

# Preface

Considerable progress has been made in our healthcare system, in particular with respect to sensitive diagnostic tools, reagents and very effective and precise drugs. On the other hand, high-throughput screening technology can screen vast numbers of compounds against an array of targets in a very short time, and leads thus obtained can be further explored. In developing countries, the exploding population exerts pressure not only on natural resources but also on the human population itself, whose members strive to become successful and advance in society. This leads to increased blood pressure, anxiety, obesity-associated lipid disorders, cardiovascular diseases and diabetes. Most of these diseases result in disturbed family life, including sexual behaviour.

Despite technological developments, herbal drugs still occupy a preferential place in a majority of the population in the Third World and terminal patients in the West. Herbal drugs, in addition to being cost effective and easily accessible, have been used since time immemorial and have passed the test of time without having any side effects. The multitarget effects of herbs (holistic approaches) are the fundamental basis of their utilization. This approach is already used in traditional systems of medicine like Ayurveda, which has become more popular in the West in recent years. However, the integration of modern science with traditional uses of herbal drugs is of the utmost importance if ones wishes to use ancient knowledge for the betterment of humanity. This book will try to bridge this gap and will be a valuable source for herbalists, traditional and modern medical practitioners, and researchers in botany, ethnobotany, pharmacy, phytochemistry and agriculture. Contributions on herbs used for beneficial effects on memory, sexual behaviour, neurodegeneration, erectile dysfunction, inflammation, cardiovascular diseases, cancer prevention, stroke and central nervous system disorders will provide vital information to readers.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my contributors, who have gone to great lengths to ensure the high scientific quality of the book. I would also like to thank my colleagues at Springer.

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