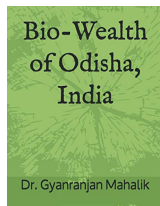


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Ethnomedicinal Uses and Pharmacological Activity of Four Species of *Sida*

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Corresponding author email id: sagarika.parida@cutm.ac.in**ABSTRACT**

Genus *Sida* belongs to family Malvaceae. Species of this genus has high medicinal value in Indian and other systems of medicine in many countries. Some of the *Sida* species are used in Ayurvedic formulations and are also called as Bala in Sanskrit. "Bala" means strength and is a popular herb in ASU (Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani) drugs. All the parts of plants are attributed with various medicinal values but especially the root is often used for the presence of bioactive compounds. Bala helps in managing body weight both by suppressing body weight and reduce the urge to overeat. Mostly its roots are used for preparation of herbal medicines. Four species viz. *Sida acuta* L., *Sida cordata* (Burm.) Borss., *Sida cordifolia* L., *Sida rhombifolia* L. and *Sida spinosa* L. are used in Ayurveda for preparation of various drugs for different ailments. This book chapter describes different types of "Bala" such as "Bala", nagabala, Baladhya and Mahabala and their ethnomedicinal uses, phytochemical constituents, and antimicrobial activity of four species of *Sida*.

Keywords: Antimicrobial activity, "Bala", Ayurvedic Formulation, Traditional System of Medicine, *Sida*

INTRODUCTION

Plants have immense potential as medicine. Plant based medicines are proved to be good source of modern drugs to treat various diseases of human being. Drugs have been discovered after the isolation of bioactive compounds from various parts. Ayurveda is a system of medicine that originated in ancient India and this system relies on plant based drugs. Among the medicinal plants, genus viz. "*Sida*" is important as different species are used in Ayurvedic compound formulations. This genus belongs to the family Malvaceae which is known as "Mallow family". This family has 1500 species in 82 genera present and this genus comprises of about 200 species in tropical and subtropical region of the world [1, 2] of which 20 species are found in India and 18 species in Kerala [3, 4]. Different Sanskrit names viz. 'Bala, Nagabala, Baladhya and Mahabala identifies different species such as *Sida acuta* Burm.f., S. [5].

The nomenclature and identification of species belonging to *Sida* is often confusing. The objective of this chapter is to describe the characteristics, medicinal values, presence of bioactive compounds and ethnomedicinal uses of different species of *Sida*. Correct identification of 'Bala' is controversial because of a number of synonyms are there for the same plants. Since the root of *Sida* is the source of the important raw

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drug 'Bala', its identity is controversial. [6] The Ayurvedic physicians and local healers of Kerala use *S.*