



AN OBSERVATIONAL STUDY TO ASSESS THE KNOWLEDGE AND PRACTICE OF HERBS AND SPICES DURING COVID 19

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Article Received on 06/08/2020

Article Revised on 26/08/2020

Article Accepted on 16/09/2020

ABSTRACT

Background: The main aim of the study was to assess the practice of herbs and spices in view of enhancing immunity during COVID 19. **Methods:** An Observational study was carried out over a period of four months (March 2020 to June 2020) at Mysuru city. **Results:** It was found that study population consumed herbs and spices like Lemon (98%), Tulsi (94%), Pudina (88%) Ginger (95%), Amlakki, (78) curcumin(90%) pepper (92) clove (87 %) cardamom(78%) cinnamon(88%) Jeera (98%) to boost immunity during COVID 19.

INTRODUCTION

In the rise of COVID-19 pandemic, there exists a lot of discussion to strengthen one's immunity, which acts as first line of defence against the deadly virus.

Herbs are used as bases of medicine in many ways in human beings in their life Even though Immunity cannot be built up in a day, Consuming well-balanced diet and being physically and mentally active is usually enough to keep our immune system optimum to combat diseases.^[1]

There are many natural ingredients which are known to boost our immunity. Since old ages herbs and spices were well known for their medicinal properties, with over 80 spices grown in different parts of the world, particularly in Asia. India can be considered as home to several spices that are used extensively in traditional medicine.

There are certain spices which are easily available in the masala box of kitchen which can be used to improve our immunity. There are also herbs which are available in our garden which can act as immune booster. So this article aims at recognising the practice of spices and herbs like Lemon, Tulsi, Pudina, Ginger, Amlakki, curcumin, pepper, clove, cardamom, cinnamon, and Jeera.^[2]

When we compare youngsters with old age people we can observe that old age people had more exposure to use of herbs and spices since their childhood. As herbs posses different activities like anti inflammatory, antioxidants, antiviral antifungal much more, they are very useful in boosting our immunity.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study area and design

An observational study was conducted in city of Mysuru, Karnataka from March 2020 to June 2020. All men and women belonging to age group of 15 to 75 were included in the study as participants.

Data collection

The subjects were interviewed using a pretested, predesigned and semi structured questionnaire. Information was collected regarding the previous use of spices and herbs in their daily life and compared with daily use of herbs and spices during COVID.

Statistical analysis

Data was entered and analysed in the computer using SPSS version 20.0. Results were compiled as percentage and showed in the form of graphs and tables.

RESULTS

Table 1. Gender distribution of study population.

Sl no	Gender	N	%
1	Male	150	60%
2	Female	100	40%

Table 2. Age distribution of study population.

Sl no	Age group	N	%
1	15 to 30 years	88	35
2	31 – 60 years,	100	40%
3	61 – 75 years	62	25%

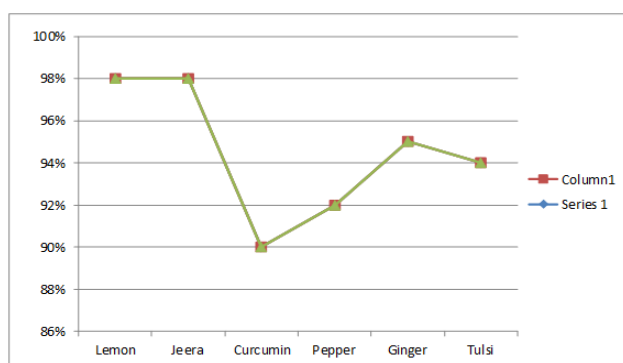


Figure 1. Percentage use of different herbs and spices are given below.

Table 3. Reasons for non consumption of herbs and spices are mentioned in below table.

Sl no	Reasons	N	%
1	Taste	56	80%
2	Odour	50	62%
3	Lack of knowledge	16	20%

DISCUSSION

Out of 250 involved participants 60% were men and 40% of women, and 35% belonged to age group of 15 to 30 years, 40 % belonged to age group of 31 – 60 years, 25% belonged to age group of 61 – 75 years.

Knowledge about immunity was known to 70% of the study population and they stated that immunity helps in well being of a person and 30% of them had no knowledge of immunity.

65% of the participants revealed the use of spices and herbs by knowledge to improve their immunity. Many of them specified that they consume these herbs and spices as a part of their diet by inculcating them in their food whereas others stated that they consume it in the form of medicine by formulating all spices and herbs in the form of a beverage.

It was shown that Lemon(98%) Tulsi (94%), Pudina (88%) Ginger (95%), Amlakki, (78) curcumin(90%) pepper (92) clove (87) cardamom(78%) cinnamon(88%) Jeera (98%) were the herbs and spices used by majority of study population.

When we interviewed the study population we found that 60% of study population has increased use of spices in their daily life due to social awareness created during COVID situation and 32% of population started using herbs and spices as a mode to enhance immunity during COVID. Whereas 8% of the population didn't change their pattern in use of herbs and spices.

Reason for non consumption of herbs and spices includes excessive spicy, taste, odour, due to variation in the harmony of "Tri dosha" principals, mainly due to increase of Agni tathva (fire principle) which leads to

formation of mouth ulcers, burning sensation, and fistulas.

CONCLUSION

In the current era of COVID our research concludes that, Consumption of herbs and spices provides more immunity. The herbal treatment has once again proven themselves that they contribute to invading capacity of human beings to combat infections. By concluding these research we provide information that consumption of herbs and spices in daily life enhances our lifespan and quality of life.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Our special thanks to all the study population for their co operation.

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