**Local medicinal plants: therapeutic approach for managing Geriatric diseases**

**Abstract**

Geriatric diseases pose a significant global challenge. The over-reliance on allopathic medications has led to neglect of traditional medicinal plants and their potential side effects. This study aims to revive the use of local medicinal plants in managing geriatric diseases. We documented the traditional use of 30 local medicinal plants in treating conditions like hypertension, diabetes, dementia, and osteoporosis. The study also explores the bioactive compounds responsible for their therapeutic properties. Furthermore, it highlights the importance of sustainable use and conservation of local resources, promoting a holistic approach to healthcare

**Keywords:** Medicinal plants, age-related ailments, hypertension, diabetes, dementia, osteoporosis, therapeutic applications, sustainable use

**Introduction**

The world's population is aging rapidly, with the number of people aged 65 and older projected to triple by 2050 (Noto, 2023). As people age, their bodily functions gradually decline, making them more susceptible to stress and age-related diseases. With growing age, people often experience decline in health condition due to chronic illnesses and reduced physiological function. Chronic diseases and reduced bodily functions impact their ability to perform everyday tasks and maintain independence. Older adults are more likely to develop chronic conditions such as hypertension, diabetes, cancer, chronic lung diseases, heart diseases, stroke, arthritis, osteoporosis, and neurological disorders including Alzheimer's, dementia, Parkinson's, and psychiatric conditions like depression. These conditions can significantly hamper an individual's quality of life, making everyday activities more challenging and often require medical intervention and management (IIPS & UNPF 2023). In contrast, active ageing is about embracing a lifestyle that promotes physical, social, and mental well-being, enabling individuals to age healthily and maintain their quality of life (Annapuranam 2025). Age-related ailments, such as hypertension, diabetes, dementia, and osteoporosis, are becoming increasingly prevalent, posing significant challenges to healthcare systems worldwide (Jaul and Barron, 2017). In recent years, researchers have extensively explored natural plant compounds for their potential to combat aging and age-related diseases. These compounds have shown promise as antioxidants, anti-glycating agents, and neuroprotective agents. Medicinal plants, in particular, contain valuable components that may help prevent oxidative stress, inflammation, neurodegeneration, and glycation - all key factors in the aging process. Studies have demonstrated that various plant metabolites can effectively regulate aging and delay the onset of age-related diseases (Babich et al., 2022). Neurological problems like dementia are also common in the recent years in older people and are expecting to increase in the number of people affected by it in the years to come. Traditional medicine, which relies on the use of medicinal plants, has been used for centuries to treat various health conditions, including age-related ailments (Rizvi et al., 2022). Medicinal plants are a vital component of traditional medicine, offering a rich source of bioactive compounds with potential therapeutic applications (Wang et al., 2023). Many medicinal plants have been used for centuries in traditional healthcare practices to treat age-related ailments, with some plants demonstrating significant pharmacological activity (Babich et al., 2022). Despite their potential, the use of medicinal plants in traditional medicine is often based on anecdotal evidence, and further research is needed to fully explore their therapeutic potential. This study aims to document the traditional use of medicinal plants in treating age-related ailments, highlighting their potential therapeutic applications, and emphasizing the need for further research into their pharmacological properties.

**Methodology**

Present study employed a comprehensive literature search and analysis of existing studies on the traditional use of medicinal plants in treating geriatric diseases (Kumar, 2025). A systematic search was conducted using major databases, including PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, with specific keywords. Data were extracted using a standardized form and analysed using descriptive statistics and narrative synthesis (Jena et al., 2025). For photographs of medicinal plants, authors have carried out a field survey in Odisha, Himachal Pradesh, and Bihar. Some photographs are presented in the paper (Plate 1; Figure 2).

