



Medicines to Prevent the Effects of Age

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The Indian system of medicine classifies panacea (herbal plants) into different classes according to their supposed action on different organs of the body or on particular symptoms of diseases. Charaka had divided medicines into fifty classes and had given the names of some medicinal plants which are useful to prevent the effects of age. Almost all human beings are anxious about their ageing and the problems allied to it and would be glad to retain youthfulness. This article introduces certain herbal plants and their use as a tonic or as a medicine for various diseases. They can be used as a panacea or in combination with other drugs.

I. *Asparagus racemosus* (Willd)

<i>Fam:-</i>	<i>Liliaceae</i>
<i>Sans:-</i>	<i>Satavar</i>
<i>Eng:-</i>	<i>Wild asparagus</i>
<i>Hin:-</i>	<i>ShatAvari</i>

Properties and uses

ShatAvari is demulcent, diuretic rejuvenator and increases intelligence. It is also known to benefit by regulating the digestive enzymes, increasing the wellness of eyes, cure abdominal tumor,

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diarrhea and dropsy. It is good for semen and breast milk, mitigates *vata*, *pitta* and piles.

The fresh juice of the root is given with honey as a demulcent in bilious dyspepsia.

The fresh juice with honey or sugar is also useful in treating jaundice, leucorrhoea and menorrhagia.

The paste of the tubers with milk is given in piles. However, it is strongly advised the bark of the roots must be removed before use as it is poisonous. Juice of the tubers taken with milk is useful in gonorrhoea.

As a diuretic the drug is used in combination with other herbs of its classes. The preparation should be such that:-

Take the tubers of *Asparagus racemosus*, *Tribulus terrestris* (*gokshura*), *Saccharum Spontaneum* (*kasa*), *Desmostachya Bipinnata* Stapf, *Oryza sativa* (*sAlidhanya*), *Saccharum officinarum* (*ikshu*), *Batatas paniculatus* (*vidAri*) and *Scripus kysoor* (*kaseruka*) equal parts and prepare a decoction in the usual way. It is given with honey or sugar to cure scanty urine that produces heat and urinal odor.

The following preparation of *shatAvarI* with ghee is very useful as a preventive medicine in all diseases:-

Take the decoction of *shatAvarI*, add the tubers in the form of a paste, add ghee and boil them together and prepare a *ghrita*. Consume it one teaspoon with sugar.

II. (a) *Boerhavia repens* Linn.

Sveta punarnava

Fam:	<i>Nyctaginaceae</i>
Sans :	<i>Sveta punarnava</i>
Eng:	<i>Hog weed</i>
Hin:	<i>Safed punarnava</i>

II(b)Boerhavia diffusa Linn.**Rakta punarnava**

<i>Bot :</i>	<i>Boerhaviadiffusa Linn</i>
<i>Sans :</i>	<i>rakta punarnava</i>
<i>Hin :</i>	<i>lAl punarnava</i>

Properties and uses

Both the white and red varieties of the plants are used as medicine, but the white variety is preferred more. The root of the plant is regarded as a laxative, diuretic and stomachic. It is used in treating jaundice, ascites, anasarca, scanty urine, leucorrhoea, lumbago, myalgia, scabies cardiac disorders, anemia, cough, bronchitis, leprosy, edema, hernia, scrotal enlargement and spider and snake bite poisons.

The decoction of the roots is useful in urinal calculi, inflammations, piles, AIDS and Tuberculosis. The decoction of *punarnava* root added with *chiretA* and ginger powder is given in anasarca. The decoction of *punarnava* is useful in kidney stone and oedema. Local application of the root paste is useful in treating oedematous swellings.

Juice of the leaves with honey is used to produce eye drops that could be useful in curing chronic ophthalmia. In Tibetan medicine *punarnava* is used in asthma, jaundice, and ascites. Tibetan literature also mentions its diuretic properties.

The following decoction is useful in treating general anasarca with ascites, cough, jaundice, difficulty of breathing etc.

Punarnava root, neem bark, leaves of *patolA* (*Trichosanthusdioica*) ginger, *kAtuki* (*Picrorrhizakurroa*), *harItaki*, *guDUchl*, and the wood of *dAruharidra* (*Berberisaristata*) (15 gms each) and water (450 ml). To treat anasarca, the mixture is boiled and reduced to one fourth of its original consistency.

