



Cowpathy: An Emerging Domain of Complementary and Alternative Medicine



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Opinion

Cowpathy refers to the concept of application of cow products for healing purpose. This has emerged as a new offshoot of the traditional Ayurveda of India. This system makes use of the major five products derived from cows for treatment of ailments. The five components employed in cowpathy healing system include milk, urine, dung, ghee, and curd derived from the cow. Two variants of cowpathy are in practice today, the Panchagavya therapy and cow urine therapy [1]. Panchagavya is a product prepared using the above five components of the cow and is produced as liquid formulation as well as semisolid Panchagavya Ghrita formulation. The mode of delivery is either oral intake or topical application. The ancient Ayurveda literature like "Sushrita Samhita" and "Ashtanga Sangraha", have the reference of the preparation and medicinal applications of cow products [2]. Several individuals and organizations in India have revived this domain of healing during recent past. This approach succeeded in bringing positive impact on healthcare during the last few decades. Of course, the society is divided still now regarding the efficacy of these products. In order to end such controversies, the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS), an autonomous Ayurvedic research organization of the Government of India has subjected the Panchagavya ghrita for its technicality and efficacy evaluation. The formulation has been legally endorsed based on the Ayurvedic classical texts and Ayurvedic Formulary of India, Part I. The efficacy and safety/toxicity evaluation have also been confirmed by CCRAS [3].

Cowpathy is making new trend today with lakhs of followers in India and some beyond India as well. Cowpathy products address a wide range of human ailments from the common cold to cancer. Ayurveda recommends cow urine products for improvement of the general health and intellect, in addition to its application in treating digestive and stomach disorders, skin disorders like leukoderma, dermatitis, psoriasis etc. and conditions like obesity, anaemia, diabetes, and many others. The cowpathy has further extended the application of cow urine and/or panchagavya therapy to a still wider

range of clinical conditions. The antibiotic and antiviral properties of cowpathy products have been established through research work carried out by many Universities and Research Institutes of repute to investigate the scientific footing of this healing concept. Some of the centres of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), India, Gujarat Agricultural University, All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), Izatnagar, and G.B. Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Pantnagar are few by name who have performed commendable research on cowpathy [4,5]. Apart from these many NGOs and private organizations such as the Go-Vigyan Anusandhan Kendra, Nagpur, the Patanjali Yogpeeth, Haridwar, and the Panchagavya Academy, Rajkot from India also focus on research, development and extension activities on cowpathy [5-7].

The bio-enhancing capacity of the active ingredients from cow urine on antibiotics and anti-cancer agents has been endorsed through the US Patent entitled "Use cow urine distillate (Go-Mutra) as bioenhancer of anti-infective and anti-cancer agents", awarded to CSIR, India [8]. Another novel therapeutic application of cow urine as an agent for protection of DNA damage from oxidative enzymes has bagged Chinese patent (No. 100475221) entitled "Pharmaceutical composition containing cow urine distillate as an antioxidant" issued to CSIR and NEERI, Nagpur India [9,10]. These studies are further supported by practical proof of isolated case studies like the story of a 37-year-old Amit Vaidya from Los Angeles, as narrated by him in his autobiography "Holy Caner and How A Cow Saved My Life" [11]. Many other examples of cancer cure on patients are available in URLs of different organizations committed for the promotion of cowpathy and conservation of cows [4,12]. More elaborate and research-based evidence on the curative action of cowpathy on several other diseases is available in the AYUSH portal [13] and several other URLs dedicated for cowpathy [14]. The popularity gained by cowpathy as a healing system across the healers and the public, the success stories of cure attained on cancer, HIV and other challenging diseases and the

scientific pieces of evidence established on the efficacy and safety of the products have ratified the potential use of cowpathy products in the complementary and alternative medicine. This opportunity needs to be reaped across the world and would definitely able to bring a positive impact on the healthcare system.

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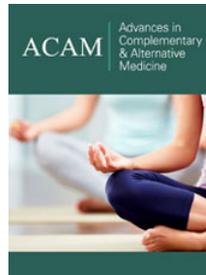
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