

Natural touch of Ugadi

On the festival of Ugadi,(celebrated in Karnataka, Telengana and Andhra Pradesh in India) according to the Hindu calendar, the sun is vertically above the point of intersection between the equator and the meridians on this day. Thus, it heralds the commencement of spring or Vasant Ritu. The rabi crop has just been harvested and it is time for mangoes to flood the market. The neem (*Azadirachta indica*, Meliaceae) and Jaggery (multiple sources like, *Saccharum officinarum*, Poaceae,



Phoenix sylvestris, Arecaceae) mixture that is eaten not only signifies the bitter and sweet moments to be experienced during the year but is also a form of precautionary medication for the summer. The occurrence of diseases like Chicken pox is prevented by taking neem (antiulcer, anti-malarial, antifungal, antibacterial, antiviral, antioxidant properties) which also acts as an anti-mutagen and anti-carcinogenic for the possible high risk exposure to UV rays. Jaggery provides iron content and reduces the body heat. Further, the Torana (mango leaves strung together with neem twigs at the ends) hung at every door in the house acts as a cooling agent and effective protection against bacterial infection.

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