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Medicinal plant: *Leucas* spp.

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Abstract

Leucas spp. are important medicinal plant found in India. All the parts of the plant contain various bioactive compounds. Therefore the plants are used as remedies for various ailments. This review reveals a brief account of *Leucas* spp. and its medicinal properties.

Keywords: Medicinal plant, *Leucas* spp., distribution, pharmacological activities

Introduction

Various medicinal plants have been used as remedies for diseases traditionally from ancient times. A plant species commonly known as ‘Gumo’, thumba or ‘Durun bon’ within the genus *Leucas* and the family Lamiaceae is also considered as important medicinal plant. The genus has around 111 species all over the world. Among these *Leucas lavandulaefolia*, *L. cephalotes*, *L. indica*, *L. lanata*, *L. mollissima*, *L. plukenetii*, *L. zeylanica* and *L. aspera* are commonly found species (Chowdhury, 2005) [3]. The plants are widely distributed throughout Asia, Australia, and Africa. It has some potent phytochemicals with promising phytochemical properties. The plants are distributed throughout the pastures and wastelands in India. It is an annual, erect herb 30-80 cm tall. Stems square, leaves simple, opposite, narrowly lanceolate to 6 cm long, margins toothed, flowers are white, borne in distant spherical whorls, in uppermost leaf axils.

Medicinal properties

Various parts of this plant have been used in traditional medicine. The plant is used traditionally as an antipyretic and insecticide. This plant is used as an edible vegetable and herbal remedy. All the parts of the plant has been found to possess various pharmacological activities like hepatoprotective, hypoglycemic, antidiarrhoeal, anti-inflammation, antifungal, antioxidant, antimicrobial, antinociceptive and cytotoxic activity and as an antidote to snake venom (Chew *et al.*, 2012; Rahman and Islam, 2013) [2, 8]. *Leucas* leaves are used in chronic rheumatism. The flowers of this plant are administered in the form of syrup as a domestic remedy for cough and cold, and for the treatment of intestinal worm infections in children. For the treatment of chronic malaria and asthma the plants are used. The juice extracted from the leaves cures skin problems since it is antibacterial. It also strengthens the liver and the lungs. Young leaves, mature leaves, inflorescence and flowers of *L. aspera* have antibacterial (*Bacillus subtilis*, *B. cereus*, *Staphylococcus aureus*, *S. epidermis*, *Escherichia coli*, *E. faecalis*, *Proteus vulgaris* and anti fungal (*Candida albicans*, *Penicillium chrysogenum*) activities (Chetia and Saikia, 2020) [1]. The plant extract showed motor in coordination and muscle relaxant activity (Mukherjee *et al.*, 2002) [7]. Therefore clinical trial of this plant need to be investigated so that in near future some marketable drugs can be produced.

Phytochemical properties

Several compounds have been isolated from various parts of the plant. The plant include phytochemicals are acacetin, chrysoeriol, linifoliside, linifoliol, chrysoeriol-6(OAc)-4-P-glucoside, lupeol and taraxerone. The active ingredient present in the plant may be used for preparing some drugs or pharmaceutical formulations used to treat diseases (Makhija *et al.*, 2011; Latha *et al.*, 2013) [6, 5].

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Conclusion

Extensive experimental research in modern pharmaceutical science is needed for exploring the indigenous medicinal plants. The scientific research of *Leucas* spp. and their cultivation practices in large scale should be carried out.

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