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A review on ethnomedicinally important pteridophytes of India

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Abstract

Ethnopharmacological relevance: Pteridophytes have been considered an excellent source of medicine since ancient times and remain underexplored in ethnobotanical aspects when compared to other vascular plants. Hence, an attempt has been made to compile medicinally important pteridophytes used by different ethnic minorities and local people in India.

Materials and methods: Relevant information on the uses of pteridophytes was extracted from scientific journals (local, regional, and international), books, book chapters, conference proceedings, M.Sc. and Ph.D. dissertations, and other scientific databases. Recent and accepted names of plants were validated using standard nomenclature databases.

Results: In total, 283 species of pteridophytes are enumerated in this review which are used to treat 129 ailments. Ethnobotanical records from the states Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, and Uttarakhand revealed 59% of overall uses of pteridophytes from India. Pteridaceae was recorded with highest number of medicinally important species (57), followed by Polypodiaceae, Dryopteridaceae, Thelypteridaceae, and Aspleniaceae with 36, 27, 22, and 21 species respectively.

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