**Results and discussion**

The present study documented 30 local medicinal plants used in traditional medicine to treat various geriatric diseases. The results are presented in the table. The study reveals that the most used plant parts are leaves (36 %), followed by whole plants (16 %), stem, bark, and rhizome (6 % each), among others (Figure 1). The mode of preparation and administration varies, with decoctions, infusions, and powders being the most common methods. The results also show that the majority of the plants investigated in the field are used to treat age-related ailments such as hypertension, diabetes, dementia, and osteoporosis. *Bidens pilosa* and *Tribulus terrestris* are used to treat hypertension, while *Gymnema sylvestre* is used to treat diabetes (Table 1). Medicinal plants such as *Bacopa monnieri*, *Withania somnifera*, *Pleurolobus gangeticus*, *Huperzia serrata* and *Gingko biloba* are used as traditional therapeutics to treat common neurological diseases and disorders such as dementia, Alzheimer’s, Huntington’s and Parkinson’s diseases. The phytochemical constituents present in these plants are saponin, tannin, terpenoid, amino acids, polyphenols, anthocyanins, triterpenes, anthocyanins, resins, tartaric acid, formic acid, etc. *Celastrus paniculatus* and *Prinsepia utilis* are used in rheumatic problems.; *Bidens Pilosa* and *Catharanthus roseus* are used to treat hypertension; *Terminalia arjuna* is used in cardiac problems. Numerous age-related diseases and disorders are traditionally treated using numerous medicinal plants, as indicated in Table 1, along with their origins and phytochemical constituents that may assist to alleviate the difficulties, as shown in Table 2. The most popular plants used to cure geriatric diseases are discussed below.

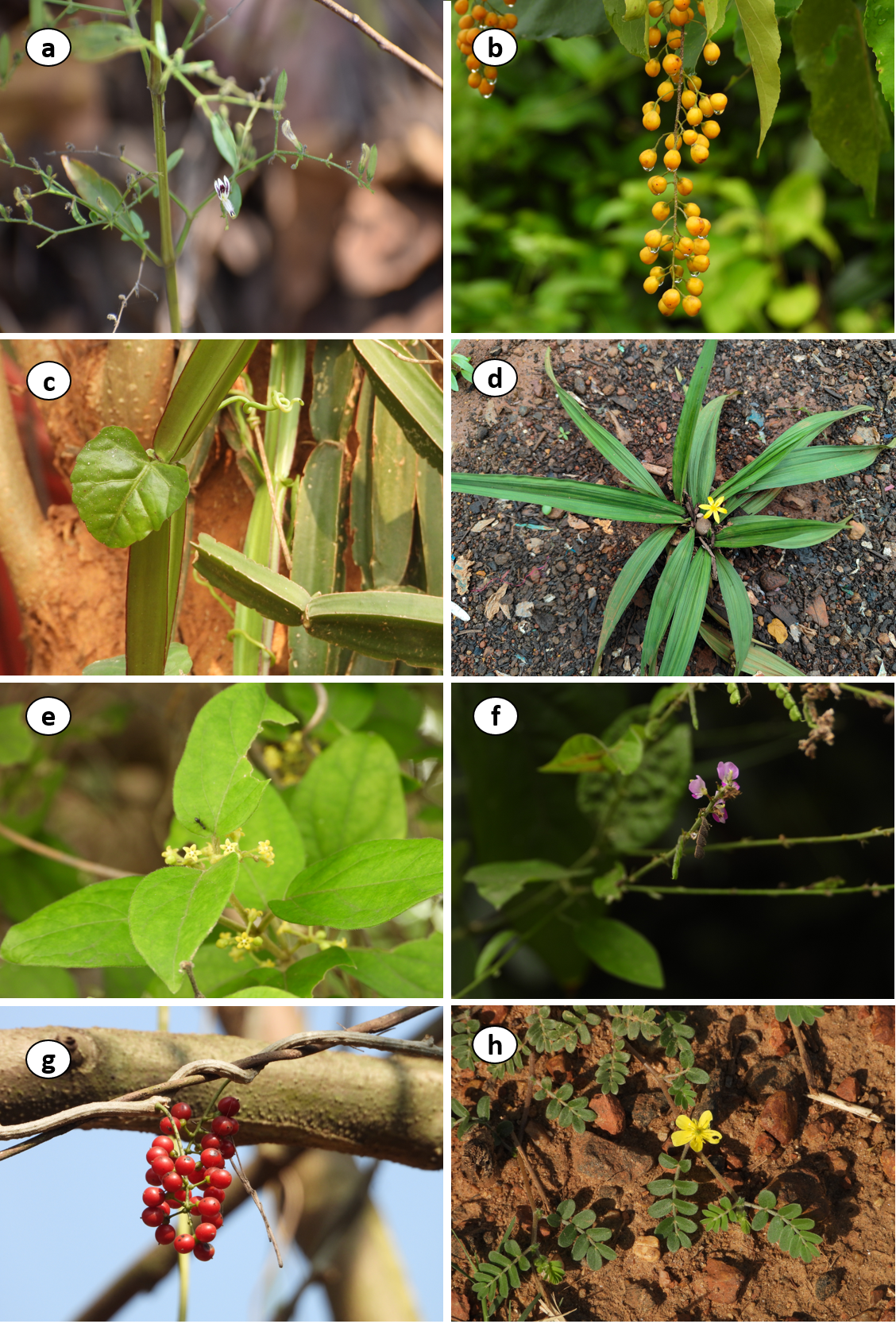
**Table 1:** Important medicinal plants used to treat geriatric diseases

