

Role of Herbals as Immunity Boosters in the Management of COVID-19

Abstract:

The review mainly focuses on various herbs that can be used for the enhancement of immunity amidst COVID-19 pandemic. Coronavirus comes under the viruses that are capable of causing common cold, raising the temperatures and also can result in severe acute respiratory syndrome. The major threat to public health is caused due to the emerging infections such as SARS. Novel Coronavirus or COVID-19 has spread across various countries and been declared as a 'pandemic' by the World Health Organization. Basically, coronavirus affects the individuals which have low immunity. However, one can adopt various herbs that can increase the amount of intestinal beneficial bacteria and can make up 85% of the immune system of the body. So, making use of such herbs one can very effectively promote health and boost immunity to fight against the virus attack. Also, the plant based play a major role in boosting the immunity and preventing the individuals from catching COVID-19 infections.

Introduction:

In Wuhan, Hubei Province, People's Republic of China (PRC), an unidentified case of pneumonia was detected in late December 2019. The clinical characteristics of the disease were having resemblance to the virus *Streptococcus pneumoniae* that causes a viral disease. With the thorough investigation of all the samples collected by the PRC experts of various disease control centers, it was confirmed that the occurrence of novel pneumonia was due to the new coronavirus. Officially the disease was named as COVID-19 by the World Health Organization [1]. It was named as severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 or SARS-CoV2 by the International Committee on Taxonomy of Viruses. The assigning of the official name of the novel coronavirus and the disease caused by the same is the effect of the statement in clinical research and scientific evidences.

The novel coronavirus belongs or to fit in the family of β -coronavirus that is a vast class of virus present in nature. Like all the other viruses SARS-CoV2 also has multiple hosts that include intermediary as well as the final hosts which makes the prevention and the treatment of

Coronavirus disease even more challenging. And when compared to respiratory syndrome transmitted in middle east and severe acute respiratory syndrome, it has been found that COVID-19 is highly transmissible and infectious with low mortality rate [2].

