



## Medicinal plants used by Kokani Tribals of Nasik district Maharashtra

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### Abstract

The Kokani tribal community, primarily located in the coastal regions of Maharashtra, Goa, and parts of Gujarat, has a deep-rooted connection with nature and traditional healing practices. Their knowledge of medicinal plants is passed down through generations, playing a central role in their day-to-day life. This knowledge is not only vital for maintaining health but also for the community's cultural and spiritual practices. The Kokani people have developed a vast understanding of plants and their therapeutic properties, many of which are still used in contemporary medicine and local treatments. Medicinal plants in the Kokani community are primarily used for curing ailments, preventing diseases, and improving general well-being. These plants are often used in various forms such as powders, decoctions, oils, or pastes. The Kokani people typically gather these plants from their local environment, including forests, fields, and their agricultural lands. The knowledge on the ethno-medicinal uses of the Kokani tribal can help to discover new drugs to cure diseases, provided data is scientifically evaluated.

**Keywords:** Medicinal plants, ethno-medicine, ethno-botany, kokani tribe

### Introduction

The Kokani people have relied on the diverse flora of their region for sustenance, spiritual practices, and most notably, for medicinal purposes. The use of medicinal plants plays a pivotal role in their healthcare system, providing remedies for a variety of ailments ranging from common illnesses to more complex conditions. This traditional knowledge of plant-based medicine has been passed down through generations, often through oral traditions and hands-on experience, allowing the Kokani to maintain a holistic approach to health and wellness. They are located in scrubby jungles of Sakri and Navapur talukas of Dhule and Nandurbar districts, respectively. Poor economic status, malnutrition and unhygienic conditions are the main causes of illness and due to lack of modern healthcare service the tribal depend on the traditional doctor, the Vaidya, Jadibutiwala and tribal practioners and his medicines. The vaidya &

jadibutiwala treats the patients with plant-based medicines and advises them to behave in a good manner. The ethno medicinal study was undertaken with

a view to find out the plants used by Kokani tribal of Maharashtra particularly to cure diseases

### Methodology

The study was carried out in 2021 during the studies, the Vaidya, jadibutiwala & tribal practioners were interviewed with a view to find out ethno medicinal plants. The plants used to cure different diseases were collected from the field, pressed, dried and mounted on herbarium sheets. The plants were identified by using flora & monograph.

### Enumeration

The study revealed that the Kokani tribal use 20 plant species belonging to different families to cure the disease.

**Table 1:** list of Medicinal plants

| Sr. No. | Botanical name     | Local name                 | Plant part used                    | Uses  |
|---------|--------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|---|
| 1.      | Acacia nilotica    | babul                      | Bark                               | It is used against diarrhea, dysentery and diabetes. gum medicine   |
| 2       | Acacia catechu     | Khair                      | Leaves, shoot & wood               | It is used against diarrhea, indigestion, Toothache. Bark powder is kept in molars to reduce pain   |
| 3       | Aegle marmelos     | Bel                        | Root & fruit                       | Antidiarrheal, antiinflammation, heart tonic used against urinary diseases  |
| 4       | Azadirachta indica | Neem                       | Root, stem, leaves & fruit         | Anthelmintic, anti-fungal, anti-diabetic, antibacterial, antiviral, skin diseases, improve liver function, Pest and disease control, dental treatments, cough, asthma, ulcers, piles, intestinalworms, urinary diseases   |
| 5       | Butea monosperma   | palas                      | Root, stem, leaves, Flower & seeds | Root powder used against snake bite. Stem bark powder used against injury. Stem juice goiter Body swelling, Leaf used against cough, cold & Stomach disorders, Diabetes Reduce fever and seed used against urinary stone. |
| 6       | Cassia arauculata  | Avali                      |                                    | Traditional medicine for diabetes, Rheumatism, Seeds used in treatment of Ophthalmic & Dysentery  |
| 7       | Cassia fistula     | Bahava                     | Whole plant                        | Skin diseases, constipation, insect bite, abdominal pain & fever  |
| 8       | Helicteres isora   | Murudsheng                 | Pods Roots                         | Root decoction is given orally as an antidote for snake bite. Pod extract is given as a tonic to small babies and weak children Paste of pods given to children's twice a day to cure stomachache.                        |
| 9       | Jartopa curcus     | (Mogli Erand, Parsi Erand, | Leaves & seeds                     | Ailments related to skin, digestive, respiratory, infectious diseases.  |