Fresh root of *punarnava* (30 gms each) made into a paste and mixed with milk is taken daily for a month to retain youthfulness.

III. *Centella asiatica* (Linn.) Urban

<i>Syn:</i>	<i>Hydrocotyleasiatica</i> Linn.
<i>Fam :</i>	<i>Apiaceae</i>
<i>Sans :</i>	<i>mandukaparn</i>
<i>Eng:</i>	<i>Indian pennywort</i>
<i>Hin:-</i>	<i>brahmamanduk</i>

Properties and uses

The properties of this herb are equal to those of *brahmi* (*Bacopamonniera*), both regarded as alternative tonic is useful in the treatment of leprosy, asthma, bronchitis, epilepsy, swelling, abdominal disorders, hiccough, amentia, fever, insomnia, cardiac debility and diseases of the skin, nervous system and blood. It prolongs life, rejuvenator and good for voice. The fresh juice of the leaves is given with milk and liquorice powder as an alternative tonic.

Take one part of the juice of the plant and six parts of ghee and boil them together to prepare a ghrita and use 10 gms of it daily. The ghrita is good for memory, brain, general health and longevity.

The juice of mandukAparni, turmeric, AmlA juice and honey mixed and taken early morning is useful for jaundice.

The juice of the plant with dAturA leaves juice and somavalli (*Sarcostemmaacidum*) is given in equal measure to cure insanity.

The juice of mandukAparni, guduchi, madhukA (liquorice) powder and the paste of aparaijitA (*Clitoria*) when taken with milk is good for intelligence, longevity, strength and for immunity.

IV. *Desmodium gangeticum* (Linn.) DC

<i>Fam:</i>	<i>Fabaceae</i>
<i>Sans :</i>	<i>shalaparni</i>
<i>Hin:</i>	<i>salvan</i>

Properties and uses

shalaparni is useful in curing vomiting, fever, dyspnea, consumption, dysentery, fever, gout, inflammations, asthma, bronchitis and cardiopathy. It mitigates all three *doSas* and is

nutritious, rejuvenating, anti-poisonous and a cure to cough caused by injury to lungs.

The drug is a cardio tonic and nervine tonic. It is also useful in general anasarca, blood diseases, bleeding piles and colitis, brain affections, scorpion sting and worms.

25 grams of *shalaparni* roots boiled in 200 ml water, reduced to 50 ml, and 25 ml each when given daily in morning and evening is very effective as a treatment to heart disease, body ache and inflammations.

A compound decoction of *shalaparni*, garlic, black cumin, and long pepper in equal parts is useful for rheumatism, heart diseases and cholesterol. A decoction of the roots is useful in fever. The roots of *shalaparni* is made into a paste and boiled with milk and rice is taken for health, insomnia and to increase mental power.

The root of *shalaparni* (four parts) and cumin (one part) mixed together and boiled in milk is given in heart diseases, weakness of the heart and difficult breathing.

The root of *shalaparni* and milk made into a decoction is given as a remedy for alcoholism.

V. *Emblica officinalis* Geartn.

<i>Syn:</i>	<i>Phyllanthusemblica</i> Linn
<i>Fam:</i>	<i>Euphorbiaceae</i>
<i>Eng:</i>	Indian Gooseberry
<i>Sanskrit :</i>	<i>dhatri, AmlakA</i>
<i>Hindi :</i>	<i>AmlA</i>

Properties and uses

dhatri is similar to *haritaki* in properties and especially useful in bleeding diseases, diabetes, greyness of hair, best aphrodisiac and rejuvenator, mitigates *vata* by sour taste, *pitta* by sweet taste and cold potency, *kapha* by astringent taste and dryness.

The juice of *dhatri* with honey is given in the treatment of fever, burning sensation, dyspepsia and other complaints of the digestive system. The juice is given in hemorrhage, scurvy, constipation and urinary problems. The juice is also used as an eye drop in the treatment of eye troubles.

Powder of the fruits is effective in hyperacidity, peptic ulcer, gastric troubles, blood impurities, hemorrhage and dysentery. It is also useful in the treatment of cough, asthma, cardiac complaints, leucorrhoea and epistaxis. *dhatiri* is very effective in the prevention of the decay of cells and thus helpful to retain youthfulness.

