

# The Janus Corner

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Looking Back

Looking Forward

This occasional section within the journal surveys visions and achievements, often not on the main track of the developing biomedical sciences, but all relating to discoveries and developments of medicinals – both ancient and modern. What they have in common, in one way or another, is providing further background and glances around the edges of the core discipline of pharmacognosy, as it has been and continues to evolve within our times.

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The following were received as letters to the editor and are published here in their entirety. Letters to the editor express the opinion of the author(s) and may or may not reflect the opinion of the editor or the journal.

### SCOPE OF PHARMACOGNOSY IN TODAY'S WORLD

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As a pharmacognosist, I have always wondered how nature has bestowed her blessings upon mankind in the form of precious medicinal plants and other natural products. Pharmacognosy is simply “the study of jadi-butti” in my words the “knowledge of Asudhi”.

I have further conceptualized the scope of pharmacognosy in form of a poem entitled “Scope of pharmacognosy in today's world”. Pharmacognosy plays a vital role in our daily life from morning till evening which can be well understood by the poem:

### Scope of pharmacognosy in today's world

Pharmacognosy is everywhere in life.....

in fibers (Silk, cotton, wool, nylon).....

in kitchen shelf.....

in honey.....

in leather making.....

in paan katha (Catechu).....

in ginger tea.....

in spices.....

in daily life.....

in medicinal preparation (Podophyllum, Mentha).....

in cosmetics (Aloe, Haldi).....

in perfumery.....

PHYTOPHARMACEUTICALS.....

PHYTOPHARMACEUTICALS.....

PHYTOPHARMACEUTICALS.....

Morning till Evening

Use of Pharmacognosy.....

Pharmacognosy.....

Pharmacognosy,

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Ayurveda, the pride of my nation (India), an integral part of study of Pharmacognosy, has vast potential in today's time. Ayurvedic drugs like Punarnava, Antamul, Shankpusphi, Neem, Rasna, Arjuna, Shatavari, Gokhru. Brahmi. Chirata, Picrohiza, Kalmegh, Bavchi, Ashoka. Amla. Bahera, Jatamansi, Banafsha, Tulsi, Guggal are used in a variety of disorders.

Plants and phytopharmaceuticals are used in different diseases such as:

1. Anticancer: Vinca, Podophyllum, Taxus.
2. Antinflammatory: Colchicumcorm and seed, Turmeric.
3. Antiamebic: Ipecac root, Kurchi bark.
4. Anthelmintic: Artemisia, Male fern, Quassia wood, Vidang, Chenopodium oil.
5. Antiasthmatic: Ephedra, Lobelia, Vasaka, Tylophora.

6. Antispasmodic: Belladonna, Datura, Hyoscyamus.
7. Astringent: Catechu, Tannic acid, Myrrh. Myrobalan, Ashoka bark.
8. Analgesics: Opium, Cannabis.
9. Bitter Tonics: Quassia wood, Nuxvomica, Gentain, Picrorrhiza, Chirata, Kalmegh,
10. Carminatives: Cinnamon bark, Cardamon. Seed
11. Flavours: Nutmeg fruit, Clove, Umbelli ferous fruits, Peppermint, Saffron.
12. Purgatives: Aloe, Castr oil, Plantago seed husk.
13. Expectorant: Benzoin, Balsam of Tolu, Glycyrrhiza, Vasaka.
14. Cardiotoxic: Digitalis, Squill, Strophanthus.
15. CNS action: Ergot, belladonna, Stramonium, Hyoscyamus, Ephedra, Physostigma.
16. Hallucinogens: Cocaine, Cannabis.
17. Tranquilizer: Rauwolfia roots.

The growing concern in the recent past over toxic effects of various synthetic drugs has forced the researchers, academicians and doctors to consider some steps for preventing the misuse of such drugs. The occurrence of side effects

after a long term use of synthetic drugs always feared during treatment of chronic diseases. Such a possibility is experienced to be of negligible extent in the case of herbal drugs and other medicines obtained from natural sources. These are some reasons which the authorities in this field to reconsider the use of herbal medicines and to give enough attention to the development of sciences of phytopharmaceuticals. The development of science of phytopharmaceuticals and the hopes for remedies in chronic diseases has generated new enthusiasm in researches workers to develop herbal medicines.<sup>[1]</sup> Phytopharmaceuticals the rage and age of today are in considerable demand. Pharmacognosy can now be rightly be called as “Science of phytopharmaceuticals” in today’s era.<sup>[2]</sup>

## REFERENCES

1. Kokate CK, Purohit AP, Gokhale SB, 2002, 18th Edition, Phytopharmaceuticals- Retrospect and prospect. In Pharmacognosy. Nirali prakashan, Pune, 524–5.
2. Sumati Sethi, 2005, Evolution of phytopharmaceuticals. Phytomedica, (Previously known as Journal of indigenous medicine), Volume 6, 13–18.