HERBAL MEDICINAL PLANTS OF RAJASHTHAN : MUSLI.

SANTOSH SHARMA AND *ASHWANI KUMAR

Department of Botany, S.S. Jain Subodh Girls College, Jaipur
*Department of Botany, University of Rajasthan Jaipur 302004.

ABSTRACT

Now the traditional Indian system of medicine can be broadly classified into the empirical forms of folk medicine which are village based, region-specific, indigenous herb based, local resources based and in many cases, community-specific. The other system called the Shastriya stream which includes the Ayurveda, Siddha and Yunani systems of medicine is more complicated and elaborate with theoretical and research findings. Musli is useful as aphrodisiac and nerve tonic. Tribal uses of plant are presented here.

Key words: Musli, Shatawari, Aprodiasic, Santhal, Lodha, Ayurveda, Dysentry, Asparagus spp.

INTRODUCTION

Initially, the knowledge about plants as a source of medicine was confined to dwellers of high mountains, tribal people, village folk and priests. Globally, the earliest origin of documentation about medicinal plants appeared for the first time in the vedic literature in Indian sub continent and subsequently, with the advent of Buddhism and Jainism, the documentation of medicinal plants was recorded systematically. Different system of medicine developed accordingly, which have been termed as Ayurvedic, Chinese, Korean, Malaysian, Japanese, Yunani and more recently Homoeopathic.

Several of the herbal drugs used by the traditional folk healers since long have proved to be of great biological significance and modern researches have convincingly established their medicinal property and restored their credibility which has been eroded with the coming of the modern synthetic medicines (Sastri, 1956; Sharma and Kumar 2001a, b). Further studies on the phytochemistry of other herbal drugs used by the traditional folk healers would reveal some more valuable chemical compounds of greater biological significance not yet known to the world of medicine. A particular herb which is being used by a traditional folk healers as medicine for the treatment of some ailment may be of considerable significance for other ailments also (Sharma and Kumar 2011, 2012). Further researches have revealed that a particular herb is not only useful in those ailments for which they were being used by them for long time, but also for other ailments about which was not known either to them or to the science of medicine.

The musli plant is used in curing sexual dysfunction and also as aphrodisiac. Details are presented here.

Musli (Asparagus adscendens Roxb.)

Asparagus adscendens (Liliaceae) is valued worldwide for its enormous potential in traditional medical system. Besides this, Asparagus
Asparagus racemosus Willd, Asparagus filicinust Buch-Ham.-ex. D. Don., Asparagus gonoclados Baker and Asparagus officinalis Linn. have been reported to have medicinal value. Musli is a suberect prickly shrub, with white tuberous roots. It is distributed in West Himalayas and Punjab to Kumaon.

**It is known by different names in different languages of the country**

- **Common Name**: Satavar
- **Hindi**: Hazarmuli,
- **Satavar, Safedmusli**
- **Marathi**: Satavar
- **Gujarati**: Ujli-musli,
- **Dholi musli, Saphed musli, Garhwali**: Jhima
- **Sanskrit**: Mula, Narayani,
- **Musli**
- **Tamil**: Sattavari

**It is also known by various names in different part of India.**

- **Bombay**: Dholimusli,
- **Sapheta musali**
- **North West provinces**: Khairuwa
- **Lodhas know this plant by the name of Jogilati**
  - Lodhas prescribe root paste with red roots of Ramdatun (*Smilax zeylanica* Linn.) (3:2) in the treatment of constitutional disorders. They take fresh root extract as refrigerant and apply root paste on wounds caused by mollusca shell. They give dried root powder with goat’s milk (3:2) to women as a galactagogue. They also use root paste as a demulcent for animals (Kirtiker and Basu, 1935).
  - Santhals take root infusion as cure for sunstroke.
  - Tharus tribe gives the decoction of root as galactagogue (Maheshwari *et al.*, 1980).
  - Tribal and non-tribal people of Kumaon region of U.P. use the plant stem as an aphrodisiac.
  - In states of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan and Gujarat, leaves are used for the treatment of dysentery (Jain, 1984).

**Synonyms**

- Satavari, dvipisatru,
- dvipaka, varakan taka,
- narayani, satapadi,
- sathva and bahupatrika

**Taste**: Sweet

**Attributes**: Heavy and unctuous

**Potency**: Cold

**Specific action**: Rejuvenating, promoter of strength, galactagogue and alleviator of Vayu and Pitta.

**Therapeutic usage**: Cures vitiation of blood and oedema (Dash, 1991)

According to Ayurvedic literature, the tuberous roots are used as demulcent and tonic; useful in diarrhoea, dysentery, general debility, tumours and inflammations. The whole plant is used as a vegetable. (Pathak, 1970 and Kashyapa and Chand, 1986).

The following Ayurvedic medicines are prepared solely by *Asparagus adscendens*.

