

A Wild Vegetables in Sindhudurg District : Great Source of Nutrients

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Abstract: Wild but edible vegetables growing in monsoon play a significant role in the sustenance of rural people. It is believed that the wild vegetables boost immunity, if consumed in certain period of time. The objective of present study is to identify the wild vegetables traditionally utilized by local communities, in rainy season who reside at the rural areas of Sindhudurg district of Maharashtra region. Utilization of wild plants as food is the oldest tradition. The edible part of these species utilized by local people include rhizomes, corms, stems, leaves, petioles, inflorescence, flowers, petals, fruits, pods and seeds. Vegetables play an important role in human diet. A diet rich in vegetables and fruits is considered healthy and supposed to reduce the possible risk of various diseases. Vegetables contain vitamins, minerals and carbohydrates which are necessary for good health. Vegetables represent a protective food and are highly beneficial for human health and also useful as a traditional medicine. Leafy vegetables are mostly herbs but leaves of shrubs and trees are also used as vegetables and are generally a good source of nutrients. Green leaf contains maximum amount of vitamins and minerals but it is low in fats and calories. Constituents present in leafy vegetables help to build teeth and protect the body, regulating its processes. An abundant amount of phytochemicals are present in leafy vegetables which act in the defense mechanism. Some leafy vegetables are a rich source of essential oils, glycosides and pigments which help to stimulate appetite. Some of them contain important digestible and nondigestible carbohydrates. Soluble and insoluble fibers in leafy vegetables help in digestion. Mineral constituents in vegetables like Ca, Mg, P, Fe, Cu etc. provide alkalizing effect and neutralize acidity produced by other foods. All these factors are necessary to grow healthy and strong.

Keywords: Wild Vegetables, Monsoon, Immunity, Nutrition, Diet, Traditional Medicines, Phytochemicals.

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