

DETAILS OF DRUGS IN SOME WIDELY USED INDIGENOUS MEDICINAL PREPARATIONS

Tissa Hewavithana*

Abstract

Vatikaprakaranaya (Guli kalka book-1879) deals with many recipes of pills and pastes, many of which cannot be found in other Ayurveda texts. It contains about 2707 formulations.

After consulting some Ayurveda Physicians six recipes ; Buddharaja, Navarathan, Desadun, Sharkaradi, Kalkas and Seetharama, Suranwidura Wattis were selected for the study.

On the basis of the results of the study, it was found that the drugs frequently used are not available in Sri Lanka at present. Thus the recipes would have been probably taken from some other sources or the plants and other minerals mentioned are no longer available in Sri Lanka.

Introduction

Though India is said to be the origin of Ayurveda, Sri Lanka too has its own system of Medicine, which is known to as Indigenous Medical system.

Sri Lankan history is supposed to have begun with the arrival of king Vijaya from the Northern part of India. Possibly, the origin of Sri Lankan medical system would have been thus influenced from India. However it is possible to assume that long before the arrival of Vijaya in the Pre Buddhist era, there existed a developed medical system during the regime of King Rawana, for which no written records are found.

According to Mahawansa the chronicle of Sri Lankan history, King Pandukabhaya (377-307 BC) had built a hospital in Anuradhapura. During the period of 337-367 AD, King Buddhadasa was well known as an eminent physician for humans as well as animals.

During the Polonnaruwa kingdom, the king Great Parakaramabhabu (1158 - 1186 AD) who contributed immensely for developing the medical system was supposed to have set up medical posts such as Maha Vedana (Kings physician) and Sulu Vedana (Deputy physician).

However with the arrival of the Europeans, this advanced medical system gradually declined. Specially during the regime of the Seethawaka and Kandy, most of the religious and medicinal books had been burnt or taken away from the country. Fortunately certain recipes mentioned in the destroyed books and ola leaves were re-written by traditional physicians who were literate.

Sarartha Sangrahaya (1288 - 1303 AD.) in which the contents are based on the details of Charaka, Susrutha and Vagbhata Samhithas could be considered as the first medicinal book published

*B. A. M. S. (Colombo)-Lecturer (Probationary) Gampaha Wickramarachchi Ayurveda Institute, University of Kelaniya.