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REVIEW

Pharmazeutisches Institut der Rheinischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, Bonn, Germany

Plants containing pyrrolizidine alkaloids used in the Traditional Indian Medicine – including Ayurveda

E. ROEDER, H. WIEDENFELD

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Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Erhard Roeder, Dr. Helmut Wiedenfeld, Pharmazeutisches Institut der Universität, An der Immenburg

4, D-53121 Bonn, Germany

roeder@uni-bonn.de; wiedenfeld@uni-bonn.de

Dedicated to Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Mirela Farmanowa on the occasion of her 85th birthday.

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Pyrrolizidine alkaloids (PAs) show a hazardous potential for humans and animals. They can possess mutagenic, teratogenic, carcinogenic and fetotoxic properties. One pathway of a human intoxication can be the use of medicinal plants which contain toxic PAs. The Traditional Indian medicine – in particular Ayurveda – is a popular and well-known healing system. Within this system several PA-containing plants are used which, on account of their PA level, represent a severe health risk. In general, it is not recommended to use plants containing those toxic compounds.

1. Introduction

The traditional medicine of India (TIM) consists of several systems and is most popular worldwide. Within these systems, especially "Ayurveda" is well-known and is practised in many countries; even hospital facilities can be found focused on an ayurvedic treatment.

The first reports of TIM date back to 2000 BC. It influenced the Chinese and Tibetan and even Western medicine.

Although there are various studies demonstrating the successful treatment by TIM e.g. in the case of heart diseases, asthma, diabetes type II, rheuma, fistula-in-ano, there are still no studies showing the efficacy and importance of TMs preparations in modern medicine. This may be caused by the frequent absence of a clear description of the active ingredients and/or the active principles.

No reports can also be found about possible long-term side effects resulting from TIM treatment. However, these side-effects are likely to be experienced if PA-containing plants or preparations from them are used. As already described for European and Chinese traditional medicines (Roeder 1995, 2000) and for plants used in Mongolia, Nepal and Tibet (Roeder et al. 2009) and in Madagascar and the Mascarene Islands (Roeder et al. 2011), also in TIM PA-containing plants or preparations are used which have already been described to contain toxic PAs or are suspected of containing them.

Chemically, PAs are ester compounds deriving from a bicyclic five-membered ring (pyrrolizine) in form of mono-, di- or macrocyclic dierins. In case the necine shows a double-bond in position 1,2 and a non-substitution adjacent to the bridge nitrogen atom, the resulting PAs can be toxic for humans and domestic animals. Although showing no or only low active toxicity, PAs can undergo a 3-step metabolic detoxication to alkylating agents in the human or animal liver (being the first target organ for the toxicity) which can result in mutagenic, genotoxic, carcinogenic and fetotoxic effects (Fu et al. 2002, 2004, 2007; Xia et al. 2004, 2006; Wiedenfeld et al. 2008; Wiedenfeld and Edgar 2011; Fig. 1).

2. PA-containing plants in TIM

Ageratum conyzoides L. (syn. *Carex conyzoides* (L.) Kunze, *Eupatorium conyzoides* (L.) Krause) [Asteraceae, subfamily Asteroidae, tribe Eupatorieae]. Engl. name: bell goat, goat weed; vernacular name: Ajapandha, Appa grass, Dochuny, Uchanti, Gandhar, Schaduvey, Vishamushi (Nair et al. 1998; Samant et al. 1998; Khare 2007; Jaffar 2008; Enchanted 2011). Distribution: whole India, especially southern India, up to an altitude of 1,000 m. Root, bark, leaves, flowers, roots, fruits, seeds. The juice of the herb is used for rectal injections. Intravaginal for uterine disorders. The leaves and stem have antiseptic, anti-tetanic and styptic properties. Contains the toxic alkaloids lycoptamine (15), and echimidine (30) (Wiedenfeld et al. 1991). *Allium scorodoprasum* L. Tauch. [Boraginaceae, subfamily Boragineae, tribe Lithospermiae].

Engl. name: allanet, dyers or Spanish bugloss. Distribution: natural in South Europe, cultivated in India. Medicinal use: astringent, antiseptic, used for intestinal ulcers, erysipelas (Engel 2000). In the traditional medicine of the Indians (located in Kannur, A. scorodoprasum can be replaced by *Obionea schraderi*).

Contains the toxic pyrrolizidine alkaloids O-angloyl-retonecine (9), triplangularine (19), dihydroxytriangularine (20) (Roeder et al. 1984).

Anchusa officinalis Retz. (syn. *A. aceraria* Mill) [Boraginaceae, subfamily Boragineae, tribe Boragineae]. Engl. name: alkanet, cow's tongue plant. Distribution: in Indian gardens and hills.

