

## **“Traditional System of Medicine And Cure Among the Jaunsarese of Jaunsar-Bawar (Uttarakhand )**

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### **Introduction**

Disease and cure systems are universal phenomena. In order to achieve complete physical, mental and social well being the realm of cure becomes important. Every society has its own typical system / method of curing diseases i.e. line of treatment varies from culture to culture due to 'social determinants', age and place. The rationale underlying various systems of treatment of diseases in different human groups basically depends on two fundamental principles : (1)The cause-effect factors, and (2)The magico-logical / magico-ritual performances. Tribal system of medicine, indigenous as well as traditional falls under the category of 'Ethno-medicine'. Indigenous / tribal medicine system looms large on the fact that cause in itself would bring about a cure and are pronounced to be based on hit and trial methods. The role of Medicine man, Shaman, Ojhas, Maitreyi, and Baki (in Jaunsar-Bawar) as well as Guni (in Jaunsar-Bawar) is very important in indigenous/tribal medicine system. Though tribal medicine man is usually referred as a quack by modern medicinal systems but in tribal system of healing this person dabbles in all sorts of ailments and some times may have an all powerful concoction that he prescribed for all common disorders varying, however, its dosage, duration of treatment and mode of administration.

This paper is an out come of empirical study among the Jaunsarese and is an attempt to enlist various diseases and discuss their traditional / indigenous cures. This tribe of India, residing in mountainous region (Uttarakhand) uses vast list of plant folk medicine to combat pathogens and vectors of various diseases. The paper is based on the field data collected from twelve Jaunsari villages of Jaunsar-Bawar after rigorous field work.

### **Study Areas**

The present study covers the Jaunsar-Bawar region of Chakrata in district Dehradun (Uttarakhand). Chakrata is one of the Tehsils of the Dehradun district. It has two blocks (1) Chakrata, which has 153 Villages and (2) Kalsi, which has 206 Villages. The Jaunsari tribals are the one of the five tribals of the Uttarakhand state. Its total population resides in 358 villages of the Chakrata and Kalsi blocks of the Jaunsar-Bawar area. The Jaunsari tribals are commonly known as 'Khas' or 'Khos', Khosh etc. this whole inhabited area is known as *Jaunsar-Bawar*.

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Jaunsar-Bawar is in the cis-Himalayas, located at the north western corner of the State of Uttarakhand. It forms the northern half of the Dehradun district, and lies between 77°42' and 78°5' east longitude, and 30°31' and 31°2' north latitude. Its total area is 2639 sq Km. in which the Jaunsaris reside in a total of 1000.07 sq. Km area. The area is roughly oval in shape, with its major axis lying north latitude. The western and north-western boundaries are contiguous with Sirmur, Jubbal and Taroch, all of which were formerly princely states, but now form parts of the state of Himachal Pradesh. Tons river makes its western boundary. The present study is confined to 12 villages of Jaunsar-Bawar viz. Pati, Rawana, Bisdar, Buraswa, Maharawana/Mairawana, Shirwa, Bangoti, Timara, Bandara, Tungarauli, Maipawata/Mahapawata and Bahamu. The inhabitants of these villages have become familiar with the medicinal and economic properties of the floral life existing in the area.

### Methodology

The paper is focused on the comparison of the remedies used by the tribals on the basis of ailments i.e. for a specific ailment which remedy is used by tribals of the area. Seventy five Jaunsarese who have knowledge of plant folk medicine were interviewed to study ethno-medicinal uses of different plant species. Extensive field work (which included observation, interview) and ethno-botanical surveys were carried out during the years 2005 and 2006 in Jaunsar-Bawar region. During the stay at Jaunsar-Bawar contacts were established with several elderly tribal men and women. Traditional doctors of the region were interviewed and accompanied to forests to investigate the medicinal plants. Later on information was confirmed by interviewing different members of the tribes.

### List of Some Medicinal Plants used by Jaunsarese Tribe of Jaunsar-Bawar (Uttarakhand)

S. No.	Botanical Name*	Vernacular Name	Family	Ailment(S)	Method of use
1-	Achyranthes bidentata	Golda	Amaranthaceae	Snake- bite	Extract of the plant is used orally as an antidote.
2-	Ajuga bracteosa	Nilkanthi	Lamiaceae	Blisters, Skin diseases Malarial fever Snake- bite Ear- ache	Juice of the leaf is applied on blisters and used orally for skin diseases. Decoction of the plant is used to treat malarial fever. Root extract is used as antidote. Juice of the leaves is used as drop for ear cavity twice a day
3-	Ageratum conyzoides	Podina	Asteraceae	Bleeding	Leaf juice is used to check bleeding and to act as an antiseptic.

