



# SHRIMATI INDIRA GANDHI COLLEGE

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Chatram Bus Stand, Tiruchirappalli – 620002.



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**Herbal medicine** is becoming popular once again, though surprisingly few people seem to understand what it really is. This introduction is designed to give a much better idea of how herbal medicine is used today. Plants have been used as medicine for thousands of years, and until recently were the only form of medicine available to the majority of people. In this booklet Household herbals are compiled giving medicinal uses of plants as food and medicine. Older people today may remember some of the medicine their mothers gave them which are not documented sufficiently. Hence, effort is to prepare this booklet to document the medicinal values of traditional herbs which are native to our area.

Many herbs are chockfull of cancer-fighting antioxidants, valuable nutrients, fat-free flavor, and more. Fresh herbs are often easy to cultivate and can grow in a small garden in the back yard, in pots on an outdoor patio or sunroom, or even in a window box inside a kitchen.

The Department of Biochemistry and Microbiology have put collective efforts to educate and familiarize on the importance of herbs and their medicinal uses.

## **Objectives**

- To encourage and promote the awareness about the importance of home herbal gardens.
- To encourage the society to use herbs in food
- To popularize the usefulness of commonly available and frequently used herbal plants and to conserve the associated traditional knowledge for future generations.

**Nutraceuticals are** food or part of food that provides health benefits including the prevention and treatment of a disease. Nutraceuticals have an advantage over the medicine because they avoid side effects, have naturally dietary supplements, etc. Nutraceutical; on the basis of their natural source, chemical grouping, categories into three key terms -nutrients, herbals, dietary supplements, dietary fiber, etc.

## **Health Benefits:**

Avoid the side effect.

- May increase the health beneficial effect.
- May have a natural dietary supplement, so do not have unpleasant side effects.
- May increase the health value, our diet and improve the medical condition of humans.
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- May easily be available and economically affordable.

Nutritional therapy is a healing system using dietary therapeutics or nutraceuticals as a complementary therapy which is based on the belief that foods can not only be sources of nutrients and energy but could also provide medicinal benefits. Nutraceuticals detoxify the body, avoiding vitamin and mineral deficiencies, and restoring healthy digestion and dietary habit. Phytonutrients basically are plant nutrients with particular biological activities in supporting human health.

## **Arali** (*Nerium oleander*)

### Medicinal Uses:



- Arali has been used in the treatment of cardiac illness, asthma, diabetes mellitus, scabies, cancer, and epilepsy.
- It has been used to treat ulcers, hemorrhoids, leprosy and ringworm.
- It cures asthma, epilepsy and paralysis.
- It cures skin diseases such as eczema.
- It reduces blood sugar levels.
  - It enhances the immune-system.
  - It promotes a normal menstrual cycle.

## **Aranelli** (*Phyllanthus acidus*)

### Medicinal Uses:

- The leaves are used to make a poultice to treat sciatica, lumbago and rheumatism, while the seeds are used as a cathartic and the root as a purgative.
- Fruit is eaten as a blood-enhancer for the liver.





## **Omavalli (*Plectranthus amboinicus*)**



### **Medicinal Uses:**

- The leaves are used for the treatment of cough, sore throats, nasal congestion, infections, rheumatism and flatulence.
- The plant being used to treat malarial fever, hepatopathy, renal and vesical calculi, cough, chronic asthma, hiccough,

bronchitis, colic, convulsions, and epilepsy.

## **Sirukurinjan (*Gymnema sylvestre*)**



### **Medicinal Uses:**

- It forms one of the ingredients in the manufacture of natural medication for diabetes.
- Extracts of the herb are believed to treat problems like hyperglycemia, obesity, high cholesterol levels, anemia and digestion.
- It suppresses the taste buds and consequently reduces the desire to eat.
- Its root is made into a paste or powder and applied to the wounds of snakebites.
- The herb controls and regulates weight, promotes healthy blood lipid, glucose levels and curbs sweet tooth.

## Siriyangai (*Andrographis paniculata*)

### Medicinal Uses:

- It has beneficial effect in reducing diarrhea.
- It is used in the treatment of Jaundice.
- It is used in the treatment of diseases like flu, sinusitis, upper respiratory tract infection, cough and bronchitis.
- It used as one of the best remedies for Malaria.
- It acts to dispel heat and remove toxins.



## Pudhina (*Mentha piperita*)



### Medicinal Uses:

- Mint is a great appetizer or palate cleanser, and it promotes digestion.
- The strong aroma of mint is very effective in clearing up congestion of the nose, throat, bronchi and lungs.
- Regular use of mint is very beneficial for asthma patients, as it is a good relaxant and relieves congestion.
- Mint juice is an excellent skin cleanser. It soothes skin, and helps to cure infections and itchiness, and reduces pimples.

## Nithyakalyani (*Catharanthus roseus*)

### Medicinal Uses:

The essence of *Catharanthus roseus* is used in case of:

- Cysts, polyps, fibroids, warts, pre cancer conditions.
- Hypertension, congestive headaches.
- Loss of balance, vertigo.
- Cerebral circulatory insufficiency, it improves cerebral oxygenation.
- Pre-diabetic condition: resistance to insulin.