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Rural Dispensary

Sr.	Name of Item	Unit Pack Size
1	Inj. Lignocaine HCL 2% w/v	30 ml (vial)
2	Inj. Diclofenac Sodium 25mg/ml	3 ml amp
3	Inj. Pentazocine Lactate 30mg/ml	1ml amp.
4	Inj. Atropine Sulphate 0.6 mg/ml	2 ml amp
5	Inj. Dexamethasone Sodium Phosphate 4mg/	2 ml vial/amp.
6	Inj. Pheniramine Maleate 22.75 mg/ml	2ml amp
7	Inj. Theophylline and Etofylline (50.6mg +	2ml amp
8	Inj. Tetanus Toxoid (Adsorbed)	0.5 ml Amp
9	Inj. Metaclopramide 5mg/ml	2 ml Amp.
10	Inj. Ranitidine IP 25mg/ml	2ml amp
11	Inj. Adrenaline 1mg/ml	1 ml amp
12	Sterile Water for Injection, IP	5ml ampoule
13	I.V Normal Saline (Sodium Chloride 0.9%)	500 ml Btl.
14	I.V. Dextrose Saline 5% w/v to 0.9% w/v	500 ml Btl.
15	Sulphacetamide Eye Drops IP 10%	10 ml vial
16	Tab. Paracetamol 500Mg	10 X 10 Strip
17	Tab. Cetrizine Hcl 10 mg	10 X 10 strip
18	Tab. Ibuprofen coated 400 mg	10 X 10 Strip
19	Tab. Albendazole 400 mg	10 X 10 Strip
20	Tab. Ranitidine 150 mg	10 X 10 Strip
21	Tab. Dicyclomine Hcl 10mg	10 X 10 Strip
22	Tab. Salbutamol 4 mg	10 X 10 Strip
23	Tab. Ferrous Sulphate with Folic Acid Ferrous	10 X 10 Strip
24	Tab. Ciprofloxacin coated 500mg and 250 mg	10 X 10 Strip
25	Cap. Amoxycillin 500 mg	10 X 10 Strip
26	Tab. Cotrimoxazole S.S Trimethoprim 80mg +	10 X 10 Strip