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Botanical Name** | **Family** | **Part(s) & Mode of Use(s)** | **Reference(s)** |
| *Achyranthes aspera* | Amaranthaceae | Leaf decoction is used gastric problems. | Kumari *et al.,* (2024) |
| *Aegle marmelos* | Rutaceae | Leaf decoction or leaf paste is used to treat cataract disease. | Choudhary *et al.,* (2021) |
| *Andrographis paniculata* | Acanthaceae | Leaf decoction is used to treat diabetes and during cold and fever. | Devi *et al.,* (2022) |
| *Bacopa monnieri* | Plantaginaceae | Leaves are used to treat dementia caused due to Alzheimer’s Disease. | Basheer *et al.,* (2022) |
| *Bidens pilosa* | Asteraceae | Decoction, maceration, or powder are used in hypertension. | Kuo *et al.,* (2021) |
| *Catharanthus*  *roseus* | Apocynaceae | Decoction of roots and leaves is prescribed against hypertension and diabetes. | Kumari *et al.,* (2024) |
| *Celastrus paniculatus* | Celastraceae | Root powder is given to treat rheumatism. Seed oil is used to treat joint pain. | Deodhar and Shinde, (2015) |
| *Centella asiatica* | Apiaceae | Leaf extract is effective in reducing oxidative stress in the brains of Parkinson’s patients. | Sissique *et al.,* (2014) |
| *Cissus quadrangularis* | Vitaceae | Stem helps to maintains bone homeostasis and ultimately reduces or prevents bone loss in osteoporosis. | Nath *et al.,* (2024) |
| *Crocus sativus* | Iridaceae | Flowers help to treat disorders of the nervous system. | Perry *et al.,* (2011) |
| *Curculigo orchioides* | Hypoxidaceae | Rhizomes are utilized to strengthen bones and tendons, which helps prevent osteoporosis. It is also used treatment of piles. | Present study; Bhukta *et al.,* (2023) |
| *Curcuma longa* | Zingiberaceae | Rhizome is used as a therapeutic agent in treatment of various eye diseases such glaucoma, cataract etc. | Liu *et al.,* (2017) |
| *Euphorbia hirta* | Euphorbiaceae | Whole plant infusion is used as eye drop to treat glaucoma. | Devi *et al.,* (2022) |
| *Ginkgo biloba* | Ginkgoaceae | Seeds are used in traditional Chinese medicine to manage dysfunctions of the heart and lungs. Leaves are used widely for dementia. | Yuan *et al.,* (2017) |
| *Gymnema sylvestre* | Apocynaceae | Three to four leaves are eaten daily in the morning to treat diabetes. | Devi *et al.,* (2022) |
| *Huperzia serrata* | Lycopodiaceae | Whole plant used for the treatment of memory loss. | Perry *et al.* (2011) |
| *Murraya koenigii* | Rutaceae | Decoction of leaves is used in diarrhea and to maintain blood sugar level. | Kumari *et al.,* (2024) |
| *Panax ginseng* | Araliaceae | It is used as tonic and helps in prolonging youthfulness. | Perry *et al.,* (2011) |
| *Pleurolobus gangeticus* | Fabaceae | Root is used in the treatment of dementia. | Mahajan and Kumar, (2015) |
| *Prinsepia utilis* | Rosaceae | Seed oil is used for massaging  rheumatic joints. | Kumari *et al.,* (2024) |
| *Psidium guajava* | Myrtaceae | Consuming fruit helps to reduce and maintain high blood pressure. | Kumari *et al.,* (2024) |
| *Punica granatum* | Lythraceae | Consuming fruit with luke warm water helps to maintain blood sugar levels. | Kumari *et al.,* (2024) |
| *Ricinus communis* | Euphorbiaceae | Poultice of  leaves used in  bruises and swollen joints. | Kumari *et al.,* (2024) |
| *Syzygium cumini* | Myrtaceae | The bark is used in  digestive problems, astringent to the  bowels and has anthelmintic activity. | Kumari *et al.,* (2024) |
| *Terminalia arjuna* | Combretaceae | Bark powder is administered twice daily to treat coronary artery disease. | Dwivedi *et al.,* (2014) |
| *Tinospora cordifolia* | Menispermaceae | The alcoholic extract possesses cardioprotection against ischemia-reperfusion induced myocardial injury. The stem decoction is also taken to boost immunity. | Sharma *et al.,* (2011); Present study |
| *Tribulus terrestris* | Zygophyllaceae | It has a significant antihypertensive effect both systolic and diastolic blood pressure. | Murthy *et al.,* (2000) |
| *Urtica dioica* | Urticaceae | Leaf extract helps in maintaining the blood glucose level. | Kumari *et al.,* (2024) |
| *Withania somnifera* | Solanaceae | Root juice is taken after the meal in night to treat Alzheimer’s disease. Plant extract is also effective against other neurogenerative disorders such as Huntington's and [Parkinson's disease](https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/pharmacology-toxicology-and-pharmaceutical-science/parkinsons-disease). | Dar and Ahmad, (2020) |