1. **Musli paka**: It is a very good tonic and an aphrodisiac.
   - Dose: ½ to 1 tola with milk
2. **Musalyadi curna**: It is used as an aphrodisiac and is given in a dose of 3-5 gm.
The following are the classical uses of Musli.
(1) The root of Musli pounded with goat’s milk and honey is applied on face for freckles.
(2) Powdered rhizome of Musli is given in 12 gm dose with 100 to 250 ml milk twice a day for the treatment of epilepsy.
(3) 25 g grounded root of Apamarga (Achyranthes aspera Linn.) is steamed in Tanduladapa (rice washing), 250 ml of goat’s milk and 1 gm powdered root of Musli is added to it. It is given twice a day in bleeding piles.
(4) Fresh juice (Svarasa) obtained from the root of Musli (14 to 28 ml) taken twice a day or powdered root of Musli 3 to 6 gm taken with 100 ml milk twice a day cures peptic ulcers.
(5) Powder of Musli and Bakuci (Psoralea corylifolia Linn.) alleviates deafness.
(6) Powder of Musli root combined with Giloe (Tinospora cordifolia(Willd) Miers), suspended in milk added with ghee is given as an aphrodisiac.
(7) Paste of seeds of Kapikaccii (Mucuna pruriens(Linn.)Dc.), Musli, grape fruit(Vitex vinifera Marsh), whole plant of Lotus (Nymphaea stellata Willd.) 6-12 gm, boiled with milk is given with 50 ml warm water or 100 to 250 ml milk twice a day for cure of heart diseases.
(8) Decoction of equal part of stem of Guduci (Tinospora cordifolia), root of Musli and leaf of Patola (Trichosanthes dioica Roxb.Wall.), bark of Nimba (Azadirachta indica A.Juss.) and wood of Raktachandana (Pterocarpus santalinus Linn. F.) 28 ml is given twice a day for lacteal disorders.
(9) Powder of equal part of dried ginger, root of Musli and flower of Jasmine (Jasminum officinale Linn.) 3 to 6 gm is given with 50 to 100 ml Tanduldaka (rice washings) twice a day in abortion or miscarriage.
(10) Decoction of equal part of Triphala(Phyllanthes emblica Linn., Terminalia arjuna(Roxb.)Wt.and Arn., Terminalia chebula (Gaertn.) Retz., root of Musli, leaf of Patola (Trichosanthes dioica Roxb.Wall.), stem of Guduci (Tinospora cordifolia), whole plant of Parpata(Hedyotis corymbosa (Linn.)Lamk.) 14 to 28 ml is given twice a day in mercurial poisoning.
(11) Fruit of Goksuru (Tribulus terrestris Linn.), seeds of Eranda (Ricinus communis Linn.) and root of Musli – 100-200 ml is given with Guda (jaggery) and ghee thrice a day for the treatment of retention of urine.
(12) Ksira Siddha with Draksha (grape fruit), roots of Yastimadhu (Glycyrrhiza glabra Linn.), fruit of Goksuru, root of Musli – 100 to 200 ml is given twice a day in haematuria (the patient in this condition patient passes foetid, saline, warm urine with blood, pain in bladder region).
(13) Ksirapaka prepared from the powder of equal part of roots of Musli, Bala(Sida cordifolia Burm.) and Draksa (grape fruit) 100 to 200 ml is given with Sarkara (raw sugar) thrice a day in syncope (Transient loss of consciousness and after sometimes the patient may become conscious even without treatment).
(14) Root of Salmali (Ceiba pentandra (Linn.) Gaertn.)4 parts, root of Musli 3 parts, Vanslochana(Bambusa bambos Druce.) ½ parts are taken and powdered. Its 3 to 6 gm is given with 5 to 10 gm honey and Sarkara (raw sugar) three times a day for the treatment of neurasthenia and impotency.
(15) Equal parts of Svaras (juice) of root of Musli and leaf of Brahmi(Bacopa monnieri (Linn.)Wetlst) 7 to 14 ml is given with 100 to 250 ml fresh milk twice a day in loss of memory and lack of confidence.
(16) Powder of equal part of decorticated seed of Kapikacchii (Mucuna pruriens) and Musli 3 to 6 gm is given with 100 to 250 ml milk and 25 to 50 gm Sarkara (raw sugar) twice a day in oedema and eruptions.
(17) Decoction of equal part of roots of Asvagandha (Withania somnifera Linn.), Musli, Atibala (Sida rhombifoliaLinn.), Ativisa(Aconitum heterophyllum Wall )and stem of Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia) 14 to 28 ml, is given three times a day for the treatment of mumps and parotitis.
(18) Powder of equal part of roots of Bala (*Sida cordifolia* Burm) Asvagandha, Musli and Punarnava (*Boerhaavia diffusa* Linn.) 1 to 3 gm is given with 100-250 ml milk, twice a day for the treatment of bleeding from lungs and haemoptysis (Dash and Kashyap, 1992 and Sharma, 1996).

Besides the above preparations, various other Ayurvedic medicines contain musli (*Asparagus adscendens*).

