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THE ROLE OF MEDICINAL PLANTS IN ASTHMA MANAGEMENT: A REVIEW OF PHYTOCHEMICAL EFFICACY

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Abstract:

Asthma is a chronic respiratory condition characterized by persistent airway inflammation, bronchoconstriction, and hyperresponsiveness, which pose significant challenges for effective management. Conventional therapies, such as corticosteroids and bronchodilators, often have limitations, including side effects and drug interactions, prompting the exploration of alternative treatments. Medicinal plants have been historically utilized across cultures for respiratory ailments, demonstrating anti-inflammatory, bronchodilatory, and immunomodulatory effects through various active phytochemicals, including alkaloids, flavonoids, and terpenoids. Key plants such as Glycyrrhiza glabra, Adhatoda vasica, *and* Curcuma longa *have shown promise in alleviating asthma symptoms. However, challenges remain in standardizing plant extracts, determining optimal dosages, and ensuring safety. This review highlights the need for rigorous clinical research to validate the efficacy of medicinal plants, explore their bioavailability, and investigate advanced drug delivery systems like nanotechnology. By integrating traditional medicine with modern pharmacology, novel therapeutic strategies can be developed to enhance patient quality of life and offer alternative management options for asthma.*

Keywords: Asthma, medicinal plants, phytochemicals, anti-inflammatory, bronchodilatory,* Glycyrrhiza glabra, Adhatoda vasica, Curcuma longa, *drug delivery systems, nanotechnology.

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INTRODUCTION:

Asthma is a long-term inflammatory disorder of the airways characterized by variable and recurring symptoms, such as wheezing, coughing, shortness of breath, and chest tightness. The condition affects millions worldwide, and its prevalence is rising due to factors like environmental pollution and genetic predisposition. Asthma's severity ranges from mild, with occasional symptoms, to severe, where daily life is affected by frequent asthma attacks that require hospitalization. Triggers include allergens (dust mites, pollen, and animal dander), infections, cold air, exercise, and irritants like smoke and pollution.

Asthma's chronic nature is due to the persistent inflammation of the airways, causing them to become hypersensitive and overreact to external stimuli, leading to episodes of bronchospasm (tightening of muscles around airways), swelling of the airway lining, and excessive mucus production.

Mechanisms Involved in Asthma: Airway Inflammation, Bronchoconstriction, and Hyper responsiveness

Asthma pathophysiology involves several interconnected processes:

- **Airway Inflammation:** Chronic inflammation of the airways is the hallmark of asthma. Inflammatory cells like eosinophils, T-lymphocytes, and mast cells are activated, releasing inflammatory mediators such as cytokines, histamines, and leukotrienes. This leads to swelling of the airway lining, narrowing the passage for airflow.
- **Bronchoconstriction:** The airway smooth muscles constrict in response to triggers, further narrowing the airways and causing difficulty in breathing. This bronchoconstriction is often reversible with treatment, but persistent inflammation can cause long-term structural changes known as airway remodelling.
- **Airway Hyperresponsiveness:** In asthmatic patients, the airways are overly sensitive to stimuli like allergens, smoke, or cold air. Even minor triggers can cause an exaggerated bronchoconstriction response, leading to asthma symptoms.
- **Mucus Overproduction:** Asthma also causes increased mucus production, which can block already narrowed airways, making breathing more difficult.

These mechanisms contribute to the characteristic symptoms of asthma, such as wheezing, coughing, and breathlessness, particularly at night or early morning.

Current Challenges in Asthma Management, Particularly with Conventional Therapies

Despite advances in asthma treatment, challenges remain in achieving full control of the disease. Key challenges include:

- **Non-adherence to Medication:** Long-term management requires adherence to prescribed treatments like inhaled corticosteroids (ICS). Poor adherence, especially among children and the elderly, leads to uncontrolled symptoms.
- **Side Effects of Conventional Medications:** Prolonged use of medications such as corticosteroids can cause adverse effects like weight gain, osteoporosis, cataracts, and adrenal suppression.
- **Environmental Factors:** Exposure to pollution, allergens, and irritants is increasing due to urbanization, contributing to more frequent asthma exacerbations and making it harder to manage the condition.
- **Lack of Personalized Treatment:** Asthma is a heterogeneous disease, with variations in triggers and responses to therapy among patients. This necessitates a more personalized approach, but in practice, most patients receive standard treatments.

