

CHAPTER 6

Ocimum sanctum L. (Holy Basil or Tulsi): A Medicinally Significant Herb

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ABSTRACT

Plant-based medicines or herbal drugs have an essential role in developing novel therapeutics for innumerable diseases. Traditional medicines (TMs) have a long history date back to thousands of years. Asian countries like India and China have a rich and diverse legacy of traditional systems of medicines like Ayurveda, Siddha, and Traditional Chinese Medicine. *Ocimum sanctum* Linn also is known as “Holy basil” or “Tulsi” is one of the indispensable medicinal plants (MPs) reported in TMs. It has been reported to possess diverse pharmacological activities like anti-microbial, immunomodulatory, anti-stress, anti-inflammatory, anti-ulcer, anti-diabetic, hepatoprotective, chemoprotective, anti-hyperlipidemic, cardioprotective, anti-oxidant, antitussive, radioprotective, memory enhancing, anti-arthritic, anti-fertility, anti-hypertensive, anti-coagulant, anti-cataract, anthelmintic, and anti-nociceptive activities. It has a safe record of human consumption for thousands of years. Hence, the plant has been extensively studied by several investigators and its active constituents are isolated and structure elucidations are done with modern analytical techniques.

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