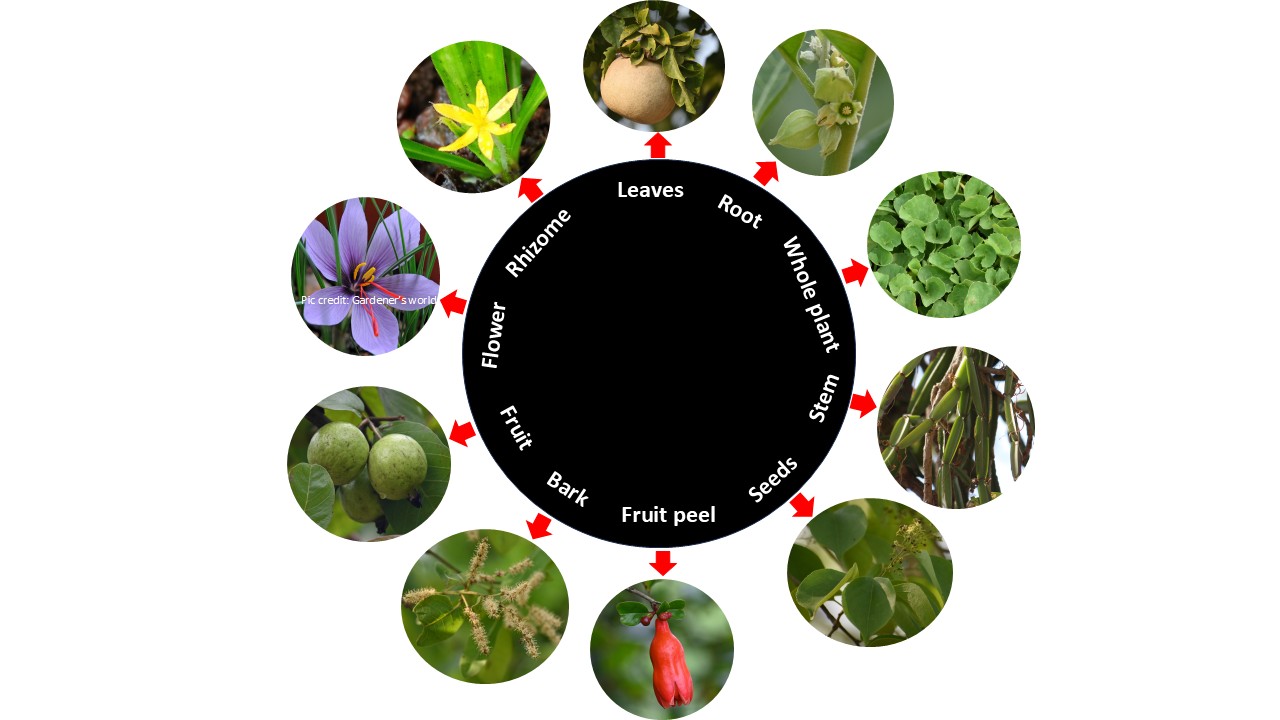
**Figure 1:** Frequency of plant parts utilized for medicinal purposes (comma in the percent frequency needs to be replaced with point)