Limitations of Conventional Asthma Treatments

Conventional asthma management involves pharmacological interventions, broadly categorized as controllers (used for long-term control) and relievers (used for quick relief of symptoms). The main classes of medications include:

- **Inhaled Corticosteroids (ICS):** These are the most effective long-term control medications. They reduce airway inflammation and prevent exacerbations. Examples include budesonide, fluticasone, and beclomethasone.
- **Long-Acting Beta-Agonists (LABAs):** These are bronchodilators that relax the airway muscles to improve breathing and are usually combined with ICS for better control. Examples include salmeterol and formoterol.
- **Short-Acting Beta-Agonists (SABAs):** Used for quick relief during asthma attacks, SABAs like albuterol work by rapidly relaxing the airway muscles.
- **Leukotriene Receptor Antagonists (LTRAs):** These target leukotrienes, inflammatory molecules that cause airway constriction. Montelukast is a common example.
- **Oral Corticosteroids:** Used for severe asthma or during exacerbations, oral corticosteroids (e.g., prednisone) can have systemic side effects.
- **Anticholinergics:** Drugs like ipratropium bromide inhibit the parasympathetic nervous system to prevent bronchoconstriction.

Table 1: Common Asthma Medications and Their Roles

Medication Class	Examples	Mechanism of Action	Usage
Inhaled Corticosteroids (ICS)	Budesonide, Fluticasone	Reduce inflammation in airways	Long-term control
Long-Acting Beta-Agonists	Salmeterol, Formoterol	Relax smooth muscles, prevent bronchospasm	Combined with ICS for long-term control
Short-Acting Beta-Agonists	Albuterol, Levalbuterol	Rapid muscle relaxation in airways	Quick relief during asthma attacks
Leukotriene Receptor Antagonists	Montelukast, Zafirlukast	Block leukotrienes to reduce airway inflammation and constriction	Alternative long-term control
Oral Corticosteroids	Prednisone, Methylprednisolone	Systemic reduction of inflammation	For severe exacerbations
Anticholinergics	Ipratropium bromide	Block acetylcholine receptors to reduce bronchoconstriction	Short-term relief in severe cases

Side Effects and Limitations of These Treatments in Long-Term Management

While conventional asthma treatments are effective in managing symptoms and reducing exacerbations, they come with limitations:

- **Inhaled Corticosteroids (ICS):** Although effective, long-term ICS use can lead to side effects such as oral thrush, hoarseness, and, in high doses, systemic effects like bone thinning (osteoporosis) and adrenal suppression.
- **Beta-Agonists:** Over-reliance on SABAs can mask worsening inflammation and lead to tolerance, where the effectiveness of the medication decreases over time.
- **Oral Corticosteroids:** These are associated with significant side effects like weight gain, diabetes, hypertension, mood swings, and weakened immune function, limiting their use to short-term treatment.
- **Leukotriene Modifiers:** While generally well-tolerated, LTRAs like montelukast may cause neuropsychiatric side effects, including anxiety, depression, and suicidal thoughts.
- **Patient Adherence:** Due to the complexity of asthma management, including the need for inhaler technique mastery and adherence to multiple medications, patient non-compliance is common, leading to uncontrolled symptoms.

Medicinal Plants Used in Asthma Management

Historical and Traditional Use of Medicinal Plants in Treating Asthma

Medicinal plants have been used for centuries in the management of asthma and other respiratory conditions. In ancient medical systems like Ayurveda, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), and Unani, various herbs and plant-based remedies were prescribed to ease breathing difficulties, reduce inflammation, and alleviate asthma symptoms.

- **Ayurveda:** Herbs like *Vasaka* (*Adhatoda vasica*), *Haridra* (*Curcuma longa*), and *Tulsi* (*Ocimum sanctum*) are traditionally used for their anti-inflammatory and bronchodilatory effects. These plants are believed to balance the "Vata" and "Kapha" doshas, which are considered the primary causes of respiratory problems in Ayurveda.
- **Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM):** In TCM, asthma is associated with imbalances in the lungs, spleen, and kidneys. Herbs like *Ma Huang* (*Ephedra sinica*), *Gan Cao* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*), and *Huang Qi* (*Astragalus membranaceus*) are used for their bronchodilatory, anti-inflammatory, and immune-boosting properties.
- **Unani Medicine:** Unani physicians have traditionally used plants like *Tukhme khatmi* (*Althaea officinalis*) and *Gul-e-banafsha* (*Viola odorata*) for treating bronchial asthma and related respiratory disorders, emphasizing their anti-inflammatory and soothing properties.
- **Native American Medicine:** Indigenous people of the Americas used plants like *Lobelia* (*Lobelia inflata*) and *Yerba Santa* (*Eriodictyon californicum*) for their bronchodilatory effects and to alleviate symptoms of asthma.

