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An Ethnobotanical Review of Medicinal Plants Traditionally Used for Diabetes Management in Southern Iran

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ABSTRACT

Diabetes is a chronic and rapidly growing global health concern. In regions rich in ethnobotanical knowledge, the use of medicinal plants plays a vital role in the management of this disease. Ethnobotanical investigations are particularly valuable for identifying plant species with therapeutic potential. This study aimed to review and document medicinal plants traditionally used for diabetes treatment in the southern provinces of Iran. This review was conducted by systematically searching scholarly articles using keywords such as medicinal plants, ethnobotany, and the names of southern Iranian provinces, including Sistan and Baluchestan, Bushehr, Hormozgan, Khuzestan, Fars, and Kerman. Reputable scientific databases—Google Scholar, SID, Magiran, PubMed, and Scopus—were explored to identify relevant ethnobotanical studies. Selected articles were critically analyzed to extract and compile information on plant species and their traditional uses for diabetes. The review identified numerous plant species cited in ethnobotanical records of southern Iran for their anti-diabetic applications. Key species include *Cichorium intybus*, *Achillea millefolium*, *Medicago sativa*, *Stachys byzantina*, *Amygdalus lycioides*, *Descurainia sophia*, *Amygdalus scoparia*, *Withania somnifera*, *Otostegia persica*, *Urtica dioica*, *Tribulus terrestris*, *Pistacia atlantica*, *Dorema aucheri*, *Artemisia siberi*, *Allium cepa*, *Kelussia odoratissima*, *Brassica napus*, *Citrullus colocynthis*, *Teucrium polium*, *Solanum nigrum*, *Vicia faba*, *Trigonella foenum-graecum*, *Salvia macrosiphon*, *Morus alba*, *Sesamum indicum*, *Zataria multiflora*, *Olea ferruginea*, and *Hordeum vulgare*. Leaves, aerial parts, and fruits were the most frequently utilized plant parts. These species were predominantly distributed across Fars, Khuzestan, Kerman, Bushehr, and Sistan and Baluchestan provinces. This study highlights the richness of ethnobotanical knowledge in southern Iran, where medicinal plants from the Asteraceae, Lamiaceae, and Fabaceae families are widely used in traditional diabetes treatment. Their ecological distribution across several provinces emphasizes the interplay between regional biodiversity and traditional healing practices. Documenting these species offers promising pathways for future research and development of plant-based antidiabetic therapies.

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