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Diversity, Distribution, Indigenous Uses and Conservation of the Medicinal Plants of Indian Himalayan Region Used in Cancer

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ABSTRACT Indian Himalayan Region is very well known for the medicinal plant wealth. The representative, natural and unique medicinal plants are used for curing various diseases/ailments including cancer and income generation. In view of high value of the medicinal plants of IHR, an attempt has been made to; (i) assess and review the medicinal plants with anti-cancerous properties; (ii) document indigenous uses and practices; (iii) analyze for nativity, endemism and rarity; (iv) review the species for chemical composition/active ingredients; and (v) suggest strategy for the conservation and management of these species. Total 36 species representing trees (18 spp.), shrubs (07 spp.), herbs (08 spp.) and ferns (01spp.) were recorded. Different parts of these species, such as whole plants, roots (including rhizomes and tubers), leaves, flowers, fruits, seeds, stems, barks, etc. were used by the inhabitants for curing the cancer. Four (04) species were natives and 31 species non-natives to the Himalayan region. Two species i.e., *Berberis aristata* and *Taxus baccata* subsp. *wallichiana* were near endemic. Chemical composition of the part(s) used, if available, has been given. Due to over exploitation, habitat degradation and changing environmental conditions, the populations of many species are depleting fast. Therefore, studies on habitat ecology, development of conventional and in-vitro propagation protocols; development of agro techniques/plantation techniques and introduction in the akin habitats; and education and awareness programs for the inhabitants are suggested.