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Chemical prospection of Himalayan medicinal plants for bioactive molecules

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The Indian Himalayas are rich reservoir of important medicinal plants. For many centuries, these medicinal plants have been the main source of crude drugs used for the treatments of different kinds of diseases. Even, plants used in the traditional medicine have now become a part of the modern clinical practices. The natural products from these medicinal plants have been recognized as a source of therapeutic agents for many years. These products offer large structural diversity and modern techniques for separation, characterization, screening and combinatorial synthesis that makes them favorable as lead structure for drugs discovery. In our endeavor, a number of highly valued medicinal plants including *Picrorhiza kurrooa*, *Tinospra cordifolia*, *Cissampelos pareira*, *Cedrus deodara*, *Podophyllum hexandrum*, *Potentilla atosanguinea*, *Zanthoxylum armatum*, *Asparagus racemosus* and many more have been chemically and biologically investigated for their active ingredients during last few years. Bioactive ingredients have been isolated and characterized in the category of lignans, flavonoids, saponins, alkaloids, amides and terpenoids. In addition, analytical methods for the qualitative and quantitative assessment of biologically important phytochemicals have been developed. These analytical procedures resulted rapid identification and quantification of several kinds of natural product from plants and provide lead for the discovery of new drug candidates. The presentation will focus on characterization of active ingredients, chemical profiling and bio-evaluation of extracts, fraction and pure isolates.

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