Onnumerable indigenous drugs are being effectively employed in the Indian systems of medicine. Systematic and scientific study of the materials and principles advised in the ancient medical literature for the treatment of human and animal disorders have yielded very rewarding results.

Natural products like atropine, caffeine, codeine, digoxin, digitoxin, ephedrine, morphine, quinine, reserpine and strychnine, discovered and isolated from indigenous medicinal herbs were found to possess profound physiological and pharmacological action. Many such compounds derived from indigenous sources are used as very effective drugs in modern medicine.

Ancient Indian medical literature contains introductory information about the pharmacological actions of many natural products. But systematic studies on these remarkable remedies were rare till recent years. Many of these drugs have been in use in India through centuries. Most of them are free from undesirable side-effects unlike many synthetic drugs used in modern
medicine. Chemists, biochemists and pharmacologists have recently shown more interest in the systematic study of the safe and effective drugs derived from nature. Screening of natural products in the search for anti-atherogenic, anti-cancer, anti-coagulant, anti-inflammatory, anti-diabetic, anti-hepatotoxic and fibrinolytic drugs is in progress in several laboratories.

The major objectives of the present study are:

(1) To screen different indigenous herbal extracts for their possible anti-inflammatory action (in vitro studies using RBC-membrane).

(2) To study the effect of indigenous anti-inflammatory drugs on erythrocyte membrane stability.

(3) To make studies on the biochemical effects of oral administration of indigenous anti-inflammatory drugs—effects on biochemical parameters and enzymes—in experimental animals.

(4) To study the effects of indigenous anti-inflammatory drugs on lysosomal stability.

(5) To analyse different components of the three different forms of common salt, that is, the crude marine form, the rock form and the commercially available refined form.