Homoeopathic Potential of Bixa Orellana: A Preliminary Review of Phytoconstituents and Traditional Use

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Abstract

Bixa orellana is a neotropical plant traditionally used across Latin America for a wide array of medicinal purposes, including fever, diarrhoea, skin conditions, and wound healing. Its seeds and arils are rich in carotenoids, predominantly bixin and norbixin, alongside terpenes, tocotrienols, and other phytoconstituents that exhibit antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and lipid-modulating activities.

It explores the pharmacological and phytochemical basis for integrating *Bixa orellana*, commonly known as Annatto or the "lipstick tree," into homoeopathic practice. Traditionally used across Latin America and India, the plant has a long history of treating conditions like fevers, diarrhoea, skin disorders, and gonorrhoea. By reviewing its phytochemical profile, specifically high levels of the carotenoids bixin and norbixin, along with terpenes and tocotrienols. It highlights how the plant's diverse effects on the digestive and thermoregulatory systems provide a solid "symptom picture" for remedy selection. Old literature focuses only on symptoms (e.g., "removes fever"). This article provides the molecular mechanism. Most of the existing references are quite limited, with very few provings and not enough detailed symptom descriptions, making it difficult to use the remedy in everyday practice. Although traditional sources suggest a wide range of uses, particularly for skin problems, fevers, and digestive issues these uses have not been clearly established within Homoeopathy. The combined consideration of traditional knowledge and phytoconstituents evaluation helps build a basic understanding of the drug's therapeutic potential. Particular attention is given to its possible use in Homoeopathy, where individualised remedy selection and the process of potentization may open up new clinical possibilities.

Keywords: Annatto, Bixin, Homoeopathy, Lipstick tree, Phytoconstituents, Traditional use.