

Traditional medicine, an option for indigenous communities all over the country

Mexico has an inventory of 4 thousand 500 species of medicinal plants, and only 250 of them have been validated by pharmacists and medical institutions; the Federal Ministry of Health reports.

In Mexico, traditional medicine consists of a wide range of concepts, beliefs, practices, and material resources whose origin was developed by pre-Hispanic cultures, the World Health Organization (WHO) reveals.

The people in charge of indigenous traditional medicine are called “curanderos” (people who use traditional procedures to heal people), “parteras” (traditional birth attendants), “hierberos” (the ones who use herbs to prepare traditional remedies), and “hueseros” (people who use traditional orthopedic procedures). However, it is also possible to find “rezanderos”, “sobadores”, and “ensalmadores” whose expertise is fixing dislocated bones through different traditional procedures. Additionally, we find “chupadores” and “culebreros” who believe that through the veneration of snakes it is possible to heal people and to develop different remedies; and it is possible to find also traditional diviners, and many others.

Traditional medicine is based on the use of natural resources like plants, animals, minerals, spiritual therapies, and techniques whose aim is to keep individuals healthy.

Most rural and indigenous communities do not have access to health services, doctors, hospitals or drugs. For that reason, we are able to find traditional medicine in those areas as the most popular option to assist people suffering from different health complaints.

After many years, the indigenous communities looked for different ways to keep their people healthy, and on the way, they were able to build up the basis for traditional medicine, a practice that we are still able to find in some areas.

In Mexico we can find about 23 thousand plants, and 11 thousand 600 of those plants are considered endemic species as they were used in pre-Hispanic times to heal different complaints like swellings, infections, the flu, diarrhea, headaches, wounds, burns, cancer, diabetes, and many others.

The Food and Development Research Center reported that every single part of the medicinal plants can be used; that is to say, we can take advantage of leaves, stems, flowers, barks, and roots.



Mexico has an inventory of four thousand 500 different species of medicinal plants, and only 250 of them have been validated by pharmacists and medical institutions, the Federal Ministry of Health declares.

According to that Federal institution, among the most popular medicinal plants we can find peyote, valerian, poplar, basil, cardon, eucalyptus, peppermint, oregano; as well as different traditional plants like “cuachalate”, “tepezcohuite”, “mezquite”, “toji”; and many others.

Juana Leticia Rodríguez y Betancourt, the president of the Mexican Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences, mentioned that Mexico is the second country in the world with the widest inventory of traditional plants.

“If we took advantage of all those resources, we would be able to develop different natural products that might be used as medicine so, it would be easier and cheaper for people in the country to get them”.

Juana Leticia Rodríguez y Betancourt, the president of the Mexican Academy of Pharmaceutical Sciences.



SUMARY

Indigenous communities do not have access to health services so, they use traditional medicine as an option to help people who suffer from different complaints like fever, headaches, infections, among others.



“The Congregación opens itself by studying and healing the greatest and most wonderful encyclopedia of all creation, which is the human being”.

Dra. H. C. Catalina Mendoza Arredondo. Founder of Congregación Mariana Trinitaria.

CMT and traditional medicine

Congregación Mariana Trinitaria (CMT), is a non-profit civil society, which was founded almost 25 years ago by the Doctor Honoris causa Catalina Mendoza Arredondo with the clear objective of ensuring health for many people in the country and having traditional medicine as the main basis of it. The original idea was to include traditional medicine in the Health System so that people could take advantage of the different benefits of those procedures.

The commitment that Doctor Catalina Mendoza had with that idea was such a big issue that in her honor, it was created the “Award Catalina Mendoza Arredondo to promote Research on Integrative Medicine”. The main purpose of this international award is to encourage and promote research on this particular area of medicine.

Award Catalina Mendoza Arredondo to promote Research on Integrative Medicine

Through this award, Congregación Mariana Trinitaria promotes scientific research in health, especially in integrated medicines that consider traditional and complementary medicines as efficient and effective elements of care for patients.



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