

Study of Irritant and Anti-inflammatory Activity of Snuhi/Zaqqum (Euphorbia nerifolia) with Special Reference to Holy Quran and Ayurveda

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Abstract : Indian mythology believes that Vedas are eternal treatises. Vedas are categorized into four divisions viz., Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samveda, Atharveda. All these spiritual classics not only deal with rituals and customs but also consist of inclusion of many references related to health. Out of these four, Atharveda deals with maximum principles pertaining to health sciences. Therefore, it is said that the science and the art of Ayurveda has developed from Atharveda. Ayurveda deals with many medicinal plants either as a single therapeutic use or in combination. One such medicinal plant is Snuhi (Euphorbia nerifolia Linn.) which finds its extensive importance along with Haridra and Apamargakshar, in the preparation of Ksharsutra which in turn is used for the treatment of Fistula in Ano. It is interesting to note that this plant Snuhi is also referred in Holy Quran as the Tree of Zaqqum advocated as the food for the sinners as a part of torment. The reference in Surat Ad-Dukhan is as follows: - 44:43-46. "Verily, the tree of Zaqqum will be the food of the sinners, Like boiling oil, it will boil in the bellies, like the boiling of scalding water." The above verse implies that plant Snuhi/Zaqqum due to irritant property acts as a drastic purgative but at the same time it also possesses anti inflammatory properties in order to relieve the irritation. These properties of Zaqqum has been unfolded in the modern research which states that, Diterpene polycyclic esters are responsible for its toxic and irritant nature whereas; triterpenes are responsible for its anti inflammatory property. Present work will be an effort to review the concept of Quran about latex of the Tree of Zaqqum in terms of its phytochemistry and its therapeutic use in Ksharsutra pertaining to irritant and anti inflammatory property.

Keywords : ayurveda, Quran, zaqqum, ksharsutra, latex piles, inflammation

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