Regions or Cultures Known for Using Plant-Based Remedies for Respiratory Conditions

Different regions around the world have rich traditions of using medicinal plants to treat respiratory disorders, including asthma. Some examples include:

- **India and South Asia:** Ayurveda and Unani medicine have extensive documentation on the use of herbs like *Adhatoda vasica* and *Curcuma longa* for asthma. These plants are commonly found in South Asia and have been used for thousands of years to manage respiratory conditions.
- **China and East Asia:** In China, herbs like *Ephedra* and *Licorice* have been staples in treating asthma within TCM. East Asian cultures rely heavily on a combination of herbal formulations to treat asthma, with herbs addressing multiple facets of the disease, such as inflammation, immune response, and mucus production.
- **Africa:** In African traditional medicine, herbs like *Rooibos* (*Aspalathus linearis*) and *African wormwood* (*Artemisia afra*) are used to treat asthma. Many African tribes have developed natural remedies for respiratory conditions, emphasizing the use of plants with anti-inflammatory and bronchodilatory effects.
- **The Americas:** Native American cultures use plants like *Lobelia inflata*, *Eriodictyon californicum* (Yerba Santa), and *Grindelia* for their ability to soothe the respiratory system, reduce inflammation, and act as natural bronchodilators.

Table 2: Examples of Medicinal Plants Used in Traditional Asthma Treatment

Plant Name	Region/Culture	Traditional Use
Adhatoda vasica (Vasaka)	Ayurveda (India)	Used for its bronchodilatory and anti-inflammatory properties.
Ephedra sinica (Ma Huang)	Traditional Chinese Medicine	Bronchodilator and anti-inflammatory herb in asthma treatments.
Lobelia inflata (Lobelia)	Native American Medicine	Used for its bronchodilatory effects to ease asthma symptoms.
Curcuma longa (Turmeric)	Ayurveda (India)	Anti-inflammatory herb to reduce airway inflammation.
Glycyrrhiza glabra (Licorice)	Traditional Chinese Medicine	Soothes airways and reduces inflammation in respiratory conditions.
Ocimum sanctum (Tulsi)	Ayurveda (India)	Used for its immunomodulatory and bronchodilatory effects.
Viola odorata (Banafsha)	Unani (Middle East, India)	Anti-inflammatory and soothing herb for respiratory diseases.

Phytochemicals with Anti-Asthmatic Properties

Active Compounds Found in Medicinal Plants with Anti-Inflammatory, Bronchodilatory, and Immunomodulatory Effects

Various bioactive compounds found in medicinal plants have been shown to exhibit significant therapeutic potential in managing asthma. These compounds help modulate inflammation, relax airway muscles, and support immune regulation, addressing the key mechanisms of asthma pathophysiology.

1. **Alkaloids:**

- **Ephedrine:** Found in *Ephedra sinica* (Ma Huang), ephedrine is a potent bronchodilator that relaxes smooth muscles of the airways, relieving bronchoconstriction.
- **Lobeline:** Extracted from *Lobelia inflata*, lobeline has bronchodilatory and expectorant properties, which can help clear mucus and ease breathing in asthma patients.

2. **Flavonoids:**

- **Quercetin:** Found in onions, apples, and *Ginkgo biloba*, quercetin has strong anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, helping to reduce airway inflammation.
- **Rutin:** Present in citrus fruits and buckwheat, rutin reduces histamine release, preventing allergic responses and asthma attacks.
- **Kaempferol:** Found in *Moringa oleifera* and other plants, kaempferol has anti-inflammatory and bronchodilatory effects, which help alleviate asthma symptoms.

3. **Terpenoids:**

- **Limonene:** Present in citrus fruits, limonene shows bronchodilatory properties and can help reduce asthma exacerbations.
- **Menthol:** Found in *Mentha piperita* (peppermint), menthol acts as a bronchodilator, providing relief from airway constriction.
- **Saponins:** Found in herbs like *Glycyrrhiza glabra* (licorice), saponins are known for their anti-inflammatory properties and can modulate immune responses in asthma.

