

Testing the Efficacy of A Few Herbs for Skin and Hair Care

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The idea that every plant has medicinal use, as suggested by Paracelsus, the renowned fifteen century physician is fascinating. Virtually every medical condition can be treated with a natural product. It is best to go by the natural care route for the hair and skin because our body cannot differentiate between good and bad chemicals. It indiscriminately absorbs whatever chemicals we slather on our face and body, thus causing adverse effects. In contrast, natural products do not cause rash, irritation or allergic reaction because.

In the present study, investigations were carried out to formulate preparations for hair and skin care, by choosing herbs based upon traditional knowledge.

Skin care: Investigations revealed that green tea, *Terminalia chebula*, *Rosa* sp., *Punica granatum* and *Citrus sinensis* had good sunscreen activity and can be incorporated into sunscreen formulations to enhance the activity. The proposed UV spectrophotometric method is simple, rapid, employs low cost reagents and can be used in the *in-vitro* determination of SPF values in many cosmetic formulations. These herbs showed good UV absorption, antioxidant activity and high SPF. The skin creams that were prepared incorporating these herbs had a very good feedback in terms of texture, spreadability, etc.

Hair Care: From the study, it was concluded that *Albizia amara*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Acacia concinna*, *Sapindus laurifolius* and *Vigna radiata* had very high saponin content and therefore had good foaming index. In the present study the petroleum ether extracts showed good anti-lice activity compared with aqueous extracts of the herbs. Of all the five shampoos prepared, the petroleum ether extract of *Azadirachta indica* showed the best anti-lice activity closely followed by *Acacia concinna*.

The products were given to volunteers for the *in-vivo* survey of the skin creams and herbal shampoos, and the response was positive.