

## Ethno-Therapeutic Importance of the Human Body\*:

### 1. Medicaments of Physical and Physiological Origin

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**ABSTRACT** The various external and internal components of the human body like blood, bone, tooth, nail, hair, saliva, milk, semen, tear, bile, sweat, urine, ear wax, pus and faeces are used as remedies directly or indirectly against diseases as per information, collected from lore and literatures of Indian society. Attempts are being made to bring out these facts based on ethno medicinal perception against a broad spectrum of ailments.

#### INTRODUCTION

The traditional ethno medicinal system in India can be traced from three important resources like herbals, animals and minerals. The herbal resource being the prime in addition to that, has about 200 drugs of animal origin. A good number of animals are mentioned in Ayurvedic system, which includes 24 Insects, 16 Reptiles, 21 Fishes, 41 Aves and 41 Mammals (Tripathy, 1950). Research pertaining to drugs of animal origin and testing animals towards other drug sensitivity are still in progress. The entire organism or their flesh, fat, organs, wool, milk, secretion, excretion, bone, tooth, feather, hair, horn, shell, egg, bile, hoop, skin, as well as their pathological products and other products like milk, curd, butter, ghee, honey and glue are well known as important source of medicaments in Ayurveda.

In this context, the products of the human body are equally emphasized from medicinal point of view. The knowledge for the use of Urine as a therapeutic means was prevalent in India thousands of years ago. In the Sanskrit text *Shivambu Kalpa* (no date can be fixed), the importance of urine as a curative and preventive measure for different diseases has been described in the form of dialogue between Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati (Patel, 1973). For ages, this practice was restricted to *yogis* to maintain their

overall health during practice of Yoga. Of course the use of urine on cut wounds as a childhood practice is a common phenomenon among the Indian children while playing. Auto-urine therapy, the drugless system of healing came to lime light world wide after the publication of the book, 'Water of Life' (Armstrong, 1944). In the legendary epic Manusmruti twelve exudates created from the human body are recognized as impure substances such as 1. Oily exudes, 2. Semen, 3. Blood, 4. Bone marrow, 5. Urine, 6. Faeces, 7. Nasal mucous secretions, 8. Ear wax, 9. Phlegm, 10. Tear, 11. The rheum of the eyes and 12. Sweat [*Adhdhaaya- V / Ssloka- 135*] (Padhy et al., 2006).

Ayurveda, in course of time has deeply searched the medicinal efficacy of the above human excreta. Keeping all the above in view, an attempt is made for the compilation of facts from various literature and folk lore source on the medicinal implication of various parts and excreta of human body. The data so presented in this paper in enumeration form, are collected from ancient Sanskrit literatures or through interviews to various persons and analyzing the lore existing especially in the rural society. It is practically not possible to mention the reference in every instance.

#### ENUMERATIONS

##### 1. Internal Parts

###### a. Blood (*Rakta*):

- i) Human blood, diluted with water, massaging on sprained sites relieves pain.

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- ii) Menstrual blood (*Rootusraaba*), during first puberty /or blood discharged during the first delivery on massaging over the body ensures life time birth control.
- iii) Menstrual blood acted as antidote to poisoning due to dog bite on application over the wounds caused there of.
- iv) Menstrual blood or blood oozed during internal piles (*Arssa*), externally applied on effected parts cures Leucoderma (*Dhabala Kushtha*).
- v) Menstrual blood on internal use cures Epileptic fits (*Apasmaara*).
- vi) Menstrual discharge applied on eye lips as ointment (*Anjan*) cures many ophthalmic disorders.
- vii) Discharge of the first puberty of a damsel, on external application over the breast of the concerned, maintains long term juvenile beauty (*Peenonnata*).