## Sembaruthi (*Hibiscus rosasinensis*)



### Medicinal Uses:

- Hibiscus flowers, roots and leaves, regulate menstruation and stimulate blood circulation.
  - Flower extract has been traditionally used for liver disorders, high blood pressure and as an aphrodisiac.
  - Decoction of leaves, root and fruits are helpful in treatments of arthritis, boils and coughs.
- Fruit is used externally in cases of sprains, wounds and ulcers. Hibiscus tea is rich in Vitamin C.

## Keelanelli (*Phyllanthus niruri*)

### Medicinal Uses

- *Phyllanthus niruri* reduces the levels of urinary calcium.
- It shows potential to prevent liver damage.
- Its extracts display significant anti-tumor activity and is thus an effective chemopreventive agent.
- It displays evidence of anti-diabetic activity.
- It reduces blood pressure



## Vembu (*Azadirachta indica*)



### Medicinal Uses

- It also relieves dryness and itching, strengthens hair and promotes hair growth.
  - Neem oil and neem leaves are excellent skin care ingredients that help protect skin from environmental damage and from aging.
- Neem oil contains fatty acid and vitamin E that gets absorbed easily into the skin, it helps rejuvenate skin cells and restore elasticity.
  - The oil relieves dry skin and soothes itchiness, redness and irritation.



## Tulasi (*Ocimum teniflorum*)

### Medicinal Uses

- Tulsi has antioxidant properties and reduces blood glucose levels. Thus it is useful for diabetics.
- Tulsi reduces total cholesterol levels. Thus it is useful for heart diseases and high blood pressure.
- It has been used for gastric disorders, cough, common colds, malaria, and headaches.
- It is used as mouth wash for reducing tooth ache.
- Tulsi oil shows larvicidal activity against malarial larva.
- It has immuno-modulatory properties.



## Ponnanganni (*Alternanthera sessilis*)



### Medicinal uses:

- Leaves are used to cure respiratory problems and wheezing treatment.
  - It reduces the body heat and pile complications.
  - It strengthens heart, and other organs.
  - It improves blood circulation.
- It promotes hair growth.
  - It cures eye problem and improves eye sight.
  - It regulates the body metabolisms

## Karuveppillai (*Murraya koenigii*)

### Medicinal uses:

- Curry leaves reduces blood sugar levels by increasing the insulin activity of the body.
- Curry leaves help to improve digestion and alter the way your body absorbs fat, thereby helping lose weight.
- Curry leaves prevent the oxidation of cholesterol and protects the body from conditions like heart disease and atherosclerosis.
- It is also very effective in treating damaged hair, adding bounce to limp hair, strengthening the shaft of thin hair, hair fall and treats dandruff.



## Nanthiyavattai (*Tabernaemontana divaricata*)



### Medicinal Uses:

- The milky juice of the leaves are applied over the wounds for its anti-inflammatory action.
- The juice of the flowers can be applied over eyes as eye drops for eye diseases.
- The flower juice mixed with oil can be applied over skin diseases.
- Decoction of the leaves is an anti-hypertensive and diuretic.
- The milky juice of the leaves along with oil is applied over the forehead for pain present in the eyes.
- The roots are used to relieve toothache.

## **Thoothuvalai (*Solanum trilobatum*)**

### **Medicinal uses:**

- It tones the tissues of the body.
- It stimulates sexual desire.
- It tones the nervous tissue.
- It is a very good brain stimulant.
- It removes chest, nose and head congestion.
- It relieves cough and cold.
- It relieves dyspepsia (impairment of digestion).
- It relieves skin diseases.
- It increases memory power.



## **Kuppaimeni (*Acalypha indica* Linn.)**



### **Medicinal uses:**

- Kuppaimeni is used as a remedy for relieving acne and pimples.
- The leaf sap kuppaimeni is used as eye drops for getting rid of eye infections.
- Kuppaimeni contains active metabolites that are capable of protecting the tissues of the heart from damage and also cardiovascular diseases.
- Kuppaimeni helps in removing phlegm from the respiratory tract and hence is useful in treating cough, breathing difficulties and constipation.

## Sangupoo (*Clitoria ternatea*)

### Medicinal Uses:

- The herb has the property to regulate the circulatory system.
- The herb has been found to be effective in treating female sexual disorders like infertility, correct menstrual disorders, etc.
- They cure whooping cough in an instant manner. The herb also cures cold and asthma present in people.
- The roots of Sangupoo have the ability to improve memory and make an intellectual.
- It has a very positive effect on the human nerve system. It strengthens the nerves present in the body and increases the functioning of the brain.



## Katralai (*Aloe vera*)



### Medicinal uses:

- *Aloe Vera* is very useful for curing bowel problems due to its high anti-inflammatory properties.
- It has soothing effect on the stomach walls and reduces heart burn and discomfort.
- It is used to treat constipation.
- Aloe maintains the cholesterol level by reducing triglycerides.
- It reduces weight by stabilizing the metabolic rate, reducing lipid levels and helping burn fat. The regular intake of the aloe juice helps to fight cancer.