Vedic plants for healing

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Abstract
The four stages of human life (Brahmacharya, Grhastha, Vanaprastha, Sanyasa) is highly connected with forest directly or partially where plants, trees, herbs are taking part there in. It can be said that the forest had its unique role for earth, for air, for water, for rain, for healing, for agriculture, for birds and animals, for herbs particularly in Vedic age. Here, in this present research paper an attempt is made to highlight the Vedic plants used for the purpose of healing, which was highly popularized in Vedic age.

Keywords: Vedic plants, healing, Brahmacharya, Grhastha, Vanaprastha, Sanyasa

Introduction
Human life starts in a systematic manner in connection to the forest particularly in the stage of Brahmacharya where he used to get knowledge under the guidance of a Guru. In the stage of Grhasthasrama he depends upon forest for agriculture, construction of the houses with forest equipment and also the forest materials at the time of his need. The third stage of life is called Vanaprastha where he used to stay at forest to have Sadhana for the tranquility of his body and mind. At the last stage of life i.e. Sanyasasrama, he passed his remaining time till death by performing yogic practices. By leaving all sorts of attachments and family bondages he used to search to get Divine Bliss. As a whole, the four stages of human life is highly connected with forest directly or partially where plants, trees, herbs are taking part there in. In other word, it can be said that the forest had its unique role for earth, for air, for water, for rain, for healing, for agriculture, for birds and animals, for herbs particularly in Vedic age.

Here, in this present research paper an attempt is made to highlight the Vedic plants used for the purpose of healing, which was highly popularized in Vedic age.

According to Vrksayurveda plants are classified into four groups namely, herbs, trees, creepers and shrubs. They transmit through seeds, branches and roots. It says-

वनस्पतिद्रुमलिा गुलमााः पादपजाियाः ।
बीजात्काण्डात्तथा कन्दात्तज्जन्म तितवधं तवदुाः ।।

Vrksayurveda - 271

The plants that bear fruits without flowers are called herbs and those that bear fruits after flowering are called trees. It says-

ते वनस्पतय: प्रोत्ततः विन्दा पुष्पः फलनिः ये ।
द्रुमाश्चान्ये तनगाददिााः पुष्पपाः सह फलतन्ि ये ।।

Vrksayurveda - 272

Those, which develop into tendrils, are called creepers and those which are bushy with many branches are called shrubs. It says-

प्रसरति प्रतामयोपस्त लता: परिक्रितिताः ।
बहुस्िम्बा तवटातपनो: ते गुलमा: प्रकीर्तििाः ।।

Vrksayurveda - 273

The word Bhuvah is very often used in Vedas. Gayatrimantra, which is considered Gurumantra, also has the word Bhuva. Bhuva means destroyer of misery (Dhukhanasaka). The concept of misery can be divided into three major heads.
1. Adhyatmika - misery related to body, sense organs and mind
2. Adhibhautika - misery created or originated from the self
3. Adhidaivika - misery by natural calamities like fire, air and earthquake

All the living beings in this world have undergone with many difficulties in the form of diseases, which are caused by the body and mind. To get relief from such diseases, it is necessary to have the knowledge of the science of Vedic Plants, which is the part of Medical Science. Ayurveda, a text exclusively discusses on this particular area. Some scholars accept it as an ancillary to Rgveda and some accept it as an ancillary to Atharvaveda. Traditionally it is believed that Brahma is the founder of Ayurveda or Medical Science. To have a prosperous and longevity of life to a human being, there was great contribution of creepers, herbs, trees and forest as reflected in Vedic literature. We may come across many references from Veda signifies the utility of herbs, trees and the protection of the Environment by Vedic invocation. In the form of invocation, Vedic mantras are as follows-

नमोकृत्सन्नः || Yajurveda 16.17

इति यजुर्वेदः से नमस्ते तन्नात्तममां तन दधानीह वेत्ता वा कुतस्य सोमस्यापतमति || Yajurveda 16.20

प्रथमः || Rgveda 21.90.80

योग्य्य: - शास्त्रिनः, वनस्पतिः: शास्त्रिनः || Yajurveda 36.96

In this context, Yajurveda says, to get relief from the misery and unhappiness, we have kept Medicine (Aushadhi) for you in this Universe. You must know the knowledge and have a peaceful life by utilizing the same. It is said-

भेषजम्भिः भेषजं वर्धवम धुम्बाय भेषजम्। सुखम् वेषाय मेषयपः ।। Yajurveda 3.59

In the ancient age, Medicines were provided to get relief from the diseases of both man and animal. Putting more emphasis towards the preservation of the herbs Yajurveda says, we have love towards herbs. We must know to protect and develop the same. (Yajurveda 16.17) Again it is said, O herbs, please protect us. It is rightly said Oshadhayah Santhi, Vanaspatayah Santhi, because the herbs are cause of peace. (Yajurveda 36.96)

A hymn in Rgveda (10.97) is addressed to an Oshadhi (herb) praying to relieve people from pain and disease. The term Soma is very often used in Rgveda nearly thousand times. It is a matter of discussion even today among the scholars whether it is a plant or a creeper. Anyway, a Mantra of Rgveda refers to the significance of the Soma. It is said, “I have such power and strength within me that I can lift this earth from one place to another as I drank the juice of Soma”. It says-

हताहू युविरीविंमहि न द्रव्यानि वेष्र वा उष्णत् सोमस्यापायिति || Rgveda 10.119.3

From this reference, it is understood that Somarasa is considered as an energetic tonic for a strong health. It is also said that, Soma is the supreme among all the medicinal herbs.
there will be no harm at all, because Brahmaman is considered as doctor as it is explained in a mantra of Yajurveda. (विषय: स उच्चते भिनस्कः - Yajurveda 12.80)

