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A Promising herbal formulation “Narseeri” for treating Pediatric illness with special reference to Ayush

S. Kiruthiga Devi^{*1}, D.S.Vaniswari², D.K.Soundararajan³, A. Mary Remona⁴^{1,2}PG Scholars, Department of Kuzhanthai Maruthuvam, Govt. Siddha Medical College, Palayamkottai.³Head of the Department, Department of Kuzhanthai Maruthuvam, Govt. Siddha Medical College, Palayamkottai.⁴Department of Chemistry, Sri Meenakshi Govt. Arts College for women (A), Madurai, India.*Corresponding Author: **S. Kiruthiga Devi**E-mail: devivinoth86@gmail.com

Abstract

A child with proper mental and physical health is a blessing to home as well as society. In developing countries like India, bringing up children with good health is a challenge to parents because children falls sick often due to various health issues. One of the most common health issues among children is lack of appetite. In this study, an attempt has been made to highlight the in depth scientific value and effectivity of Siddha herbal formulation. Narseeri for overcoming pediatrics illness especially in cases of loss of appetite in children.

Keywords: Siddha, Pediatrics, gastro intestinal illness, Narseeri herbal.

Introduction

“A healthy appetite can serve as a sign of wellness”

Childhood stage is a term of critical growth in which proper nutrition is absolutely necessary. Children who have poor diet whether because of lack of food or because of improper pattern of eating that leads to inadequate intake of nutrients which prones to significant short term and long term health impacts and diseases.

The Siddha science is a traditional treatment system generated from Tamil culture. Palm leaf manuscripts say that the Siddha system was first described by Lord Shiva to his wife Parvati. Parvati explained all this knowledge to her son Lord Muruga. He taught all these knowledge to his disciple sage Agasthya.

Agasthya taught 18 Siddhars and they spread this knowledge to human beings.

Greatness of Siddha medicine

Siddha focused to "Ashtamahasiddhi," the eight supernatural power. Those who attained or achieved the above said powers are known as Siddhars. There were 18 important Siddhars in olden days and they developed this system of medicine. Hence, it is called Siddha medicine.

The Siddhars wrote their knowledge in palm leaf manuscripts, fragments of which were found in parts of South India. It is believed that some families may possess more fragments but keep them solely for their own use. There is a huge collection of Siddha manuscripts kept by traditional Siddha families.

Siddhars were of the concept that a healthy soul can only be developed through a healthy body. So they developed methods and medication that are believed to strengthen their physical body and thereby their souls. Men and women who dedicated their lives into developing the system were called *Siddhars*. Through the spirituality they attained supreme knowledge, they wrote scriptures on all aspects of life, from arts to science and truth of life to miracle cure for diseases.

Traditional uses of Narseeri in Siddha medicine

The Siddha system of medicine has a rich and treasure of medicinal knowledge. Dating back to Siddha literature, Siddha Materia Medica-Plant division ⁽¹⁾describes various herbal formulation. Seeregam, Pojanakudori are the vernacular names of *Cuminum cyminum*. Narseeri is a siddha herbal formulation which has been in practiced over thousands of years in Ancient India. Saint "THAERAIYAR" mentioned the medicinal values of herbal Narseeri formulation for treating pediatric gastrointestinal illness. ⁽¹⁾

Description about Narseeri

Natural habitat and the land under cultivation

Narseeri is the native species growing in Asia. Cultivation of Narseeri, requires a long, hot summer of 3-4 months, with day time temperature around 30C. This herb is resistant to drought and is mostly grown in Mediterranean climates. It is grown from seed, sown in spring and needs fertile, well-drained soil. The plant blooms in June and July. The seeds are normally ripe four months after planting. The plants are threshed when the fruit is ripe and the seeds are dried. ⁽²⁾

Standards criteria for harvesting and drying

Appropriate Season

The Narseeri seeds are usually ready to harvest during 100-120 days after cultivation. Seed harvesting season is different from June to July on the basis of weather conditions, because the flowering season is influenced by daylight and temperature. ⁽²⁾