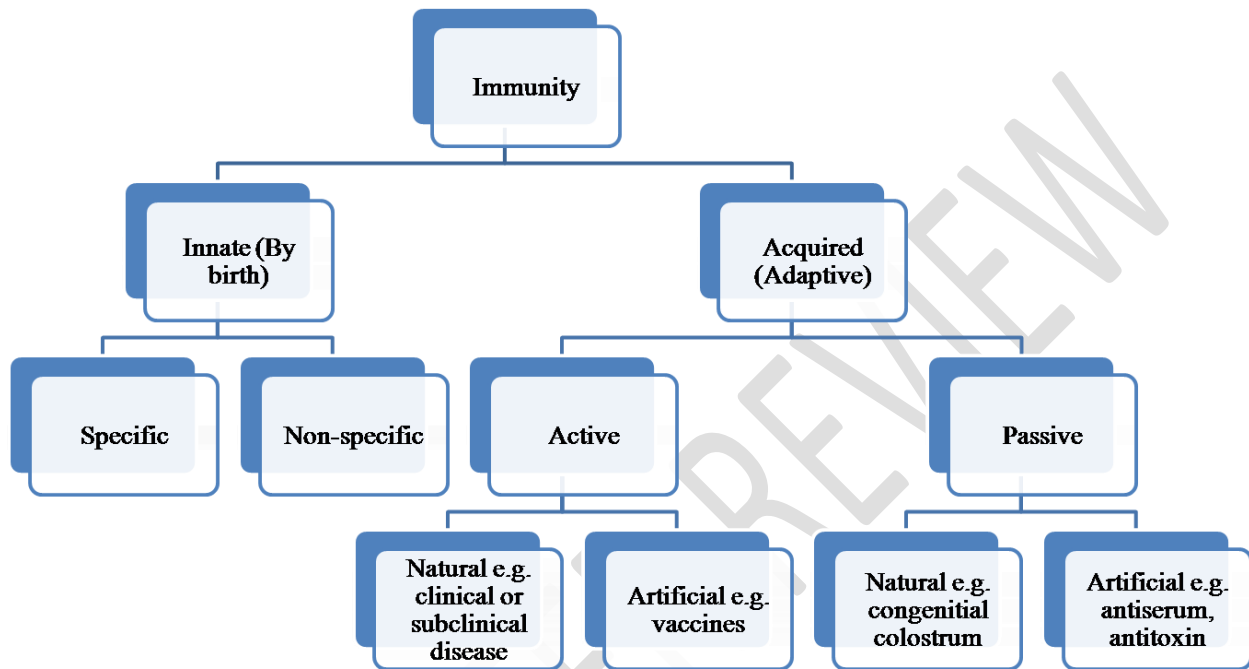


Figure 1: Different types of Immunity

It has been observed that etymology of SARS-CoV2 is the result of an inconsistent immune response. However, the only possible treatment for treating SARS patients remains the immunity boosters so as to strengthen the immune response. Viral infections can be inhibited by interferons by both the adaptive as well as the innate immune response. In the clinical trials, alpha-interferon produced by synthetic recombinant technology is proven to be effective for the patients with SARS-CoV2. It was reported in one of the studies that alfacon-1 plus interferon corticosteroids treatment resulted in lowering of oxygen saturation level caused due to respiratory disease and offered 50% promising solution of lung radiographic anomalies when compared to alone treatment of corticosteroids without using any combinations [3]. Moreover, interferon was also an active inhibitor of replication due to MERS-CoV[4]. Such inferences suggest the use of interferon in the treatment of infections linked with COVID-19. Also, when it comes to long-term use and keeping in mind all the age groups, intravenous immunoglobulin comes out to be

the safest immunomodulator. Moreover, it could also help in the conservative production of pro-inflammatory signals of cytokines thereby increasing the number of anti-inflammatory cytokines mediators[5]. Also, thymosin alpha-1 ($T\alpha-1$) effectively controls the spread of the disease by boosting the immunity for the patients with SARS [6]. These thymosin alpha-1 ($T\alpha-1$) and Intravenous immunoglobulin may also consider as an effective treatment for COVID-19.

Signs and Symptoms

Symptoms that involve primarily are tiredness, sputum during coughing, chest blockage and mild fever. Person may feel loss of taste and smell. Other symptoms of COVID-19 are muscle ache, headache, runny nose, chest pain, chills and shortness of breath.

Individuals with chronic medical conditions such as diabetes, hepatopathy, high blood pressure, obese and poor immunity are more prone to develop serious illness.

Prevention

No one has been able to issue the complete guidelines for the prevention of coronavirus by far. However, WHO and ECDC have issued certain guidelines in the same regards. These guidelines are meant for the health care providers during the caring of such infected patients. This is mainly because many studies have stated the human to human transmission of coronavirus infection that originated from Wuhan, China. Another study related to the spread of the disease was through airborne transmission, however, no strict evidence has been put forward for the same. Because of limited amounts of evidence regarding the spread of the virus, health care professionals were unable to come up with prevention guidelines.

Some of the general guidelines were published according to WHO, these include: [7] [8]




- Separating the patient from the other members of the family into an isolated room.
- Taking strict contact and droplet precautions
- Certain airborne precautions, etc.




According to the information leaflet published by European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control, members of the family or those in contact with the patient shall avoid any direct physical contact with the sick, especially those who have symptoms related to cough. The leaflets also include that one must avoid the visit to the market where dead or live animals are





handled. It is also advised to wash hands with soap or use alcohol based disinfectant before and after eating, after using the toilet and also after coming in contact with animals. Also, you can altogether avoid contacting animals and the droppings linked with them. According to a report issued by the World Health organization about three-quarters of the world's entire population trusts traditional remedies and mainly herbs for health care. Also, these herbs can be considered as the best remedy for the treatment of many of the known diseases.





However, till the time no proper and reliable cure for coronavirus is available with us, we can stick to the suggested preventive measures and keep ourselves safe. Some of the commonly available herbs that can be added to our daily diet for boosting our immunity include black-cumin, garlic, and liquorice. Not only will these herbs enhance the immunity of an individual but will also improve the gut for healthy digestion. You can include these as a part of your food or even adding them in the tea. These easily available herbs will reduce the danger to a large extent and help you to recover from the illness really quick.


