

The Magical Herb “*Euphorbia hirta* L.” An Important Traditional Therapeutic Herb for Wart Disease among the Vangujjars of Forest near Kashipur, Uttarakhand

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Abstract: The oldest remedies known to humankind are herbal medicines. India is known worldwide for its Ayurvedic treatments. *Euphorbia hirta* is often used traditionally as medicine. *Euphorbia hirta* L. belongs to family Euphorbiaceae. It is an annual herb present on the roadside throughout the country. The tribal societies of different region and the vangujjars have developed their own indigenous medicinal system. *Euphorbia hirta* L. is known to have medicinal, cultural and ethnobotanical uses.

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Key Words: *Euphorbia hirta* L., Traditional medicines, Vangujjars.

1. Introduction

India is the home of biological and cultural diversity. Different communities have used the rich plant biodiversity of India for various purposes such as food, medicine, fodder, fuel and religious proposes. Medicinal plants are one of them and they play an important role in the human life to get rid of diseases as evidenced by the ancient and recent ethnomedicinal (Jain, 1991; 1999) literatures. The indigenous systems of medicine, namely, Ayurvedic, Siddha and Unani, have been in existence for several centuries. World Health Organization (WHO) has estimated that at least 80% of the world population relies on traditional systems of medicine for their primary health needs (Negi *et al.*, 2010). The Kumaun Himalayas especially the Tarai and Bhabhar regions have high floristic diversity. *Euphorbia hirta* L. is one of the important local plants used by vangujjars in the treatment of warts. Wart is a circumscribed cutaneous elevation due to hypertrophy of the papillae and hyperplasia of all the layers of the epidermis. This review describes the use of *Euphorbia hirta* L. against wart disease by Vangujjars of Kashipur.

2. Material and Methods

The present work is an outcome of the study of medicinal plants, based on the personal observation made during the survey.

3. Vernacular Name

It is commonly known as Cats hair, asthma weed and dudhi.

4. Classification of *Euphorbia hirta* L.

Kingdom: Plantae, Division: Magnoliophyta, Class: Magnoliopsida, Order: Malpighiales, Family: Euphorbiaceae, Genus: *Euphorbia*, Species: *hirta*.

5. General Features of *Euphorbia hirta* L.

Euphorbia hirta L. is a mesophytic or xerophytic plant distributed throughout the hotter parts of India and Australia, often found in waste places along the roadsides. In habit, *Euphorbia hirta* L. is an annual plant that goes up to 2 feet in height. Flowers are small and clustered with opposite oblong leaves and toothed margin. The inflorescence is cyathium and flower is unisexual. There is a milky latex present in all parts of the plant.

6. Uses

All plant parts of *Euphorbia hirta* L. are used in medicine. This plant is used for its antibacterial, antimalarial, anti-inflammatory, galactogenic, antiasthmatic, antidiarrheal, antioxidant, antifertility, antiamoebic and antifungal property. In addition, it has a therapeutic effect on urine output and electrolytes (Kumar *et al.*, 2010). This plant is used in treatment of diseases of children, such as in case of worms, bowel complaints, cough etc. Juice of this plant is used in the treatment of dysentery and colic (Chopra, 1956). Whole parts of this plant secrete a milky latex. The local tribes and vangujjars used this latex in the treatment of wart. After cleaning by water regular external application of this latex three times a day (TDS) up to 15 days is known to cure almost every type of wart on any part of body. This traditional uses of *E. hirta* by vangujjars of Kashipur (Uttarakhand) serves as the basis for further studies. This review will definitely help the

researchers in finding other unknown uses of *Euphorbia hirta* L..

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