

## Review On Plant Apamarga

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### Abstract

*Apamarga ( Achyranthes aspera) is a pan tropical weed, found in abundance. Achyranthes aspera has occupied a key position in Indian culture and folk medicine. Since ancient times the rural people of India commonly use this herb in various disorders including Udara roga, Kushta, Arshas etc. In this article, a detail narration of the plant Apamrga is been done with the help of various books and journals.*

### Apamarga In History

#### Vedic period (2000 – 1500 B.C)

Apamarga was used in therapeutics since the time of Vedas. It appears that the root of Apamarga was more utilized during the vedic period. Yajurvedatext quotes Apamargasaktu (powder) for antimicrobial (Rakshaghna) property. The other properties attributed to it are Papanashana, Mrityunashana, and Duhsvapnanashana. In Rigveda we don't find any reference about Apamarga.

Atharvaveda extensively quoted about the properties of Apamarga as Sahasraveerya, Krimighna, Rakshoghna, Rasayana, Arshoghna, Vishaghna, Ashmarinashana and Ojovardhana. ( A.V 17/1-8)

This plant was considered as an anti-dote for snake bite and scorpion sting during vedic period<sup>1</sup>.

### Samhita Period

#### Charaka Samhita(1200 B.C)

Acharya Charaka considered Apamarga as the best among the drugs used for Nasya/Shirovirechana. Owing to the importance of the drug, Achaya Charaka denoted a seperate chapter known as Apamargatanduliya Adhyaya<sup>2</sup>.

#### Sushruta Samhita (1000 B.C)

Acharya Sushruta has mentioned Apamarga Kshara in the context of preparation of Kshara from different drugs. He has also classified Apamarga under Arkaadi Gana. He has mentioned to use Apamarga Mula and kakolyadigana drugs for Utsadana<sup>3</sup>.

### Sangraha Kala

#### AsthangaSangraha (3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> century)

While describing the Pumsavana Vidhi, Acharya Vriddha Vagbhata mentions about 'Gouradanda Apamarga', a variety of Apamarga<sup>4</sup>.

#### Asthanga Hrudaya(3<sup>rd</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> century)

Acharya Vagbhata has also mentioned about Gouradanda Apamarga to be used in Pumsavana Karma<sup>5</sup>.

### Nighantu Kala

Almost all Nighantu mentions about the types, properties and indications of Apamarga. Two varieties of Apamarga are seen in Nighantu and they are Shweta (white) and Rakta (red). However Acharya Kaiyadeva, author of Kaiyadeva Nighantu mentioned three varieties i.e. Apamarga (white), Vashira (red) and Ramata (blue)<sup>6</sup>. Narahari Pandit author of Raja Nighantu also mentions three varieties of Apamarga

**Botanical name-** Achyranthesasperalinn<sup>7</sup>

**Family-** Amaranthaceae

**Latin name-** Achyranthes- Aknthes = thorn; aspera = rough, with very short stiff or hard points.

**Habitat<sup>8</sup>**

A very common weed of way sides throughout India.

**Habit<sup>9</sup>**

A coarse weed 1-3 feet high. Stem erect, simple or slightly branched; branches striate, pubescent. Leaves are variable, upto 5 inch long, elliptic obovate or sub orbicular, usually rounded at the apex, tomentose or velvety on both surfaces, rarely glabrate; petioles 1/4 -3/4 inch long. Flowers many, greenish white in colour, sharply deflexed

against the stout pubescent rachis of the terinal spikes which elongate in fruit upto as much as 20 inch in length, bracts are shorter than the perianth. Seeds are subcylindrical with truncate apex, brown.

**Herb Description<sup>10</sup>**

Dry herb consisting of pieces of quadrangular, striated stems 4-7 mm in diameter, orbicular, obovate, hairy leaves, having attenuated base and short petiole and pieces of long slender spikes bearing prickly flowers of fruits which are sharply deflexed against the rachis. The colour of freshly dried material is greyish which changes to pale brown during storage.

**Useful Parts<sup>11</sup>**

Root, Leaves, Seed, Kshara.

**Chemical Composition<sup>12</sup>**

- Seeds (Leaves, flowers, fruits, stem and root ) contain potassium salts.
- Root-Ecdysterone, Inkosterone, insect molding hormones.
- Stem extract- sterols, and pentads saponins, ecdysterone.
- Leaf- ecdysterone..
- Unripe fruit- saponin A and B.
- Seed oil- Linoleic, Oleic, palmitic, stearic, betenic, arachidic, myristic, lauric acids.