A table spoon of fresh juice of *dhatiri* mixed with equal quantity of honey taken in the early morning of every day is a good medicine to prevent tuberculosis of the lungs, asthma, cancer, stress, tension, weakness of memory, influenza, cold, premature old age, loss and grayness of hair.

A table spoon of *Amalaka* juice mixed with a cup of fresh bitter gourd juice taken once daily for a couple of months is useful in the treatment of diabetes. A teaspoon of the juice mixed with poppy seeds, milk and sugar 1-2 teaspoons given once or twice a day is a good medicine to cure dysentery, diarrhea, colitis, amoebiasis and piles.

A table spoon of the juice mixed with a cupful of coconut milk is given daily twice for a week expels tape-worms and hook worms.

A table spoon of *Amalaka* juice mixed with equal quantity of banana leaf or flower juice and honey two teaspoons full taken with a glass of black cow's boiled milk daily once for a couple of months regularly is an excellent medicine for excessive bleeding during menstruation, sterility and scanty urination due to the kidney disorders.

Powder of dry fruits (1 teaspoon) mixed with jiggery (2 teaspoon) is given twice daily for a month to cure rheumatism, gout, constipation, piles, rectal fissure, anemia, jaundice, loss of hair and premature grayness.

Powder of *Amalaka* 1 teaspoon given with a glass of buttermilk once daily is a medicine to treat the burning sensation on the rectum, soles and palms; The same when given with a teaspoon of *jAmun* seeds daily once is a medicine to control sugar in the urine of a diabetic.

The juice of the fruit with honey and long pepper is given in hiccup and painful respiration.

AmlA hair oil is a good cure for premature grayness and hair fall. It also lengthens hair and cures insomnia. The recipe is as follows:-

Fresh *AmlA* juice 1- part

Sesame oil 2- parts

Heat the oil and add *Amala* juice little by little, when the oil is sufficiently hot continue to heat the mixture until only oil remains. Then cool the oil and strain it through a muslin cloth. Now the oil is ready for everyday use.

VI. *Holostemma ada-kodien* Schult.

<i>Syn:</i>	<i>Leptadenia reticulata</i> (Wight & Arm.)
<i>Family :</i>	Asclepiadaceae
<i>Sans :</i>	<i>jlvantI</i>
<i>Hindi :</i>	<i>jlvantI, dodI</i>

Properties and uses

jlvantI is cold in potency, sweet, mitigates all three *doSas*, good for eyes, rejuvenator and gives strength.

The roots are useful in the treatment of burning sensation, cough, diarrhea, heart weakness, cough, blindness, poison, ulcer, piles and sexual debility.

The powder of the dried roots is used 5 gm twice a day to treat diabetes. The powder is also good for the throat.

The root boiled in milk and then dried and powdered if used 5 gms each daily in milk before going to bed is good for asthma and a good rejuvenator. The decoction of the roots is also used (50-100ml).

VII. *Santalum album* Linn.

<i>Fam :</i>	<i>Santalaceae</i>
<i>Sans:</i>	<i>shoetA chandan</i>
<i>Eng :</i>	<i>White sandal wood</i>
<i>Hin :</i>	<i>safed chandan</i>

Properties and uses

chandana is pleasing to mind, cures fatigue, works as an antidote, cures bleeding diseases, and soothes burning sensation. It is also useful in the treatment of dysuria, gonorrhoea arthritis, headache, skin diseases, leprosy, forgetfulness, psychopathy, cardiac debility, jaundice, hyperacidity, strangury, cough, bronchitis, leucorrhoea, gastric irritability, fever and vomiting.

Fifteen grams of the watery emulsion of sandal wood with sugar, honey and rice water is given to control gastric irritability and dysentery, and to relieve thirst and heat of the body. It has also been used as a diaphoretic and an aphrodisiac.

The paste of sandal wood and cumin in equal quantity mixed in coconut water given once or twice a day is useful in leucorrhoea.

The powder of sandal wood mixed with milk or in the form of pills is given in gonorrhoea, fever and bilious disorders.

The paste of sandal wood mixed with butter milk is given thrice a day for inbleeding piles.

Sandal wood paste (10 gms) mixed with honey and *AmalA* juice works against vomiting.

Sandal wood paste with water or rose water is applied externally on scorpion stings, inflamed swellings, prickly heat and skin eruptions, itching, fevers hemicranias and is applied to the temples to relieve headaches.

