

Bark That Cuts Diabetes Bite Faces Extinction in Hill State

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The bark of *Pterocarpus marsupium*, a lofty tree popularly known as bijasaal, can be used to significantly lower blood glucose levels and control diabetes, according to a new study conducted by scientists from the Indian Council of Medical Research. The study also highlighted the need to conserve the tree species, which is known to have many medicinal properties, but is now on the verge of extinction. The tree is in the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

The researchers in the study found that an extract of the bark taken orally could reduce blood glucose level and glycated haemoglobin (HbA1c) significantly. The study found that after the extract was administered to rats it decreased the blood glucose levels in both control rats as well as rats with type-2 diabetes. Talking to *TOI*, Chandrashekhar, divisional forest officer, Haldwani Division, also stressed upon the need to conserve the valuable species. “Scientists have found that the tree has natural anti-diabetic properties and even in ancient times it was used to treat diabetes. But, it is now on the verge of extinction and therefore urgent measures are required for its conservation,” said Chandrashekhar, divisional forest officer, Haldwani Division.”Aqueous infusions of Bijasaal’s bark possess anti-diabetes potential. In fact, it is even beneficial for diabetics to drink water from glasses made out of the wood of the tree,” the official said. Bijasaal regenerates through seeds but the germination percentage is as low as 30 per cent, putting the species further at risk of disappearing from the forests in the state.

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