**b. Bone (*Asthi / Haada*):**

- i) Ash from preserved bone (3-5 gm) mixed with sugar taken internally consecutively for three days cures rheumatism and joint pain due to Gout (*Baata*).
- ii) Ash from preserved skull (*Khapuri*) bones mixed with sugar candy on internal use cures Epileptic fits (*Apasmaara*).
- iii) Ash uses as inhaling snuff cures swooning epilepsy (*Murchhaa*).
- iv) Ash from preserved skull bone with cow milk at 1:20 ratio on internal use during the 4th day morning of menstruation ensures conception.
- v) Oil extract of the skull bone powdered ash on external application cures pimples face (Acne) and bubo (*Dushta brana*).
- vi) Powdered bone is given for internal oral use to patients with out their knowledge, cures intermittent fever (*Paali Jwara*).

**2. External Parts**

**a. Tooth (*Danta*):**

- i) Talisman made of silver containing the first fallen tooth (milk tooth) of a baby, on bearing over the waist of women ensures birth control (prevents conception).
- ii) Macerated paste of such tooth described as above on external application antidotes snake bite.
- iii) Wearing of talisman containing the tooth of a

human corpus ensures recovery from intermittent fever and tooth ache.

- iv) Packet containing a tooth fallen with out giving pain, along with the feather of specific bird called *Balisuaa* keeping below the pillow while sleeping ensures uninterrupted i.e. deep slumber (sound sleep).

**b. Nail (*Nakha*):**

- i) Ash of human nail when allowed to be administered orally to some body, creates succumb ness and submissive character with subjects. Normally, it is a common practice applied by prostitutes with their customers through the offer of chewing betel (*Paana*).

**c. Hair (*Baala*):**

- i) Ash remains of hairs from human scalp on internal use along with honey cures Anemia (*Paandu*), Asthma (*Sswaasa*) and Urinary calculus (*Asmaree*).
- ii) Anus exposed to smoke emitting from burning hairs relief pain due to Piles.
- iii) Paste resulted from ash of gray hairs of old women admixed with alum and honey, applied externally induces sexual satisfaction during cohabitation of couples ensures due to reverting of early orgasm.
- iv) Carbon obtained from the burnt oily hair, applied externally on wounds acts antidote to rat bite poisoning.
- v) Wormed hair mat with excess oil is applied on sprained foot, relieves pain.
- vi) Ash from hair mixed with oil applied on burn wound gives relief.
- vii) Smoke resulted from burning of hairs on exposing to the vagina, relieves delivery pain and ensures smooth delivery.
- viii) Subjects suffering from defective eye sight are advised to avoid shaving of hairs especially of arm pits and keeping beard improves eyesight.

**3. Secretions**

**a. Saliva (*Laala*):**

- i) Every morning after awakening, the saliva from unwashed mouth used as ear drop kills germs causing ear affection.
- ii) The same applied externally as face cream for 15-20 minutes followed by a wash cures pimples and even, the left over dermal marks too.

- iii) Saliva on external application on eye lips checks cataract.
- iv) Gargled water from the mouth used as face-/ eye- wash for curing Pimples and eye affections.
- v) Fresh saliva is used as anti septic and healing agent for wound due to fresh injury.
- vi) Moreover wounds on nasal passage is cured by blowing air in a characteristic posture of lips, from the mouth of the patient after application of own saliva on it, acts as a powerful remedy for that.

**b. Milk (*Kshira*):**

- i) Used as eye drop (especially of own mother's milk) that cures conjunctivitis (eye affections).
- ii) Used as a medium for most pediatric Ayurvedic remedies.
- iii) Mother's milk applied on the scalp checks hiccup (*Hakuti*) of infants.

**c. Semen (*Ssukra*):**

- i) Dreamful discharge of night pollution applied externally as cream cures Leucoderma.
- ii) The same on oral internal administration tames wickedness in netiquette female spouse.
- iii) External application on scalp checks hair falling; even ensures hair root initiation.
- iv) Subjects incompetent to lead sex life due to lack of erection, are rejuvenated by intake of semen of others, and called as *Aasekya* in Sanskrit literature.

