



Controversial Herbal Drugs of Ayurveda

Amritpal Singh Saroya



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PREFACE

We feel glad for presenting the work 'Controversial Herbal Drugs of Ayurveda' before you. Many of plant drugs documented in Ayurvedic textbooks have a controversy on their accurate botanical linkages. Proper identification of medicinal plants has significant impact on finished product and therapeutics. In Ayurveda, identification of medicinal plants is major hurdle in laying pharmacopeial standards for formulations.

Since plants and plant drugs in Ayurveda were designated Sanskrit names, often based on the "doctrine of signature", morphological appearance, properties and action, the interpretation of these names during the later period of time led to acceptance of more than one botanical species for one plant drug. Due to lack of correct identification, similar looking plants are collected from the field site along with the genuine medicinal plant by mistake. But many times similar looking (inferior) cheap alternatives are intentionally mixed along with some quantity of genuine plant.

The adulterators not only mix similar species but also cheap and inferior quality produces such as rotten or substandard products which can be procured at very cheap rates. *Astavarga* (group of eight medicinal plants) as an instance is integral part of Ayurvedic formulations like Chyvanprasha and four plants viz, *Riddhi*, *Vridhhi*, *Jivaka* and *Rishbhaka* have been discussed as possible members of family Orchidaceae. In Ayurveda *Pasanbheda* is another drug of controversial origin. Further work on proper botanical identification of *Pasanbheda* is warranted. In Indian market several commercial lithontriptic preparations are sold for dissolving kidney stones. Some formulations are utilizing *Bergenia ligulata* and other one *Bryophyllum calycinum*.

The drugs in the book have been arranged in alphabetic form and details have been mentioned according to Ayurvedic and Herbal Materia Medica. Information on chemical composition, wherever possible, has been included. The work cited in the text is thoroughly referenced throughout the book. Hope the book will be useful for the Ayurvedic drug industry and practitioners. Critical comments from the readers are welcome.

Dr. Amritpal Singh Saroya

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