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Traditional Medicine Among Tribals of Rajasthan

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ABSTRACT In this paper an attempt has been made to study the traditional medical system among tribals of Rajasthan. The traditional medicinal care practiced in the area having both herbal as well as ritual from of curing is not considered important by official agencies. The cultural importance of ritual cure and role of medicinal plants (their properties as they relate to healing, their symbolic values and their procurement from environment) in the traditional medical system of tribals is of great value. It can be seen from the appendix I that there are large number of illnesses where oral application of herbal preparations are a frequent part of the treatment (e.g) fever, dysentery diarrhoea, Malaria, cough and cold, eye ailments, Guinea worm (*Nadu*), stomachache etc). But, at some point the tribals see the limits of such phytotherapeutic forms of treatment. Any illness that is associated with severe pain, long lasting and is not responding to any herb requires help of the supernatural. The tribals relate their ritual needs to supernatural powers and ask for help and forgiveness. The state sponsored medical system do not look "at indigenous medicine" as a whole and fail to see the socio-cultural basis of its uses.