Appropriate Harvesting Methods

The seeds are harvested about 4 months after planting when the plant begins to wither and the seeds changes to brown-yellow colour. In Siddha traditional method, the whole plants were removed from the soil and collected as sheaves. The sheaves were set up in the fields and shifting and cleaning by winnower. The isolated seeds were then further dried to 10% moisture content, wither by placing on mats or trays in the sun or using a drier in the humid conditions. The dried seeds are winnowed using a traditional winnowing basket to remove the dirt, dust, leaves and twigs. Nowadays, the modern and high capacity combined machines are used for harvesting, shifting and cleaning of the plants. ⁽²⁾

Phytochemistry and medicinal properties of Narseeri

Antimicrobial activity has been reported from the volatile oils and aqueous extract of Narseeri.

Narseeri seed oil and alcoholic extract inhibited the growth of *Klebsiella pneumonia* and its clinical isolates by improvement of cell morphology, capsule expression and decreasing urease activity. Cuminaldehyde is the main active component of Narseeri and suggested as the active antimicrobial agents.

Main Physiochemical characteristics of Narseeri:

Moisture content: 8%, PH: 7.3, total ash: 7.5, acid insoluble ash: 18%, alcohol soluble extractive: 6.58%, water soluble extractive: 13.8% and total carbohydrate 55.58 % and 60.05% in the wet and dry fruits respectively.

Pharmacological effects of narseeri

Gastro intestinal effect:

The stomach of pentobarbitone-anesthetized rats was perfused at 0.15ml/min with aqueous extracts of Narseeri cumin or acetylcholine (1 microgram/ml or 10 micrograms /ml) solutions, in 40 min blocks, twice in each experiment bracketed by saline perfusions. The acid content in the sample was estimated by titration with 0.1N NaOH with phenolphthalein as indicator. Narseeri increased stomach acid secretion from 0.08 to 0.02, (p<0.05).

Materials and Methods

The Narseeri seeds were procured from the local market. And the seeds are purified, dried and made into chooranam form as per Siddha Materia Medica procedures. The fine chooranam were administered to children of age group between 1-12 years. Six children having fuzzy eating habits were chosen for the study. The fine Narseeri chooranam 500mg was mixed with honey and given to children 3 times a day, 30 minutes before food. Weight of the children before and after treatment is monitored.

The ages of children selected for the study were 1,5,3,5,6,7 and 8 years old. The health problems observed in the mentioned age group children were loss of appetite, poor intake of food, constipation, unhealthy food habits.

The Narseeri herbal formulation of weight 500 mg was given to the children along with honey (as adjuvant) for three times a day, 30 minutes before food.

The children who were given Narseeri herbal formulation, started consuming food properly at regular time intervals after three days of intervention.

The frequency of food intake of the children has also been increased as a result, the children weight has been increased and the observation are presented in table below.

Age (Years)	Gender	Duration of treatment	Weight (Kg) Before treatment	Weight(Kg) After treatment
1.5	Female	45 days	8.5	10
3	Female	45 days	12	13
5	Female	45 days	14	14.7
6	Male	45 days	17	18.2
7	Female	45 days	19	20
8	Male	45 days	22.5	23.5

Results

From this study, we conclude that the Narseeri - siddha herbal formulation (with honey as adjuvant) proves to play a vital role in increasing the appetite and weight of the children.

Thus, Narseeri is a promising and safe herb really supports well for kids in improving their health.

Discussion

The health problems observed in the mentioned age group children were loss of appetite, poor intake of food, constipation, unhealthy food habits showed good prognosis after intake of Narseeri - siddha herbal formulation.

Conclusion

Apart from their theoretical knowledge, our Ancestor have acquired great experience through their forefathers and palm leaf manuscripts. It is the duty of the Graduates and Post Graduates of Siddha medicine to bring out these experiences, evaluate them and document them. We have taken a small initiative towards this step. We hope to extend the search for finding and documenting such good medicine with scientific sensitivity for overcoming various health problems.

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Conflict of Interest

Authors declare that there was no conflict of interest.

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