Puriben was born in a government quarter near the railway crossing at Sarotra Road in Dhanpura village. Her father was a railway employee under the British while her mother was a homemaker. She remembers playing with dolls and gilli-danda along with her sister. At the tender age of ten she started looking after the cattle and assisting in the fields. Arduous work like cleaning and grinding the grain made her stronger. She was married in her parental village itself, so had the advantage of maternal and in-laws’ houses in the same place. She has two daughters and a son. Her courtyard echoes with her folk songs and lullabies.

**Traditional Veterinary Practices**

When she was 15 years old, there was a widespread disease called ‘kharva’ (Foot and Mouth Disease) among the animals. Her grandmother taught her its treatment. She added 250 g millet flour to 150 g cow or buffalo milk to make a paste and applied it on the hooves of the animals for four days. That brought relief. She practises this even today proving that the traditional and indigenous practices fit well even in the contemporary age of allopathic treatments. If the cattle do not come to heat then she uses the mixture of five kg of coarse powder of dried cluster beans [Cyamopsis tetragonoloba (L.) Taub.] and five kg of millet. After mixing them properly she feeds two kg of this daily for five days. If an animal is not able to throw out the placenta, she takes three kg of bajra, boils it in water. To this she adds gur (jaggery) and gives to the animal. Even after this, if it is unable to throw it, then she does it with the dexterity of her hands. Puriben uses onion juice, which is a sterilizer to treat prolapse. If prolapse occurs every year, she mixes ten kg rice, ten kg urad and ten kg fenugreek seed powder. She gives 500 - 700 g of this powder daily till it ends i.e. for around 15 days, three months before the delivery, which is said to totally eliminate the chances of prolapse.

**A Century of Wisdom: Puriben**

Puriben can amaze anybody by her verve and zest even at the age of 110. She belongs to Dhanpura village of Amiggaral Taluka of Banaskantha district, Gujarat. The wonder lady, who can still boast of threading the needle, has never been to hospital for any treatment.

**Traditional Practices for Human Food and Life**

Puriben has helped in 1200 deliveries in her village. When a lady suffers from post-partum illness, she treats her in the following way:

- She boils 500 g of Babool (Acacia nilotica L.) leaves and one kg of Mahuda (Madhuca longifolia J. F. Macbr.) bark in two litre of hand made buttermilk. This decoction is added to the bathing water. After giving bath, the lady is made to rest in a warm room. In case the mother has lactation difficulties, she advises her to eat 50 g suva (Anethum graveolens L.) and 50 g saunth [dry ginger (Zingiber officinale Rosc.)]. She boils suva in water and gives this potion to the infants suffering from stomach ache. To treat headaches, she gives the decoction of lemon leaves, suva and saunth. Pyorrhoea is treated by inhaling the smoke of bhoiringani (Solanum xanthocarpum Schrad. & Wendl.), a well known and widely distributed practice in the country.

**Satvik Food and Life**

The secret for her long and healthy life is the pure ‘Satvik’ diet she had since childhood. Instead of fretting and fuming the whole day, she keeps herself busy in chores like bringing grass and taking care of the cultivation. She has again started teething. Assembling the children of her family and from her neighbourhood to watch them play is her routine in the evenings.

**Her Message**

“Eat satvik food; don’t indulge in fights, indolence and violence. Live together and always keep yourselves busy in constructive activities.”

Puriben Jaisanghbhai. Dhanpura, Sarotra. Amiggarh, Banaskantha, Gujarat- 385135

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