An ethno-medico-botanical survey was carried out in Guntur district during 1997-98. Guntur district is inhabited by four tribal groups namely Chenchus, Sugalis, Yerukalas and Yandis. From these tribals ethnomedico-botanical information of 96 species belonging to 54 families has been gathered.

Most remedies consisted of single plants. Some of the simple therapeutic combinations of 2-3 plants with some ingredient were recorded in the survey. A special pestle and mortar made of stone is used for preparing the powders of desired plant parts. They use the powders as such, or mix with other ingredients like black pepper/garlic/turmeric powder/dried ginger/sesame oil/cocount oil/castor oil/cow milk or goat’s milk/jaggery/sugar candy. The names of diseases along with their diagnoses were ascertained in consultation with allopathic doctors. The local people use trees (34), herbs (24), shrubs (29), climbers/stragglers (8) epiphytes/parasites (1) in herbal medicine.

These medicinal plants cure many diseases like rheumatism, cold, cough, jaundice, diarrhoea, dysentery, diabetes, skin diseases, sexual diseases, asthma etc., besides antidote for snake and scorpion bites. Disease-wise analysis with regard to the number of plants used is given below. Maximum number of plants i.e., 8 species for diarrhoea/dysentry, 7 species for fevers and malaria, 7 species for skin diseases, 5 species for body pains, 4 species for stomach ache, 4 species for scorpion stings and snake bites, 5 species for menstrual disorders, 5 species for headache, 4 species for ulcers, 4 species for fish poison, 4 species for boils and blisters, 3 species for urinary disorders, 3 species for toothache. 2 species for asthma,
2 species for cuts and wounds, 2 species for hair wash, 2 species for internal strength, 2 species for chest pain, 1 species for diabetes, 1 species for jaundice, 1 species for constipation, 1 species for purgative.

Floristic composition is dominated by higher plants. Among 52 families, 52 were dicots, 2 families from monocot. Family-wise analysis of species revealed Fabaceae as dominant family with 10 species followed by Caesalpinaceae (5), Asclepiadaceae (5), Tiliaceae (4), Apocynaceae and Euphorbiaceae (4) each, Acanthaceae and Menispermace (3) each, Annonaceae, Capparaceae, Amaranthaceae, Sapindaceae, Rubiaceae, Asteraceae, Aristolochiaceae, Burseraceae and Liliaceae (2) each and remaining families have one species each.

The above ethnobotanical information used by the tribal people from this region has not been reported earlier in the available literature. The present detailed ethno-medico-botanical explorations forms the first report of its kind in the Guntur district and paves the way for further more detailed work on this most important aspects for alleviation of human ailments by the ancient methods which changes the modern medical technology in many instances.