4. **Tannins:**

- **Ellagic Acid:** Found in pomegranates and berries, ellagic acid exhibits anti-inflammatory properties that can help in reducing airway inflammation in asthma.
- **Gallic Acid:** Present in plants like *Terminalia chebula*, gallic acid has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects, making it beneficial in managing asthma.

5. **Phenolic Compounds:**

- **Caffeic Acid:** Found in coffee, thyme, and sage, caffeic acid has anti-inflammatory effects and can modulate immune responses, making it useful for asthma management.
- **Rosmarinic Acid:** Found in rosemary and mint, rosmarinic acid has antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, helping reduce bronchial inflammation.

Table 3: Phytochemicals with Anti-Asthmatic Properties

Phytochemical Class	Examples	Source Plants	Therapeutic Effect
Alkaloids	Ephedrine, Lobeline	*Ephedra sinica*, *Lobelia inflata*	Bronchodilation, expectorant
Flavonoids	Quercetin, Rutin, Kaempferol	*Ginkgo biloba*, Citrus fruits, *Moringa oleifera*	Anti-inflammatory, bronchodilation
Terpenoids	Limonene, Menthol	Citrus fruits, *Mentha piperita*	Bronchodilation, reduces airway constriction
Saponins	Glycyrrhizin	*Glycyrrhiza glabra*	Anti-inflammatory, immune modulation
Tannins	Ellagic Acid, Gallic Acid	Pomegranate, *Terminalia chebula*	Anti-inflammatory, antioxidant
Phenolic Compounds	Caffeic Acid, Rosmarinic Acid	Coffee, Rosemary, Mint	Anti-inflammatory, modulates immune response

Examples of Medicinal Plants and Their Phytochemicals

Several medicinal plants have been identified as having anti-asthmatic effects due to their bioactive compounds:

- **Ephedra sinica (Ma Huang):** Contains ephedrine, a well-known bronchodilator, helping to relieve asthma symptoms by relaxing airway muscles.
- **Lobelia inflata (Lobelia):** Contains lobeline, which is a natural bronchodilator and expectorant.
- **Glycyrrhiza glabra (Licorice):** Contains glycyrrhizin, a saponin with anti-inflammatory and immune-modulating properties.
- **Curcuma longa (Turmeric):** Contains curcumin, a potent anti-inflammatory compound that helps reduce airway inflammation.
- **Ocimum sanctum (Tulsi):** Contains flavonoids like apigenin and luteolin, which have bronchodilatory and anti-inflammatory effects.

Key Medicinal Plants with Anti-Asthmatic Effects

Glycyrrhiza glabra (Licorice)

- **Description:** Licorice root has been used in traditional medicine for its soothing properties. It is rich in glycyrrhizin, an active compound known for its anti-inflammatory effects.
- **Mechanism of Action:** Glycyrrhizin inhibits the enzyme 11β-hydroxysteroid dehydrogenase type 2, leading to increased cortisol levels in the lungs, which can reduce inflammation. It also exhibits expectorant properties, helping clear mucus from the airways.
- **Studies:** Research indicates that licorice can reduce airway hyperreactivity and improve lung function in asthmatic patients .

Adhatoda vasica (Vasaka)

- **Description:** A traditional Ayurvedic herb known for its bronchodilator effects. It contains alkaloids like vasicine, which are believed to relax bronchial smooth muscles.
- **Mechanism of Action:** Vasicine acts by inhibiting inflammatory mediators and relaxing bronchial tissues, thus alleviating symptoms of asthma and other respiratory disorders.
- **Studies:** Clinical trials show significant improvement in pulmonary function tests in patients using Vasaka extracts .

Curcuma longa (Turmeric)

- **Description:** Turmeric contains curcumin, a potent anti-inflammatory and antioxidant compound.
- **Mechanism of Action:** Curcumin inhibits nuclear factor kappa B (NF-κB) and decreases the production of pro-inflammatory cytokines (e.g., TNF-α, IL-6), thereby reducing airway inflammation.
- **Studies:** Several studies have demonstrated curcumin's ability to improve respiratory function and decrease asthma symptoms in both animal models and human subjects .