**Table 2:** Phytochemical constituents of the medicinal plantsused to curegeriatric diseases

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Medicinal Plant** | **Part** | **Phytochemical constituents** | **Source(s)** |
| *Achyranthes aspera* | Leaves | Flavonoids, saponins and tannins | Das *et al.,* (2012) |
| *Aegle marmelos* | Leaves | γ-sitosterol, β-sitosterol, [rutin](https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/pharmacology-toxicology-and-pharmaceutical-science/rutin), glycosides, marmeline, halfordiol, aegelin, marmesinin, phenyl ethyl cinnamamides and [lupeol](https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/pharmacology-toxicology-and-pharmaceutical-science/lupeol) | Sarkar et al., (2020) |
| *Andrographis paniculata* | Leaves | Saponins, tannins, terpenoid and steroids | Kasarkar *et al.,* (2025) |
| *Bacopa monnieri* | Leaves | Saponins, tannins, flavonoids, steroids terpenoids and glycosides | Singh, (2012) |
| *Bidens pilosa* | Whole plant | Flavonoids, steroids, triterpenoids, tannins and phenols | Son *et al.,* (2022) |
| *Catharanthus roseus* | Leaves | Alkaloids, flavonoids, sterols, saponins, amino acid, polyphenols and anthocyanins. | Sharma *et al.,* (2024) |
| *Celastrus paniculatus* | Seeds | Alkaloids (celapanin, celapanigin, celapagin, celastrine and paniculatine), palmitic acid, phytol, erucic acid, trans- β-copaene and linalool | Ali *et al.,* (2020) |
| *Centella asiatica* | Whole plant | Terpenoid alcohols, aromatic amine, alcohols, alkanes, caryophyllene and steroids. | Naidu *et al.,* (2023) |
| *Cissus quadrangularis* | Leaves and stem | Tannins, phenol flavonoids, triterpenoids, phytosterols, glycosides, saponins, and alkaloids | Hamid and Patil (2023) |
| *Crocus sativus* | Flowers | Fatty acid, apocarotenoids (crocetin, crocin, picrocrocin and safranal), flavonols quercetin, kaempferol, isorhamnetin glycosides), anthocyanins (delphinidin 3-O-glucoside, delphinidin 3, 7-diglucoside, petunidin 3-O-glucoside and malvidin-O-glycoside) | Bakshi *et al.,* (2022) |
| *Curculigo orchioides* | Rhizomes | Alkaloids, flavonoids, phenols and tannins | Saxena *et al.,* (2022) |
| *Curcuma longa* | Rhizomes | Saponins, terpenoids, glycosides, tannins, and alkaloids | Javed *et al.,* (2020) |
| *Euphorbia hirta* | Whole plant | Alkaloids, flavonoids, saponins, tannins, terpenoids, quinones and coumarins | Haruna *et al.,* (2023) |
| *Gingko biloba* | Leaves | flavonoids (Quercetin, Rutin, Kaempferol, Isorhamnetin), terpene trilactones (ginkgolides and bilobalide) | Okhti *et al.,* (2021) |
| *Gymnema sylvestre* | Leaves | Triterpene saponins, anthraquinones, pentatriacontane, phytin, resins, tartaric acid, flavones, hentriacontane, formic acid, butyric acid, lupeol | Tiwari *et al.,* (2014) |
