



Four traditional practitioners in the studied village were descended from the Thai-Lao ancestors. They had a lot of treatment experience without any written record or textbooks. Most of them were in old age and their knowledge and skills were likely to be lost without passing on to the next generation.

A total of 104 medicinal plants was found to be used by these practitioners during the period of study. Ninety eight point two percent of medicinal plants were collected from natural forests in different ecologies including tropical rain forests and dry deciduous dipterocarp forests. Thirty-three of the plants were herbs, 31 shrubs, 26 trees and 14 climbers. Parts of plant used were roots, whole plants, stems, woods, leaves. The indication was to cure diseases, to detoxicate and to strengthen body. The main method of using was boiling. Nevertheless, grinding against a stone was sometimes practiced. Preparation process was hardly sanitized. Evidently medicinal plants used among Easan traditional practitioners are completely different from those promoted for use by the Ministry of Public Health.

Sixteen diseases treated by the practitioners were indeterminable. Most of them were Easan terminology diseases for which some patients were considered terminally ill in modern medicine. The others were diseases rarely known in the past but recently found with great frequency such as diabetes mellitus.

Most of the 169 patients who came to the practitioners was poor farmers with only primary educational background.