

# *Medicinal Plants as Functional Food: A Review*

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## ***Abstract***

***Background/ Introduction:*** The importance of medicinal plants in Indian traditional cuisine is well-known. While many herbs, seeds, and plants with medicinal benefits are used in daily meals, this discussion will focus on the most commonly utilized ones. Despite significant research on functional foods, studies specifically on medicinal plants are limited. This review aims to explore the medicinal plants integrated into the everyday Indian diet, ensuring a consistent intake of beneficial compounds.

***Methodology:*** A literature review was conducted using sources like PubMed, SciFinder Scholar, and Google Scholar, focusing on keywords such as medicinal plants, traditional uses, and pharmacology in publications from 2017 to 2023. Relevant articles were assessed by their titles, abstracts, and keywords, while unrelated works were excluded.

***Results and Discussion:*** Medicinal plants contain bioactive compounds called phytochemicals, which give them their medicinal properties. Historically used in home remedies, these plants help combat illnesses and offer health benefits. Their bioactive molecules provide nutritional advantages, classifying them as functional foods. Numerous studies highlight the potential of medicinal plants in promoting health and preventing diseases.

***Conclusion:*** General inspection of the literature suggests that the medicinal plants possess antioxidant, antimicrobial, and anti-inflammatory properties. In addition, most of them have been reported to possess several beneficial properties suggesting that this type of knowledge could affect overall interest in as functional foods and encourage the production and consumption of these species. It could help in addressing specific consumer needs as healthy diet is a part of the lifestyle that maintains or improves overall health.

***Keywords:*** medicinal plants, biological activities, functional, foods