Table 1: Herbal plants used to boost immunity

Scientific Name	Common name	Family	Part Used	Chemical Constituents	Uses	Picture	Reference
<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Neem	Meliaceae	Leaves, stem bark	Azadirachtin, nimbin, nimbidin	Strong antioxidant		[9]
<i>Allium sativum</i>	Garlic	Liliaceae	Bulb	Allicin, Alliin, vitamin C, alpha glutamyl peptides	Carminative, expectorant, respiratory diseases such as bronchial asthma, chronic bronchitis		[10]
<i>Zingiber officinale</i>	Ginger	Zingiberaceae	Rhizomes	Sesquiterpene hydrocarbon like α -zingiberol; α -sesquiterpene alcohol α -bisabolene, α -farnesene, α -sesquiphellandrene	Antiemetic, stimulant, conditions like sore throat, asthma, cold, cough		[11]

<i>Ocimum Sanctum Linn</i>	Tulsi	Labiataeae	Leaves	Volatile oils such as Eugenol, carvacrol, eugenol- methyl-ether and other components like vitamin C	Immunomodulator, stimulant, anti- spasmodic, anti- asthmatic, Stomachic		[12]
<i>Asparagus racemosus</i>	Shatavari	Liliaceae	Roots	Steroidal saponins such as Shatavarin I- IV, sarsapogenin, β - sitosterol, stigmasterol	Anti-spasmodic, demulcent, diuretic, in bronchial infections, in case of infertility		[13] [14]
<i>Andrographis peniculata</i>	Kaalmegh	Acanthaceae	Leaves or entire aerial plant	Kalmeghin, andrographolide , β -sitosterol, eugenol, caffeic	Tonic, influenza disease, bronchitis, cholera, dyspepsia, diabetes		[15]

<i>Terminalia arjuna</i>	Arjuna	Combretaceae	Bark, Leaves	Arjunic acid, tannins, arjunetin, arjunones, arjunolic acid	Cardiotonic, hepatoprotective, respiratory diseases, diuretic		[16]
<i>Bauhinia variegata</i> Linn.	Kanchana r	Caesalpiniaceae	Roots, bark	Eugenol, lupinol, β -sitosterol	Astringent,		[17]
<i>Thea Sinensis</i>	Tea	Theaceae	Leaves and leaf buds	Caffeine, theobromine, theophylline and tannins	Stimulant, astringent, diuretic, antioxidant, hepatoprotective		[18]
<i>Centella asiatica</i>	Brahmi	Umbelliferae	Fresh or dried herb	Triterpenoid saponin glycosides, brahmoside, brahminoside	Immunomodulator, stimulates reticulo-endothelial system, anti-inflammatory		[19]

<i>Acanthopanax sessiliflorus</i>	Prickly spine	Araliaceae	Shoots and roots	Bio-polymers	Lympho-proliferative activity		[20]
<i>Cannabis Sativa Linn.</i>	Common hemp	Cannabinaceae	leaves	cannabinoids	Immunomodulator		[21]
<i>Thuja occidentalis</i>	White cedar	Cupressaceae	Leaves and immature cones	polysaccharides	Insecticide, liniment, immunomodulator		[22]
<i>Panax ginseng</i>	Ginseng	Araliaceae	Dried roots	triterpenoids ginsenoside, chikusetsusaponin, panxoside	Demulcent, stimulant, carminative, expectorant, increase humoral and cellular immunity		[23]

<i>Dracocephalum parviflorum</i>	Dragon head	Lamiaceae	leaves	polysaccharides	Immunity booster		[24]
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Conclusions: Coronavirus is serious disease caused by virus SARS-CoV2. It may get transmitted to human by close contact or droplets present in the air. Individuals with poor immune system are more prone to it. Few plants with significant medicinal value and immunomodulator activity may stimulate the immune response. Therefore, use of those herbals in your daily life to boost the immunity response can play the vital role in the prevention and management of coronavirus.

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