| *Huperzia serrata* | Whole plant | Alkaloids, terpenoids, volatile oils, and flavonoids | Chu *et al.,* (2025) |
| *Murraya koenigii* | Leaves | Alkaloids, flavonoids, saponins, phenolics and tannins | Arif et al., (2024) |
| *Panax ginseng* | Not mentioned | Polysaccharides, ginsenosides, peptides, polyacetylenic alcohols and fatty acids | Ru *et al.,* (2015) |
| *Pleurolobus gangeticus* | Not mentioned | Alkaloid, flavonoids, saponins, phospholipids, phenols glycolipids, sterols, and flavone glycosides | Sahu *et al.,* (2025) |
| *Prinsepia utilis* | Not mentioned | Alkaloids, flavonoids, phenolics, and terpenoids | Prakash *et al.,* (2024) |
| *Psidium guajava* | Fruit | Glycosides, flavanoids, alkaloids, saponins, vitamin, carbohydrate, aminoacid | Joseph *et al.,* (2016) |
| *Punica granatum* | Peel | Tannins, flavonoids, alkaloids, phenols, flavonoids, alkaloids and steroids | Noreen *et al.,* (2025) |
| *Ricinus communis* | Leaves | Alkaloids, triterpenoids and glycosides | Aneja *et al.,* (2024) |
| *Syzygium cumini* | Bark | Terpenoids, alkaloids, catechins, phenols, quinones, saponins and tannins | Jagetia, (2017) |
| *Terminalia arjuna* | Bark | Phytosterol, lactones, flavonoids, phenolic compounds, tannins and glycosides | Mandal *et al.,* (2013) |
| *Tinospora cordifolia* | Leaves and stem | Flavonoids, amino acids, diterpines, protein, saponins and carbohydrates | Chahande *et al.,* (2024) |
| *Tribulus terrestris* | Whole plant | Tannins, saponins, flavonoids, terpenoids, phenolic compounds, reducing sugars and alkaloids | Verma *et al.,* (2025) |
| *Urtica dioica* | Not mentioned | Flavonoids, tannins, scopoletin, sterols, fatty acids, polysaccharides, isolectins and sterols | Asgarpanah and Mohajerani, (2012) |
| *Withania somnifera* | Roots | Alkaloids, amino acids, steroids, volatile oil, starch, reducing sugars, glycosides, hentriacontane, dulcitol and withaniol | Uddin et al., (2012) |



**Plate 1:** Some common plants used in geriatric diseases; a) *Andrographis paniculata,* b) *Celastrus paniculatus*, c) *Cissus quadrangularis*, d) *Curculigo orchioides*, e) *Gymnema sylvestre*, f) *Pleurolobus gangeticus,* g) *Tinospora cordifolia*, h) *Tribulus terrestris*



**Figure 2:** Plants with different parts used in the treatment of geriatric diseases

**CONCLUSION**

Present study highlighted the 30 local medicinal plants in managing geriatric diseases. In the present study, uses and their bioactive compounds are provided and give a base line data for further advance work. The study also draw attention towards the use of local plant resources in sustainable manner and conservation.

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