Sandal oil is a good remedy for gonorrhoea, chronic foetid, bronchitis, cystitis and gleet. It is also useful in bronchial catarrh and is given in omum water or infusion of ginger.

VIII. Terminalia Chebula Retz

<i>Family</i> :	<i>Combretaceae</i>
<i>English</i> :	<i>Chebolicmyrobalan</i>
<i>Sanskrit</i> :	<i>harItakI, abhaya</i>
<i>Hindi</i> :	<i>harad</i>

Properties and uses

harItakI is very astringent causes dryness, hot in potency, stimulates digestive system, good for intelligence, rejuvenates and stoutens

the body, good for eyes, initiates the downward movement of faeces, urine, flatus etc. It is a powerful alternative and tonic. It has also known as *pranada* or life giver, *sudha* or nector, *Bhishakpriya* or physicians favourite or so on. Seven kinds of *harItakl* are described in *Bhavaprakasa* as *vijaya*, *rohini*, *putana*, *amrta*, *abhaya*, *jlvantl* and *chetaki*, the distinctions being described upon the shape, color, marks on the outer covering of the fruits and the regions where that grows. Only two varieties are recognized at present. A good *harItakl* fit for use should be heavy, smooth, dense, and fresh, rounded in shape and should sink into water when put. Fruits with small seeds and abundant cortex are preferred and the seeds are not used as medicine.

harItakl cures dyspnoea, cough, asthma, diabetes, hemorrhoids, leprosy and other skin diseases, dropsy, enlargement of abdomen, worms, hoarseness, disease of the duodenum, abdominal tumor, flatulence, hiccup itching, heart diseases, jaundice, colic, enlarged spleen and liver, renal calculus, dysuria, retention of urine, piles etc.

harItakl consumed with food stimulates intelligence and strength of sense organs, mitigates *kapha* and *vata*, eliminates urine, feces and other wastes. As a tonic for promoting strength, preventing the effects of age and prolong life *harItakl* is used as follows:-

One *harItakl* mixed with salt is taken every morning in the rainy season, with sugar in autumn, with ginger in the first half of winter, with long pepper in the second half, with honey in spring, and with *guda* (jaggery) in summer.

harItakl used after meals removed the bad effects of food and disorders caused by *vata* and *kapha*. Consumed along with salt (*saindhava*) it cures diseases of *kapha*, used with sugar cures diseases of *pitta* used with ghee it cures diseases of *vata* and used with *guda* it cures all diseases.

The powder of the fruit (3-6 gms) mixed with honey given daily is useful in diseases of throat.

The fruit's pericarp (flesh) boiled in cow's milk and then dried and the powder mixed with 15 ml Castrol oil is given daily in the morning is useful for hydrosel.

The fruit kept in cow's urine over a night and in the morning it is pasted and is given orally is useful in piles, ascitis and obesity.

harItakl fried in ghee and mixed with jaggery and long pepper is given to piles patients as carminative.

harItakl and ginger powder mixed with jaggery is mixed in hot water to alleviate asthma and hiccough. Paste of *harItakl*, ginger and pepper is useful in hiccough and asthma.

As a treatment to hyper acidity *harItakl* powder, black raisins and sugar are given. The powder of *harItakl* with jaggery is given in gout. *harItakl* powder taken with honey is useful in diabetes.

harItakl powder mixed with honey when given with wine in the morning provides fragrance in the body and is also useful in treating obesity.

harItakl and neem or neem with *Amalaka* are given to overcome leprosy.

harItakl heated and powdered and mixed with *tila* oil is applied in chronic leprosy and wounds.

Paste of *harItakl* fried in castor oil then mixed with long pepper and rock salt is a good remedy for scrotal enlargement and inguinal hernia.

Take three or five *harItakl* fruits with jaggery and then take *guDUchl* decoction in gout

Take three myrobalans (*triphala*) *chireta* and *guDUchl* and prepare a decoction. It is given 1-2 ounces is useful in dyspepsia, feverishness and hemicranias.

The decoction of *harItakl* or *triphala* is given in hepatitis. The decoction of *harItakl* with honey reduced the excessive body fats and so useful in obesity.

harItakl, *musta*(*Cyprus rotundus*) ginger, and jaggery is an effective panacea for diarrhea, dysentery and flatulence.

Butter milk and *harItakl*, or *triphala* is useful in obesity and diabetes.