Tylophora indica

- **Description:** Traditionally used in Ayurvedic medicine for respiratory disorders. It contains active constituents that exhibit anti-inflammatory properties.
- **Mechanism of Action:** Tylophora indica may enhance the synthesis of certain immune-modulating compounds, reducing the hyperresponsiveness of bronchial tissues.
- **Studies:** Clinical studies indicate it can help reduce bronchial reactivity and improve lung function in asthmatic patients .

Boswellia serrata (Indian Frankincense)

- **Description:** Known for its anti-inflammatory properties, Boswellia contains boswellic acids that inhibit leukotriene synthesis.
- **Mechanism of Action:** Boswellic acids prevent the release of inflammatory mediators and reduce bronchoconstriction, improving airflow in asthma patients.
- **Studies:** Research has shown that Boswellia extracts can significantly improve asthma symptoms and reduce the need for conventional medications .

Zingiber officinale (Ginger)

- **Description:** Ginger is a widely used spice with anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, known to help alleviate respiratory issues.
- **Mechanism of Action:** Ginger compounds inhibit the production of pro-inflammatory cytokines and leukotrienes, thereby reducing airway inflammation and hyperreactivity.
- **Studies:** Clinical trials have indicated that ginger extract can lead to a decrease in asthma symptoms and improved lung function.

Table 4: Summary of Key Medicinal Plants and Their Mechanisms

Medicinal Plant	Active Compounds	Mechanism of Action	Key Findings from Studies
Glycyrrhiza glabra	Glycyrrhizin	Inhibits 11β-HSD, reduces inflammation	Reduced airway hyperreactivity, improved lung function
Adhatoda vasica	Vasicine	Relaxes bronchial smooth muscles, inhibits inflammation	Significant improvement in pulmonary function
Curcuma longa	Curcumin	Inhibits NF-κB, reduces pro-inflammatory cytokines	Decreased asthma symptoms, improved respiratory function
Tylophora indica	Various alkaloids	Modulates immune responses	Reduced bronchial reactivity
Boswellia serrata	Boswellic acids	Inhibits leukotriene synthesis, reduces bronchoconstriction	Improved asthma symptoms, reduced medication use
Zingiber officinale	Gingerol, shogaol	Inhibits cytokines and leukotrienes	Decreased asthma symptoms, improved lung function

Mechanism of Action of Phytochemicals

How Phytochemicals Work at the Cellular and Molecular Level

Phytochemicals exhibit their anti-asthmatic effects through various cellular and molecular mechanisms, primarily by:

- **Anti-Inflammatory Pathways:** Many phytochemicals modulate inflammatory pathways by inhibiting the activation of nuclear factor kappa B (NF-κB), a key regulator of inflammation. This results in decreased expression of pro-inflammatory cytokines like TNF-α and IL-6.
- **Antioxidant Effects:** Compounds such as curcumin and flavonoids can scavenge free radicals and reduce oxidative stress in the lungs, which is often heightened during asthma exacerbations.
- **Immune Modulation:** Some phytochemicals enhance immune responses by promoting the production of regulatory T-cells and inhibiting the release of inflammatory mediators from immune cells, thus reducing airway inflammation and hyperresponsiveness.

Potential Inhibition of Specific Inflammatory Mediators

Phytochemicals may inhibit several key inflammatory mediators associated with asthma, including:

- **Leukotrienes:** Substances like boswellic acids can inhibit leukotriene synthesis, which are potent bronchoconstrictors.
- **Histamines:** Flavonoids from plants like ginger can reduce histamine release from mast cells, alleviating allergy-induced asthma symptoms.
- **Cytokines:** Phytochemicals can suppress the production of cytokines involved in promoting inflammation, such as IL-4, IL-5, and IL-13, which are crucial in asthma pathophysiology.

Clinical Studies on Medicinal Plants for Asthma

Several clinical and preclinical studies have validated the efficacy of medicinal plants in asthma management:

- **Glycyrrhiza glabra:** A clinical trial reported a significant reduction in asthma symptoms and an increase in peak expiratory flow rate (PEFR) in patients using licorice extract compared to a placebo .
- **Adhatoda vasica:** A randomized controlled trial demonstrated improved lung function in patients treated with Vasaka extracts, with reduced asthma attacks over six months .
- **Curcuma longa:** Studies indicated that curcumin supplementation resulted in significant decreases in asthma symptoms and medication usage in participants .
- **Boswellia serrata:** Clinical trials have shown that Boswellia extracts can effectively reduce the

frequency of asthma attacks and improve overall lung function .

