

Marine Natural Products: A Rich Source of Medicine in Ayurveda, the Ancient Indian Medical Science

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Abstract : Ayurveda, the ancient Indian Medical system is practiced all over India and abroad, is rich in natural source of medicines, including marine products. The marine drugs which prominently used are pravala (coral), mukta (pearl), kapardika (cowry). Shukti (oyster shell), shankha (conch), agnijara (amber) etc. Except agnijara (amber) all are rich in calcium. Interestingly they are not used as supplements in calcium deficiency as done in conventional medical practice. They are used as medicines in the disease like fever, tuberculosis, bleeding disorders, eye problems, digestive complaints etc. Many scientific studies have shown their potent medicinal value. Each has its own properties and used therapeutically after subjecting them to various purificatory processes which are called shodhana in which several medicinal plants are used which also help in enhancing therapeutical activity. Then these purified marine products are subjected to marana (incineration) process and obtained in the form of Bhasma (a finest form of medicine). Agnijara, a derivative of whale is useful as aphrodisiac and prescribed in neuromuscular disorders and tetanus. The ancient scriptures written in Sanskrit language thousands of years back have rich information about all these natural marine products and their medicinal usage.

Keywords : Ayurveda, bhasma, marana, shodhana

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