

Ethnomedicine in Northeast Thailand

Chayan Picheansoonthon*

Abstract

Northeast Thailand (or Isan) covers approximately 160,000 km² and comprises administratively 20 changwats (provinces) about 22 millions people. It is Thailand's largest region, located on the Korat Plateau, bordered by Lao PDR (north and northeast) and Cambodia (southeast). The region is rich in both cultural and biological diversity. The major population of the region is the Thai-Lao, with several other ethnic groups, the Khmer Surin, the Phu Thai, the Kui, the Soe, to mention a few. Folk healers in northeast Thailand can be roughly classified into 4 groups: spiritual healers, 'herbal sanding' healers, 'blowing' healers, and folk masseurs. In this presentation, ethnomedicine of the Kui and the Phu Thai ethnic group in northeastern Thailand will be discussed. Studies on the "herbal sanding" healers and the 'blowing' healers will be also be presented.

Keywords: Northeast Thailand, ethnomedicine, Kui, Phu Thai, "herbal sanding" healers, 'blowing' healers

* **Corresponding author:** Faculty of Medicine, Mahasarakham University, 269 Nakhon Sawan Rd., Tambon Talad, Amphoe Mueang Mahasarakham 44000, Thailand and Academy of Science, The Royal Institute of Thailand, Sanam Suea Pa, Sri-ayuthaya Rd., Khet Dusit, Bangkok 10300, Thailand