SN	Botanical name	Local name	Family	Habit	Part used	Treatment process
1	<i>Acetosella indica</i> L.	Mukhbar	Euphorbiaceae	Herb	Leaf	Taken leaves juice is used as skin disease.
2	<i>Adonis amurensis</i> L.	Ajogni	Asparagaceae	Herb	Leaf	Part made from leaves is used as ointment.
3	<i>Aegiphila indica</i> L. (Cot. Ser.)	Bet	Rubiaceae	Tree	Leaf	Applied young leaves juice is used as decoction.
4	<i>Ageratum conyzoides</i> L.	Odhara	Asteraceae	Herb	Leaf, stem	Applied both the leaves and stems paste are used as skin disease, legume and wound.
5	<i>Allium procera</i> (Koch.) Benth.	Kores	Fabaceae	Tree	Bark	Applied boiled with bark is used as scabies.
6	<i>Andrographis paniculata</i> Wall ex Nees	Kalonjeh	Acanthaceae	Herb	Leaf	Taken leaves paste is used as wound and others.
7	<i>Argemone mexicana</i> L.	Sukkita	Papaveraceae	Herb	Lates	Laten is used as skin disease and others.
8	<i>Artemisia hololeuca</i> L.	Jishak	Asteraceae	Clumber	Leaf	Taken leaves decoction with water oil used as ointment.
9	<i>Artemisia vulgaris</i> L.	Aja	Asteraceae	Tree	Leaf	Taken leaves decoction with water oil used as ointment.
10	<i>Artocarpus heterophyllus</i> Lamk.	Katal	Moraceae	Tree	Leaf	Taken young leaves Juice is used as ointment.
11	<i>Acadira indica</i> A. Juss.	Nem	Melastomaceae	Tree	Leaf	Leaves boiled with sand apply physically as used as ointment and others.
12	<i>Carica papaya</i> L.	Papaya	Caricaceae	Shrub	Lates	Taken latex is used as ointment.
13	<i>Centella asiatica</i> (L.) Urban	Trinkwan	Ajaceae	Herb	Leaf	Taken young leaves paste is used as ointment.
14	<i>Cocculus laevigatus</i> Burm.	Bala	Menispermaceae	Herb	Flowers	Taken rhizome decoction applied physically as ointment.
15	<i>Coccinia grandis</i> (L.) Voigt	Telakucha	Cucurbitaceae	Clumber	Whole plant	Part of the whole plant is applied for care of skin disease.
16	<i>Croton leprosus</i> Roxb.	Susso	Euphorbiaceae	Herb	Leaf	Leaf paste is used on wounds.
17	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i> Pers.	Durbagh	Poaceae	Herb	Whole plant	Parts made from whole plant are used as skin disease, stop bleeding and wound.
18	<i>Dathera zizanioides</i> Roxb.	Susso	Fabaceae	Tree	Wood	Taken wood paste is used as abscess.
19	<i>Ecclinus albus</i> L.	Kalekoti	Asteraceae	Herb	Leaf	Taken young leaves paste is used as wound and skin disease.
20	<i>Etubula conyzoides</i> L.	Etubula	Asteraceae	Herb	Leaf	Part of leaves is used as wound.
21	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i> L.	Bot	Moraceae	Tree	Leaf	Applied leaves paste is used as abscess.
22	<i>Fimbristylis littoralis</i> (Ham.) Pugl.	Bansapi	Fimbristylidaceae	Herb	Whole plant	Whole plant bath is recommended for skin allergy.
23	<i>Heptapterum indicum</i> L.	Hansir	Boraginaceae	Herb	Leaf	Parte made from leaves is used as skin disease.
24	<i>Jatropha gossypiifolia</i> Linn.	Jaghratana	Euphorbiaceae	Herb	Leaf	Taken leaves juice and leaves paste is used as others and wound.
25	<i>Lavandula nitida</i> L.	Mehendi	Labiatae	Shrub	Leaf	Taken leaves paste is used as wound and burning sensation.
26	<i>Mikania cordata</i> (Burm.) Robinson	Asitamati	Asteraceae	Clumber	Leaf	Juice of leaves is applied as injury.
27	<i>Mimosa pudica</i> L.	Sata	Fabaceae	Herb	Leaf	Leaves decoction applied physically as used as skin disease.
28	<i>Quinchamalium ciliatum</i> L.	Aurad	Osidaeae	Herb	Whole plant	Plant top care skin disease.
29	<i>Pericallis hybrida</i> (L.) Delile	Patmaru	Polygalaceae	Herb	Leaf	Applied leaves juice is used as insect-bite.
30	<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i> (L.) Roxb.	Kheora	Arecaceae	Tree	Spore	Extract of spore is used as skin diseases.
31	<i>Piper betle</i> L.	Fan	Piperaceae	Clumber	Leaf	Taken leaves juice is used as cut injury.
32	<i>Pithecellobium dulce</i> L.	Jangdung	Moraceae	Tree	Root	Root decoction applied physically as skin disease.
33	<i>Senna alexia</i> (L.) Roxb.	Dukdusin	Fabaceae	Shrub	Leaf	Taken leaves decoction is used as ointment, also taken leaves paste is used as dad.
34	<i>Souchetia aperta</i> (L.) Hill		Asteraceae	Herb	Whole plant	Powder of the dried plant is applied on wound and boils.
35	<i>Sophora japonica</i> (Thunb.) Moes.	Akarnandi	Mimosaceae	Clumber	Leaf	Part made from leaves is used as abscess.
36	<i>Syzygium cumini</i> (L.) Skeels	Jam	Myrtaeae	Tree	Bark	Applied bark paste is used as wound.
37	<i>Twinnia cordifolia</i> Miers.	Gulancha	Mimosaceae	Clumber	Whole plant	Fresh plant juice is used in skin disease and burning sensation.
38	<i>Tridax procumbens</i> L.	Tridhar	Asteraceae	Herb	Whole plant	Applied whole plant juice is used as scabies.
39	<i>Veronica polita</i> (Dryand.) Kuntze	Kukum	Asteraceae	Herb	Flower	Taken flower heads paste is used as wound.
40	<i>Xanthium indicum</i> Kon ex Roxb.	Ghagra	Asteraceae	Herb	Whole plant	Paste made from whole plant is applied as small-pox, boils, abscess, insect-bite and snake-bite.
41	<i>Youngia japonica</i> (L.) DC.	Younaga	Asteraceae	Herb	Leaf	Taken leaves paste is used as wound.

11 HEALING PLANTS used in NATIVE AMERICAN MEDICINE



- BUCKBRUSH
- MINT
- YARROW
- WILD GINGER
- SMILAX
- BONA-NOX
- BLACKBERRIES
- CURLY DOCK
- MULLEIN
- CATTAI
- SUMAC
- ROSE HIP

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Medicinal Plants औषधीय वनस्पति



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Wt. & Arn. *Bose* BC, *Vijayavargiya* R, *Safi* AQ, *Sharma* SK, *Shallaki* (*Boswellia serrata*) pp. *Gauthaman Karunakaran*, *Mishra* LC, (*Nath* et al., 1981; *Satyavati* et al., 1987c)Myristica fragrans Houtt (*Myristicaceae*)Seed, aril, oilAphrodisiac, hypolipidemic, anti-inflammatory (*Sharma* et al., 2002c)Ocimum sanctum Linn (*Lamiaceae*)Whole plant, root, leaf, seedAdaptogen, anti-oxidant, hypoglycemic, immunomodulator, radio-protector (*Uma Devi*, 2006)Oroxylum indicum (Linn) Vent. *Medicinal Plants of India* Volume 1, 2000:32-S81-S118, [Google Scholar]58, [Google Scholar]11, 3-16, *Ramachandra Rao* SE, In: History of Pharmacology of Medicinal Plants in India in Topics in The History of Pharmacology, (*Singh* and *Sushil Kumar*, 1998)Zingiber officinale Rosc (*Zingiberaceae*)RhizomeFever, cough, asthma; anti-emetic (*Sharma* et al., 2002f) [PubMed] [Google Scholar]27, (*Commbretaceae*)BarkHeart diseases (*Karunakaran Gauthaman* and *Mishra*, 2004)Tinospora cordifolia (Willd.) 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