**Table 1**

**Vernacular Names Of Apamarga<sup>13</sup>**

Sl. No.	Language	Name
1	Sanskrit	Apamarga
2	Hindi	Ciracita
3	Telugu	Uttarenu
4	Kannada	Uttarani
5	Malayalam	Katalati
6	Tamil	Nayuruvi
7	English	Lough calf tree.

**Synonyms<sup>14</sup>**

- Apamarga (removes the dosha by cleansing the srotas).
- Shikhari (flowers and fruits are born on the top of the inflorescence).
- Adhashalya (the bracteoles and the perianth are spinous and pointed downwards).
- Mayuraka (the inflorescence has the crested colour of peacock).

- Markati (the leaves have close appressed hairs beneath).
- Durgraha (removes the bad grahas or the inflorescence is difficult to handle because of spinous character).
- Kinihi ( it has wound healing property).
- Kharamanjari (the inflorescence are rough to touch).
- Pratyakpushpa (the flowers are reverted or deflexed).
- Kshavaka (induces sneezing).
- Aaghaataha (it grows in abundance).
- Maarga (cleans the srotas or channels).

**Table 2**

**Synonyms Of Apamarga According To Different Acharya<sup>15</sup>**

S I N o	Name	S	C	A	M	N	S	R	D	B	K
		.	.	.	P	.	.	.	.	.	.
		S	S	S	N	A	N	N	N	N	N
1	Apamarga	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
2	Sikhari	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	+
3	Kinihi	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	+
4	Shaikarika	-	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	+
5	Mayuraka	+	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	+
6	Durabigraha	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+
7	Adhashalya	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	+
8	Kharamanjari	-	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	+
9	Vashirakanti	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	
10	Pratyakpushpi	-	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	+
11	Markatapipali	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-
12	Durgraha	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
13	Maarga	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
14	Aaghaata	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
15	Kshaaraka	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+

**Classification Of Apamarga According To Different Acharya<sup>16</sup>.**

- **Charaka Samhita:** Shirovirechana, Krimighna, Vamanopaga.
- **Sushruta Samhita:**Arkaadi.
- **Ashtanga Hridaya:**Mutravirechaniya.

**Rasa Panchaka<sup>17</sup>**

**Rasa-** Katu and Tikta

**Guna-** Tikshna, ruksha, Sara and Laghuguna

**Virya-Ushna**

**Vipaka-** Katu

**Doshaghna karma:** Kaphavatashamaka

**Table 3**

**Rasa Panchaka According To Different Acharya<sup>18</sup>**

Sl. No	Name	B.N	P.N	R.N	D.N	K.N
1	<b>Rasa</b>	Tikta	Tikta, Katu	Tikta, Katu	Tikta, Katu	Katu, Tikta
2	<b>Guna</b>	Ruksha, Sara, Tikshna	Ruksha, Sara, Tikshna	Ruksha, Sara, Tikshna	Ruksha, Sara, Tikshna	Tikshna, Ushna
3	<b>Virya</b>	Ushna	Ushna	Ushna	Ushna	Ushna
4	<b>Vipaka</b>	Katu		Katu	Katu	

**Table 4**

**Rogaghna Karma According To Different Acharya<sup>19</sup>.**

S.No	Name	A.H	M.P	R.N	S.S	C.S	D.N	B.N	S.N	K.N
1	Bhasmakaroga	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-
2	Ashmari	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
3	Kandu	-	+	+	-	-	+	+	-	+
4	Udararoga	-	+	+	-	-	+	+	-	+
5	Adhmana	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	-
6	Raktatisara	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-
7	Vishamajwara	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
8	Shiroruj	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-

	a								
9	Kasa, Shwasa	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
10	Paandu	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
11	Pradara	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
12	Jwara	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
13	Kushta	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
14	Krimi	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
15	Karnada	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
16	Shoola	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
17	Hidhma	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
18	Arshas	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
19	Dadru	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
20	Apachi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+

**Conclusion**

Due to the various properties of the plant Apamarga, it holds an important and superior most position in Indian culture and traditional Ayurvedic practice. It is a proved drug in various disorders like Haemorrhoids, cough, Indigestion as well as early manifestation of cervical intra epithelial neoplasia etc.

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