



A SURVEY ON ANIMAL ORIGIN MATERIALS USED IN INDIGENOUS MEDICINE IN SRI LANKA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TALPATE PILIAM

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Sri Lanka claims a profound and valuable culture dated up to thousands of years in which the indigenous medicine with its precious and unrevealed treasures has been playing a significant role. In the system not only herbals but also minerals and animal origin materials have been used.

Aim of this study was to identify the animal origin materials and their applications used in indigenous system of medicine in Sri Lanka. Talpathe piliam is a series of printed books consisted of several volumes which have copied from the ancient ola manuscripts and published by the department of Ayurveda. They were thoroughly studied and categorized under following topics viz. animal phylum and sub phylum, part of the body used, diseases which they used the method of application and preparation.

According to the results obtained, parts of mammals and quadrupeds, reptiles, birds, fish, insects, arachnids, annelids, crustaceans and several animal parts which belong to phylum mollusca also have been used. Meat, bones, teeth, horns, urine, feces, skin, milk and other dairy products such as ghee and cheese have been used as major materials. Fur, hair, shells, egg shells, bile, feathers, exo-skeletons, fat, quills, secretions and dead skin of cobra also have been used exceptionally for drug preparation.

These animal materials have been used for several purposes such as both internal and external applications, supportive materials for drug production and as materials for drug storage. External applications were balms, oils and medicated smokes while decoctions, pills and pastes have been used as internal applications.

There is a vast knowledge about using animal origin materials in indigenous medicine. It can be concluded that their application and method of preparation have dispersed in a broad spectrum and further studies could be carried out in searching unrevealed valuable materials for the production of novel medicines.

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