|    |                      |            |  |   |
|----|----------------------|------------|--|---|
| 10 | Maduka indica        | Mahua      | flowers, fruits, and seeds                     | Wound healing, Antiburns, Bone healing, Skindisease, Rheumatism, Headache, Laxative, Bronchitis, Anti-ulcer, Astringent, Swelling gum, Diabetes, Stomach pain, Anti snake bite,   |
| 11 | Plumbago zylanika    | chitrak    | Root, root bark, leaves and seeds              | Anti-atherogenic, cardio tonic, hepatoprotective, neuroprotective properties.   |
| 12 | Pongamia pinnata     | karanji    | fruits, bark, seeds, leaves, roots and flowers | Piles, skin diseases, ulcer, cleaning gums, teeth, , vaginal diseases rheumatic problems, scabies,  |
| 13 | Solanum xanthocarpum | Bhuiringne | Stem, Flower fruit                             | epilepsy, pain relieving, headache, asthma, skin problems, cough diabetic treatments  |
| 14 | Sizigium cumini      | Jamun      | seeds  | Seeds have ability to regulate blood sugar level. To improve the functioning of the digestive system. Jamun seeds can also be used as oral medication to inflammation and ulcers in the intestines. Fruit Improves& increase hemoglobin, Treats diabetes. |
| 15 | Terminalia chebula   | Hirda      | fruit  | Fruits powder is kept on cavities in toothache. 2) Unripe fruit juice applied on wound and injuries. 3) Fruits are chewed in cough.   |
| 16 | Terminalia bellerica | Behada     | Fruit & bark                                   | Fruits with fruits of Syzygium cumini are powdered and decoction is given in diabetes and acidity. 2) Bark extract applied externally at the site of scorpion sting   |
| 17 | Tribulus terrestris  | Gokahru    | Fruit, leaves roots                            | Plant used against the urinary tract healthy and reduce swelling. Fruit power is for body building and to increase the immunity, Leaves are used as Urinary calculi, Roots are used as Demulcent & tonic  |
| 18 | Tridax procumbens    | Ghavati    | Whole plant                                    | To treat wounds, skin diseases and to stop blood clotting in folk medicine.   |
| 19 | Moringa oleifera.    | Moringa    | Leaves & Pods                                  | Moringa is used extensively for its nutrient-rich leaves and seeds. It is a common remedy for nutritional deficiencies, diabetes, and as an anti-inflammatory agent.  |
| 20 | Bacopa monnieri      | Brahmi     | Leaves   | This herb is known for its brain-boosting properties and is used by the Kokani people to enhance cognitive functions and reduce stress. It is often used to improve memory, focus, and mental clarity   |

## Result & Discussion

The tribal mostly depend on the herbs found around them in wild. The knowledge gained about the efficacy of medicinal plants by the tribes for generations is kept secret and is orally communicated to their descendent. It was observed that the tribal people used all these species very carefully. The report accounts for 20 plant species belonging to different families, used for to cure diseases by *Konkani* tribal of Nasik district.

Further work in this direction may help to discover new drugs to cure upcoming diseases.

## Conclusion

The Kokani tribal community's use of medicinal plants represents a rich tradition of natural healing and sustainable living. Their deep knowledge of the local flora not only contributes to their health but also fosters a profound respect for nature. As more people turn to traditional medicine for holistic well-being, the Kokani people's practices offer valuable insight into the wisdom of indigenous plant-based healing systems

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