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& HYDROPONICS – 2022 (6th ICMPHP)/
8th INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON AYURVEDA, UNANI, SIDDHA &
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**ISBN 978-624-5873-40-1
ISSN 2950-7499**

Published By

Institute of Indigenous Medicine,
University of Colombo,
Rajagiriya, Sri Lanka.

Exploration for analysis of Medicinal foods used to manage Diabetes Mellitus in Sri Lankan traditional medicine

R.A.D. De Silva¹, P.K. Perera² and U. Senarath³

¹Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

²Institute of Indigenous Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

³Faculty of Medicine, University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

damiandesilva2013@gmail.com

The medicinal foods used to manage non-communicable diseases in Sri Lankan traditional medicine are slowly but steadily disappearing from the country due to many reasons. This study is the first stage of the research project aimed to explore and analyze the medicinal foods used to manage diabetes mellitus in traditional medical practices of Sri Lanka. This study is a qualitative study covering the whole island that was conducted cross-sectionally, supplemented by a document review including newspapers, textbooks, leaflets, and ancient palmyra manuscripts. Also, this study included all the registered traditional medical practitioners of the country, more than 65 years of age, the first participant was selected purposively, and the rest by using the snowball technique. Investigator administered, a semi-structured questionnaire as the tool, and saturation was achieved by the 29th participant. Results revealed that the sixty-two medicinal foods were explored and seven were selected for analysis and those are a salad of immature leaves of *Coccinia grandis* (Ivy Gourd), a congee prepared with *Aegle marmelos* (Bael fruit tree) leaves, a congee prepared with *Senna auriculata* (Avaram senna) leaves, a tea prepared with *Senna auriculata* (Avaram senna) flowers, a curry prepared from *Ficus racemose* (Cluster Fig) mature fruits, a tea prepared from *Syzygium cumini* (Black Plum) seeds, a beverage prepared from *Gymnema sylvestre* (Ban Tulsi) leaves. It was concluded that the Sri Lankan native medicine possesses a large number of medicinal foods with antidiabetic effects and they should be explored, scientifically studied, and used as evidence-based management for the smooth control of diabetes mellitus.

Keywords: Traditional medicine, Non-communicable diseases, Medicinal foods, Antidiabetic effects