Powder of mango seeds and *harItakl* in equal parts are pounded with milk and applied to relieve oneself of severe dandruff.

By taking *harItakl* and grapes followed by the intake of milk one is freed from fever.

The decoction of *triphala* is useful in malaria; *harItakl* given with honey is also useful.

The *triphala* powder is very effective as a tooth powder (*chebulic myrobalan*, *Emblic myrobalan*, *Beleric myrobalan* in equal parts is known as *triphala*.)

IX. *Tinospora cordifolia* (wild) Miers ex Hook.f. &Thoms

Family :	<i>Menispermaceae</i>
Sanskrit :	<i>amrta , guDUchl</i>
English :	<i>tinospora</i>
Hindi :	<i>guDUcha, giloy</i>

Properties and uses

The stem, leaves, roots, watery extract and starch are all used as medicine. The whole plant is regarded as a tonic. It is pungent, bitter, sweet after digestion, rejuvenator, astringent, hot in potency, strengthening, kindles digestive fire, mitigates *vata*, *pitta*, *kapha*, digests undigested food substances, cures thirst, burning sensation, fever, jaundice, skin diseases, diabetes, leprosy, gout, worms, urinary diseases, dyspnoea, cough, piles, cardiac disorders, anemia and vomiting.

The fresh juice of the stem is given with milk as a tonic. An infusion of the stem is given twice/thrice a day in fever, blood impurities and malaria. Dose: 1-3 ounces. The juice of the plant mixed with long pepper powder and honey is given in gonorrhoea, cough, spleen enlargement, anorexia and chronic fever, cold infusion of the stem is given with honey in bilious fever.

Decoction of *amrta*, *parpata* (*Hedyotis corymbosa*) *mustaka* (*Cyperus rotundus*) *chiretA* (*Ophelia chiretA*) and ginger is useful in fever caused by *vata* and *pitta*. A decoction of *amrta*, *neem* and *Amalaka* (gooseberry) mixed with honey is useful in the cure of intermittent fever.

The facula prepared from the stems known as *amrtasatva* is very effective in intermittent fevers, chronic diarrhea, dysentery,

gonorrhoea, leucorrhoea, jaundice, rheumatism, and urinary troubles.

amrta, ginger and *dhanyaka* (*Coriandrum sativum* Linn.)(30 gms) each made into a decoction alleviates gout, leprosy and *amavata*. *amrta* is the best remedy for gout. A decoction of *amrta*, *triphala* (three myrobalans) neem, patola mixed with honey and sugar is used in vomiting and acid gastritis. Cold infusion of *amrta* with honey is very effective in vomiting. In fever accompanied with vomiting cold decoction of *amrta* with honey is given.

Paste of *amrta* leaves with buttermilk is given in jaundice; cooled decoction of *amrta* with honey in the morning is also useful. Juice of *amrta* mixed with honey is given for diabetes.

Powder of *amrta*, *Amalaka*(*Emblicoefficinails*) and *goksurā* (*Tribulusterrestris*) equal parts mixed with honey and ghee(unequal parts) is to be taken to become potent and to be youthful.

The following confection is recommended is chronic fever enlarged spleen, cough and loss of appetite:-

Take chebulic and emblic myrobalans, ginger, long pepper one part each, watery extract of *amrta* four parts, water sixteen parts and boil till reduced to one fourth and prepare a confection with eight parts of sugar. When of proper consistence divide the mass into boluses of about sixty grams each. One of this is taken every morning.

In eruptive skin diseases the following oil preparation is useful to apply:-

Take fresh *amrta* 3.840 kgs water 30.720 kgs boil till reduced to one fourth and strain. Then add prepared sesame oil 1.920 kgs and *amrta* pasted with water 480 gms to the strained decoction, and boil till the water is evaporated. This is known as *amrtayaditaila*.

Another one known as *vataguduchyAdl taila* is thus prepared:-

Take *guDUchl* 6 kgs, water 30.720 kgs and boil together till reduced to one fourth. Take the fresh juice of *vasaka*(*Justicia adhatoda*)and of *dhatuRA* leaves each 1.920kgs,prepared mustard oil 1.920 kgs aromatic in the form of paste 480 gms. Boil together till the water is

evaporated. This oil is useful in eruptive skin diseases with troublesome itching and diseases of nervous origin.

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