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Medicinal plants used by Tanzanian traditional healers in the management of *Candida* infections

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Abstract

An ethnomedical survey in Coast, Dar es Salaam, Morogoro and Tanga regions of Tanzania has resulted in the identification of 36 plant species belonging to 21 plant families that are used traditionally for the treatment of *Candida* infections. Twenty-one plants constituting 58.3% of all collected plants are used to treat oral candidiasis (*Utando*) one of the important signs of HIV/AIDS. The knowledge of traditional healers for the treatment of *Candida* infections has been highly supported by the literature in that 13 (36.1%) out of the 36 plants identified have been proven to be active against *Candida albicans* and/or other species of *Candida*. Also, some of the plants were reported to be active against other species of fungi including *Cryptococcus neoformans*, one of the important pathogenic fungi in HIV/AIDS. It can be seen that ethnomedical information from traditional healers provides a solid lead towards development of new drugs than random screening. The task that remains is to screen extracts prepared from these plants and perform a bioassay-guided fractionation of the active extracts so as to isolate the active compounds from these plants.