A mantra of Atharvaveda said, an herb named as Arundhati, keeps animals out of diseases, and increases the milk giving standard of the cows. It says-

अनुदुम्बराय धृणे धृणे धृणेः धृणे ।
अधिनेव बयो स्तम्भ जतने ।।

A mantra of Atharvaveda 6.59.1

Another mantra of Atharvaveda speaks about the herb Audumbara which gives good energy and power, enhances the fertility and extends the milk giving standard to the animals by using it in the form of Muni (to fix or tie-up in the animal’s body). It says:-

आौुदुम्बर सुविद्या वृक्षाणि गोष्ठे मे सतव मिति करतु ।।

A mantra of Atharvaveda 19.31.1

Through this statement of Atharvaveda it can be concluded that, not only Vedic Plants help the human being alone to eradicate the diseases but also they help the animals for their good health and sound life.

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\text{अनुभाग} & \text{Yajurveda - 12.79} & \text{अनुभाग} & \text{Atharvaveda 6.136.1} \\
\text{अनुभागम्} & \text{Atharvaveda - 35.11} & \text{नन्दः} & \text{Atharvaveda 4.37.4} \\
\text{स्विभूतिः} & \text{Atharvaveda 1.23.3} & \text{पुष्परत्निः} & \text{Yajurveda 12.79} \\
\text{अनुभागिनी} & \text{Atharvaveda 4.37.2} & \text{पादः} & \text{Atharvaveda 2.27.4} \\
\text{अनुभागिनी} & \text{Atharvaveda 4.37.4} & \text{पितः} & \text{Atharvaveda 6.10.91} \\
\text{स्त्रिया} & \text{Atharvaveda 4.38.1} & \text{पुष्पिकाः} & \text{Atharvaveda 2.25.1} \\
\text{स्त्रिया} & \text{Atharvaveda 6.59.1} & \text{पुष्पनि} & \text{Atharvaveda 8.7.8} \\
\text{स्त्रिया} & \text{Atharvaveda 8.7.10} & \text{वनमानिनिः} & \text{Atharvaveda 8.7.10} \\
\text{आज्ञा} & \text{Atharvaveda 19.44.1} & \text{सतो} & \text{Atharvaveda 5.15.1} \\
\text{आज्ञा} & \text{Atharvaveda 12.24.1} & \text{भृति} & \text{Atharvaveda 7.74.1} \\
\text{सूत्रिकाः} & \text{Yajurveda 3.60} & \text{राखिलि} & \text{Atharvaveda 4.12.1} \\
\text{सूत्रिकाः} & \text{Atharvaveda 3.18.2} & \text{विशुद्धिः} & \text{Atharvaveda 8.7.10} \\
\text{सूत्रिकाः} & \text{Atharvaveda 19.31.1} & \text{जीवित} & \text{Atharvaveda 5.8.1} \\
\text{सूत्रिकाः} & \text{Atharvaveda 4.38.5} & \text{जैक्टेन्तिः} & \text{Atharvaveda 8.7.4} \\
\text{शेत्र} & \text{Atharvaveda 5.4.1} & \text{भृतिः} & \text{Atharvaveda6.11.1} \\
\text{शेत्र} & \text{Atharvaveda 8.7.1} & \text{सर} & \text{Atharvaveda 1.2.1} \\
\text{शेत्रिकाः} & \text{Atharvaveda 6.21.3} & \text{सिन्धु} & \text{Atharvaveda 4.37.4} \\
\text{स्तवि} & \text{Yajurveda 3.6.1} & \text{शेषार्तिः} & \text{Atharvaveda 4.4.1} \\
\text{सूत्र} & \text{Yajurveda 19.38.1} & \text{सहविभूतिः} & \text{Atharvaveda 8.7.13} \\
\text{जीविका} & \text{Yajurveda 19.34.1} & \text{सोवारंशी} & \text{Atharvaveda 6.96.1} \\
\text{सूत्रिकाः} & \text{Yajurveda 4.37.6} & \text{स्नेतिः} & \text{Atharvaveda 8.7.20} \\
\text{सूत्रिकाः} & \text{Yajurveda 13.20} & \text{हिरणिः} & \text{Atharvaveda 6.95.2} \\
\text{देह्वा} & \text{Atharvaveda 8.7.20} & \text{हिरणिः} & \text{Atharvaveda 4.3.1} \\
\text{नज्ञां} & \text{Atharvaveda 6.15.3} & & \\
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From the above discussion, we may conclude that Indian mind was so sharp in Vedic age to find out the life and sense in plants and also identify their medical service to the mankind.

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A root of the herb named as Muni (Divine sage as Max Muller translated) by which a surgical incident is narrated in Atharvaveda. As it says -

उत्तानपणी मूःन स्वर्ण मिति करिः II Atharvaveda 7.74.1

It means, “With the root of Muni I pierce and penetrate all them”. It shows the use of the herbs at the time of surgery is highly discussed in Veda.

By using the herals it is also noticed that, hair growth (Athvaveda 6.137.2), removing the poison (Athvaveda 4.7.1) and the evil spirit (Athvaveda 29.1) etc are highly narrated in Vedic literature.

In Atharvaveda, many herbs are discussed, but some of the herbs are not identified yet. In whole Vedic literature there are 260 herbs available but only 130 herbs are similar to the present Ayurvedic Sciences and remaining are under doubt among the experts.

The division, quality and power to destroy the disease by the herbs are also discussed in Yajurveda (12.77) in details. Some of the noted herbs which are available in Vedas for curing disease like Yaksma, Slesma, Jwara, Kushha and they are –

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