

ETHNOMEDICINE IN INDIA AND AN APPROACH TOWARDS MEDICINAL ECOLOGY

Poonam Sharma and Jayashri Devi Sharma

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There is an undeniable interrelationship between the understanding of ethnomedicine that is a heritage from the long standing understanding of ecosystems and the older descriptive terms of medical practice. Oriental forms of traditional and folkloric uses of medicinal plants have been recorded since time immemorial in ancient texts like Rigveda and followed by historical texts in the Indian subcontinent. The historical linkages between ethnomedicine, which depends on the natural environment and its plant resources, to the research, teaching and practice of modern medicine has taken newer holistic forms, with emerging information linkages and market forces. It is essential for the medical practitioner to enrich his understanding of the use of

plant-based phytopharmaceuticals and their origins, for better, cost-effective cure. Medicinal ecology is devoted to a better understanding of the genesis of all forms of healing arts and their possible contribution to, and with, a strong bias incorporating the ecological perspectives of conservation of plant resources, into the teaching and practice of modern medicine.

Medicinal Ecology., School of Environmental Science, Jawaharlal Nehru University,
New Delhi-110067, E mail: jayds@jnuni.ernet.in