4-	<i>Ainsliaea latifolia</i>	Karhu	Asteraceae	Fever Urinary Inflammation Pneumonia	Root juice is used.
5-	<i>Ajuga parviflora</i>	Bishkopra	Lamiaceae	Fever	Plant juice is used to treat fever. Leaf paste is rubbed on forehead in severe fever.
6-	<i>Arisaema tortuosum</i>	Chambus	Araceae	Snake -bite	Corm (bulb) extract is used orally as an antidote.
7-	<i>Artemisia nilagirica</i>	Chhampur	Asteraceae	Fever & Headache Eye -inflammation &Ear-ache	Paste of the leaves is applied on forehead. Juice extract of leaf is used as drop.
8-	<i>Asparagus filicinus</i>	Kaunta	Liliaceae	Aphrodisiac	From Tuberos roots pickles are prepared & taken.
9-	<i>Bergenia lingulata</i>	Silpara	Saxifragaceae	Fever, Intestinal & bladder problems	Rhizome extract is used in fever and in removing gravel from intestine & bladder.
10-	<i>Cannabis sativa</i>	Bhang	Cannabaceae	Hydrocele problems	Bark of the plant is used.
11-	<i>Cedrus deodara</i>	Deodar	Pinaceae	Boils & blisters	Wood oil is used as ointment.
12-	<i>Cinnamomum tamala</i>	Gurandra	Lauraceae	Rheumatism & diarrhoea	From bark & leaves condiments are prepared and used medicinally.
13-	<i>Datura stramonium</i>	Safed Dhatura	Solanaceae	Facial skin problems  Ear-ache  Asthma	Roots are mashed and mixed with turmeric to prepare a paste which is applied on face to treat acne & pimples. Leaf juice is used as drop. Leaves are used as a cure for asthma.
14-	<i>Delphinium denudatum</i>	Jud-war	Ranunculaceae	Coughs	The roots are used to cure cough.
15-	<i>Geranium wallichianum</i>	Ninai (Ninoee)	Geraniaceae	Boils	Root extract has a cooling impact, so root paste is given orally with milk and also used as an ointment.

16-	<i>Grewia optiva</i>	Bhimal	--	Bone fractures	Wheat flour and turmeric (haldi) are fried and put on fractured part and then bark of bhimal is bandaged on those parts.
17-	<i>Hedychium spicatum</i>	Kachari, seerh Kachoor	Zingiberaceae	Diarrhoea  Stomach-ache Rheumatism Arthritis  Swelling of the body	Paste of the rhizome is used Bark of plant is boiled and a decoction is prepared mixing it with jaggery & eaten. Fruits are powdered and mixed with jaggery and eaten.
18-	<i>Leucas lanata</i>	Bishkopra	Lamiaceae	Stomach -ache & head -ache	Plant extract is used.
19-	<i>Pistacia integerrima</i>	Kakra	Anacardiaceae	Asthma	Powdered leaf is used.
20-	<i>Potentilla fruticosa</i>	Ratanjot	Rosaceae	Burn problems	Root-ash is mixed with oil & used as ointment.
21-	<i>Potentilla fulgens</i>	Bajradanti	Rosaceae	Gums & teeth problems	Powdered roots are used as tooth-powder.
22-	<i>Potentilla nepalensis</i>	Jok-jari	Rosaceae	Worm problems	Juice of the plant is used orally to expel worms from intestinal cavities in children.
23-	<i>Rubia cordifolia</i>	Charchora	Rubiaceae	Snake-bite  Boils & blisters	Plant paste is applied on snake bite. Paste of plant is used as an ointment on boils, blisters.
24-	<i>Solanum ferox L.</i>	Bhut-kataia	Solanaceae	Vomiting	Juice of leaves is used to stop vomiting.
25-	<i>Solanum nigrum L.</i>	Makoi	Solanaceae	Liver diseases  Ring worms	Leaf extract is used. Paste of leaves is used.
26-	<i>Valeriana jatamansi</i>	Khamuri	Valerianaceae	Tooth problems	Root extract is used.
27-	<i>Viola canescens</i>	Banafsha	Vilaceae	Fever Bronchitis Asthma  Cold & cough	Decoction prepared from flower is used for treatment. Dried plants are boiled in water & taken.

28-	Zanthoxyhum armatum	Timbur, Timroo	Rutaceae	Tooth ache Headache	The fruit powder of shrub is used in tooth problems. Leaves are boiled in water and patient is advice to take bath in it.
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\* Source : Botanical Names cited from Jain, S.K. & Rao, R.R., 'Hand Book of Field and Herbarium Methods' and Doctors working in these areas.

### Results

Traditional/ethno-medicinal remedies used by Jaunsarese are enumerated in comparative form in the table with their botanical names, vernacular names, family names, ailments and method of use. This provides us with general information related to various diseases prevailing in Jaunsar-Bawar. Though the region has vast range of ethno-botanical species present in its vicinity but they are yet to be properly explored. The Jaunsarese of the region are devoid of modern medicinal system due to their cultural constraints and limitations as well as their poor economic condition. For severe physical ailments like cardiac failures and problems related to kidney and liver etc. they to a large extent depend on modern system of medicine which too is lagging due to poor means of transport and communication. A strong data-base about medicinal uses of plants is need of the day for Jaunsarese and they should be made aware about various uses of medicinal herbs and plants growing in their fields as well as in forest area. Their sustainable utilization is necessary in order to improve lives of the Jaunsarese.

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