- **Zingiber officinale:** Clinical studies reported improvements in asthma symptoms and lung function with ginger supplementation, highlighting its potential as a supportive therapy.

Safety Profiles and Reported Side Effects

While medicinal plants offer potential benefits for asthma management, it's essential to consider their safety profiles. Most studies report minimal side effects, but some potential issues include:

- **Glycyrrhiza glabra:** Long-term use can lead to hypertension and hypokalemia.
- **Adhatoda vasica:** May cause mild gastrointestinal discomfort in some individuals.
- **Curcuma longa:** High doses can lead to gastrointestinal issues, such as nausea or diarrhea.
- **Boswellia serrata:** Generally well-tolerated; however, allergic reactions have been reported in rare cases.
- **Zingiber officinale:** Excessive amounts may cause heartburn or digestive upset.

CHALLENGES AND LIMITATIONS

Despite the promising potential of medicinal plants in asthma management, several challenges and limitations hinder their widespread acceptance and integration into conventional therapeutic frameworks. One of the primary gaps in current research is the scarcity of large-scale clinical trials that adequately assess the efficacy and safety of these plant-based interventions. Many studies focus on small sample sizes or lack rigorous methodologies, making it difficult to draw definitive conclusions about the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, challenges related to the standardization of plant extracts pose significant hurdles. Variability in the concentration of active phytochemicals due to differences in plant species, growing conditions, and extraction methods can affect the consistency and efficacy of treatments. This inconsistency complicates dosage determination, as optimal dosages may vary widely between different preparations. Furthermore, the potential interactions between medicinal plants and conventional asthma medications remain an area of concern. Some phytochemicals could enhance or inhibit the effects of standard asthma treatments, leading to unforeseen side effects or reduced therapeutic efficacy. Addressing these challenges is essential to establish medicinal plants as viable adjuncts or alternatives in asthma management.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Looking ahead, there are significant opportunities for advancing the development of new asthma treatments based on phytochemicals derived from medicinal plants. The potential for discovering novel compounds with unique mechanisms of action could lead to more effective therapies, particularly for patients who are resistant to conventional medications. Areas of research that require further exploration include the need for more extensive clinical trials that focus on various demographics, stages of asthma, and combinations of phytochemical therapies. Understanding the bioavailability of these compounds is crucial, as many active ingredients may have low absorption rates or be rapidly metabolized in the body, limiting their therapeutic effects. Advanced research methodologies, such as pharmacokinetic studies, can help elucidate how these compounds behave in vivo. Additionally, the integration of nanotechnology and advanced drug delivery systems presents a promising avenue for enhancing the effectiveness of phytochemicals. Utilizing nanoparticles or other innovative delivery methods could improve the solubility, stability, and targeted delivery of these compounds, potentially maximizing their anti-asthmatic properties. As research progresses in these areas, a more comprehensive understanding of the role of medicinal plants in asthma management can be achieved, paving the way for novel and effective therapeutic strategies.

CONCLUSION:

The use of medicinal plants in asthma management offers promising therapeutic alternatives to conventional treatments, which often fall short in addressing chronic respiratory challenges like airway inflammation and bronchoconstriction. Current therapies, including corticosteroids and bronchodilators, can have side effects and potential drug interactions, highlighting the need for safer options. Historically, many cultures have relied on medicinal plants to treat respiratory issues, with key species like *Glycyrrhiza glabra* (Licorice), *Adhatoda vasica* (Vasaka), *Curcuma longa* (Turmeric), *Tylophora indica*, *Boswellia serrata* (Indian Frankincense), and *Zingiber officinale* (Ginger) demonstrating anti-inflammatory and bronchodilatory effects through various mechanisms. Nonetheless, challenges such as standardization of extracts, dosage determination, and safety assurance remain. The absence of large-scale clinical trials impedes the comprehensive validation of these treatments. Future research should prioritize rigorous clinical studies, investigate the bioavailability of phytochemicals, and explore advanced drug delivery systems like nanotechnology. In summary, while medicinal plants show significant potential for asthma management, further research and collaboration between traditional and modern pharmacology are crucial for developing effective, safe therapeutic strategies that improve patient outcomes.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS INTEREST:

The authors report no conflicts of interest.

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