

# AN OVERVIEW OF CURRENT ETHNO VETERINARY PRACTICES IN KERALA

**P.G. BABY**

Professor and Head  
Department of Veterinary Clinical Medicine  
College of Veterinary and Animal Sciences  
Mannuthy

Indigenous animal husbandry practices are considered to be as old as domestication of various livestock species. Treatment of animals with locally available indigenous plants were being practiced for centuries by various ethnic groups at different regions and locations. It was being used without having any scientific backing, rationale or any knowledge about the active principle of the plants. Through trial and error, or by continuous use those traditional treatments measures were being practiced to alleviate the ailments of their animals. Over centuries such traditional valuable knowledge passes from generation to generation through oral transmission and by observations. Usually these traditional knowledge was restricted to specific ethnic groups or regions or localities. The wonderful herb 'Arogapacha' was known only to a specific ethnic group of tribes of Agastha forest in Thiruvananthapuram. Likewise abundant quantum of information on our traditional ethnic medicine are remained unexplored and undocumented within various ethnic groups or various regions or locations. This traditional knowledge is in a state of extinction as no serious effort so far undertaken to collect and document these of valuable informations. Thus it is imperative to collect and document traditional animal husbandry practices of our rural farmers. It has to be experimented scientifically, validated and should give a scientific backing for the effectiveness of these traditional practices and can be put into practice for the routine treatment of our livestock. They are ecofriendly, cost effective, safe and easy available locally to the farmers.

In Kerala also traditional animal husbandry practice were being used by the rural farmers. Department of Clinical Medicine, College of Veterinary and Animal Sciences is one of the collaborating centre of a All India Network Project on Ethno Veterinary Medicine. As a part of this project we have initiated a humble attempt to collect these traditional knowledge on Ethno Veterinary Medicine and some of such ethno veterinary practice are discussed in the following text.

## **Mastitis**

Most of the Livestock farmers are not aware that the Mastitis is a disease caused by micro organisms. They consider it as an oedematous and painful swelling of the udder. So to alleviate pain and oedema various topical application of indigenous plant preparation are being used. Most commonly used topical preparation are:

1. a. Kattarvazha (കറ്റാവഴ) *Aloe barbadensis* Mill and Thottavadi (ശ്ശമം) *Mimosa pudica*. The juice or grind material is usually mixed with turmeric and quick lime or with honey and white of egg and applied topically on the udder.

b. Samudra Pacha (സമുദ്രപച്ച, മരിക്കുന്ന) *Argyrea nervosa* – grind material of root in rose milk applied topically.

c. Kalli (കള്ളി) *Cactaceae V (Euphorbia nerifolia)* - juice applied topically.

d. Koval (കോവൽ) Ivy guard – Leaves of this plant grind into paste and applied with rice washings.

e. Valliyuzhinja (വള്ളിയുഴിഞ്ഞ) *Ballon vine (Cardio spermum hali cacabum)* – a climber – whole plant grind into paste and used topically.

f. Peruku (പെരുക) *Clerodendrum infortunatum* – Leaves of peruku – grind into paste and used topically along with clay.

Tulsi (കുഷ്മന്തുളസി) *Ocimum sanctum* was found to be effective for the treatment of sub clinical mastitis. The effect of Tulsi was scientifically validated at IVRI Izatnagar. The extract of *Ocimum sanctum* was prepared aseptically and it was infused intramammarily at the rate of 100 mg/teat for 7 days. Therapeutic effect obtained in this study might be due to bioactive substances like flavanoides and triterpin present in the leaf extract.

## **Diarrhoea**

Traditionally a number of home made medicinal preparation are used to control diarrhoea in animals. Electuary made from Ajowan, dried ginger,

pepper and nutmeg are commonly used as antidiarrhoeic by our farmers.

Raw banana, peelings of banana, fruit of Madhalam are also used as antidiarrhoeic. Core stem of banana plant with small onion and cumin made into paste and administered orally for diarrhoea. Pepper and dried ginger in toddy is also used in some part of Kerala, especially for calf diarrhoea. Leaves of Guava (Pera) is also used as anti diarrhoeic remedy in livestock.

#### **Skin Diseases**

Topical medicaments prepared from the leaves of കറുക (Cyanadon dactylon), ആനതകര, ആത്ത (Anona), തുളസി (Ocimum sanctum) മുളിവെട്ടി, ശീമക്കൊന്ന (Gliricidia maculata) etc. are commonly used to heal skin lesions.

Topical preparation prepared in coconut oil with leaves of ഒന്നുപാല is found to be highly effective for skin diseases like pyoderma, suborrhoea, alopecia, etc.

Juice prepared from ചിറ്റാമൂല് (Tinospora cordifolia) and കറുക (Cyanadon dactylon) mixed with powdered glycerizha and dried ginger commonly used as a topical application.

Decoction prepared from അടയ്ക്കാ മണിയൻ (Sphaeranthus indicus) applied topically to eradicate external parasites of the animals.

#### **Prolapse of uterus**

Application of medicinal agent prepared by grinding the whole plant Mimosa pudica (തൊട്ടാവാടി) - sleeping

grass on the prolapsed part of vagina and uterus is commonly practiced. It is also advised to give orally for 4-5 days.

#### **Infertility**

Oral administration of leaves of കരിവേപ്പ് (Murraya koenigii) for 10-15 days after insemination.

#### **Galactagogue**

Roots of ശതാവരി (Asparagus), whole plant of Kurunthotti (Broomfute sida) and leaves of Muringa (Moringa oleifera) given orally continuously is considered to be a good milk booster.

#### **Muscular pain and oedema**

Leaves of Calatropa gigantea (എരിക്ക്) and Datura stromonium (ഉമ്മ) is used hot fermentation on the painful area.

#### **Diseases of urinary system**

Oral administration of Decoction prepared from Tribullus terrestris (തെരിഞ്ഞൻ) Boerhavia diffusa (തഴുതാമ) punarnava and Hygrophilla auriculate (വയൽചുളു) is found to be effective for the treatment of Toxic nephritis.

#### **Anthelmintics**

Leaves of curry leaves (Murraya koenigii) pera (Guava) Poohumba (leucus), Peruku (Cleradendrum infortunatum) and Kiriya (Swertia chirayita) are used orally as anthelmintics.



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**V.C. PHARMEUTICALS**

North Paravur-683 513, Cochin

Tel: 0484-2442235, Fax: 0484-2449235

E-mail: vcpl1@sancharnet.in Website: ww.vcpharma.com

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