**d) Tear (*Assru*):**

- i) Tear is construed to be an internal cleaning agent. Apart from the physical features, other metaphysical features like broken emotion and sentiments of a subject is said to be wiped out through shedding tears coupled with external expressive features of organ vibrations like larynx (*i.e.* making sound expression), facial and limb expressions etc. Induction of lamenting / weeping / crying relieves a subject from mental depression / shock due to unforeseen incidents like demise of near and dear or accidents etc. It also acts as means of expression of joyful incidents which should not be suppressed without being ornamentally expressed, as understood during our interactions with subjects.

**e. Bile (*Pitta*):**

- i) Human bile (1/2 to 1 drop) along with cow

milk, on internal use ensures braveness in a subject by reducing / eliminating his/ her timidity and cowardice attitude.

- ii) Bile from human and other animal source is reported as diuretic and nutritional in conformity with an earlier report (Pande, 1996).

**4. Excretions**

**a. Sweat (*Sweda*):**

- i) It is normally considered as an index of personality. The smell of sweat is taken as a symptom of prescription. Characteristic odour of sweat identifies a person used by forensic experts. Repealing odour of the sweat can be removed by applying neutralizing agents prescribed by folk quacks.
- ii) Massaging the sweat on effected area dissipates blood clotting caused due to inflammatory glandular swelling, thus considered to be astringent in action.
- iii) The characteristic smell of the sweat acts as a factor of attraction/ repulsion between the conjugal cohabitation of couples.

**b. Urine (*Mootra*):**

Use of urine as medicine for a broad spectrum of ailments, is well documented in "*Manav Mootra*" (Patel, 1973). However, few folk lore uses collected, are as follows:

- i) Internal application (oral administration) of urine from opposite sex cures violent insanity. However, modern urine therapy emphasizes on auto-urine use.
- ii) Poison of snake bite victims' antidotes after oral administration of urine from healthy youths but not of self.
- iii) External application of fresh urine is extremely beneficial for healing injuries of cut wound / burn / inflammatory or other infectious skin eruptions like eczema, ring worm affection and itches.
- iv) Urine, collected from healthy babies (5-6 yrs old) used as eye drop for adults cure eye affections including cataracts.
- v) Salt residues of urine (complete evacuation of water through constant boiling under flame) applied on eye lips cures cataract.

**c. Ear Wax (*Karna Mala*):**

- i) Ear wax is directly used as ointment in eyes cures cataract.
- ii) Small fresh water fishes along with ear wax,

taken in a closed crucible, fired and made to ash; the ash so resulted is mixed with honey making an ointment which on external application over eye lips, cures night blindness.

**d. Pus (Pujo):**

- i) There is no report so far collected by our team, on its direct use against ailments. However, indirect reports in homoeopathy speak of its utility, where the drugs like Tuberculinum, Bacillinum and Psorinum are prepared from pus (lesion) of infected human pustules.

**e. Faeces (Mala):**

- i) As the last alterative, it is a regular practice with many village mothers towards the treatment of their baby suffering from irrevocable chronic debility, to opt for self acceptance of an oral dose (internal administration) of stool of their baby with the help of three pieces of Paddy (*Oryza sativa* L.) straw, that antidotes to the myth impact of the devil vision (*i.e.* *Kudrushti*), knowingly or unknowingly happened so, especially offered by any women in empty stomach after 4th day of her menstrual bath (*Ssuddha snaana*) and subsequently gets conceived.
- ii) Patients suffering from painful bubo (*Talaibabatha*) on foot, kept over fresh stool daily for 30 min for 4 to 5 days, get recovered from that which relieves the pain arose there of. Thanks are due to the Ayurvedic system of

health care those, who have gone so deep to find out the medicinal value of human physical components and physiological excreta. Many of the aspects discussed above, are principally accepted by common man out of practice for hundreds of years. Of course, the ethnic practices are further scrutinized, confirmed and codified in a medicament system, which in course of time gets scientific validation. In such a course Armstrong's attempt for self cure through urine therapy and its world wide acceptance strengthens our motivations for the acceptance of other human derivatives as source of medicaments. Not only physical; but also the metaphysical events associated with a human body have healing and curative powers and we reserve the facts for our forth coming report (Padhy and Dash, 2007).

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