing shrubs, rambling shrubs, straggling shrubs, woody climbers and climbers), 10 under shrubs, 15 herbs, 1 epiphyte and 1 fern. The tribes depend (34.52%) on trees for their herbal drugs. The identified taxa with promising medicinal properties, as reported by local tribes, are presented alphabetically along with information like family name, locality, accession number and mode of administration.

The findings of the present study require further research and pharmacological validation. Species first time reported as a remedy for respiratory disorders are marked with an asterisk (*).

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