1. **Kusmandavaleha**: 12 to 24 gm is given with 100 to 250 ml milk twice a day for the treatment of haemorrhagic disease.

2. **Candravaleha**: 10 gm is given with 100 to 250 ml fresh milk thrice in a day in Syncope disease.

3. **Bala Taila**: 7 to 14 ml is given with 50 ml warm water twice a day in prolapsus uterus.

4. **Narsimha Curna**: Half pala is given daily. It is an excellent medicine for person sufferings from leprosy, fistula, baldness, wrinkles and urinary disorders.

Besides this, Amrta Ghrta, Amrita parasavaleha, Asvagandha Ghrta, Garbha-Cintamani Rasa, Candravaleha, Cyavana Prasa Avaleha, Chagaladya Ghrta, Tikta Ghrta, Padmakadi Taila, Varunadi Ghrta and Visagarbha Taila are the medicines in which musli is main ingredient.

**Asparagus racemosus Willd.**

*Common Name*: Shatavari

**Hindi**: Bojhidan, Sadabori, Satawar, Satmuli, Shakakul

**Sanskrit**: Abhiru, Aheru, Ardhamkantaka, Atmagupta, Bahumula, Bahusuta, Bhiru, Kanchanakarini, Karshi, Keshika, Mula, Pivari, Rangini, Shatapadi

**Tamil**: Sedamulam, Sadaveli, Sadaveri, Sandaveri

**Telugu**: Challagadda, Ettavaludutige

**Uriya**: Chootaru, Mohajolo

*It is known by various names by different tribes*

**Lodhas**: Gai-sira, Satawar

**Mundas and Santhals**: Finajaperi

- Mundas use root paste against dysentery and diarrhoea.
- Oraons prescribe root decoction as an aphrodisiac and give it to women against gleet (a discharge from uterus). They give dried root powder with ghee (Clarified butter) (5:2) to children for improving eyesight.
- Oraons and Santhals use roots to make Bichimander (a tablet for preparing rice beer). Santhal tribe uses the root for curing of bleeding urine. They use the whole plant to cure headache (Goel and Mudgal, 1988).
- Lodhas use the root paste for making Rantu-tablet (a tablet used for fermentation of country liquor). They put a twig in between cotyledons of mango and throw it away after touching the body of a person who is believed to be ghost affected, to cure the victim. After delivery Lodha women wear a twig in ears and as hairdo for magical guard against evil eyes (Pal and Jain, 1998).
- Some ethnic communities use roots for preparation of sweets for diabetic patients.
- Abujmarias use the tuberous root as an anthelmintic (Roy and Chaturvedi, 1987).
- Tribal people of Godavari district of Andhra Pradesh use the root as an aphrodisiac (Sudhakar and Rolla, 1985).
- Root is used for the treatment of rheumatism in Araku Valley, Vishakhapatnam district of Andhra Pradesh and Anaikotty hills, Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu.
The root is used in tribal region of Hazaribagh district of Bihar for the treatment of bleeding nose (Tarafder and Chaudhari, 1981).

Tribes of Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh use the root for the treatment of diarrhoea and dysentery (Sharma et al., 1979 and Sebastian and Bhandari, 1984).

In Ranchi and Hazaribagh district of Bihar and Mount Abu of Rajasthan, plant is used for the treatment of gonorrhoea, leucorrhoea and menstrual complaints (Tarafder, 1983 and Hemadri and Rao, 1983).

Dangs tribe of Gujarat use the root for gastric troubles (Joshi et al., 1980).

Bhoxa tribe of UP and Rajasthan, use the plant part as a galactagogue (Sebastian, 1984; Maheshwari and Singh, 1984; Singh and Maheshwari, 1985 and Singh et al., 1987).

In Sudan, roots are used by Golos as demulcent, anti-dysenteric and diuretic.

Asparagus racemosus is widely used in many Ayurvedic and Yunani medicines.

**Ayurveda** : The roots are bitter, sweet; oleaginous, cooling, indigestible, appetiser, tonic, aphrodisiac, galactagogue, useful in dysentery, diarrhoea, tumours, inflammations, biliousness, diseases of the blood and eye and throat complaints.

**Yunani** : The root is useful in diseases of the kidney and the liver, bleeding in urine, gleet and gonorrhoea.

A mixture of honey and fresh juice of root is given as a demulcent in dyspepsia (Anonymous, 1956). Besides this, it forms part of Ayurvedic tonic used for various ailments.

1. **Galactagogue tonic** : Satawar 175 mg with Centella asiatica Linn. 250 mg, Cuminum cyminum Linn. 75 mg, Cyperus rotundus Linn. 50 mg, Gossypium indicum Lamk. 100 mg, Leptadenia reticulata W. and A. 75 mg is given twice daily with milk.

2. **Tonic for Non specific Leucorrhoea-A** : Asparagus 75 mg, , Butea monosperma Lamk. (Taub). gum 25 mg, Cinnamomum zeylanicum Blume Bijdr. bark 25 mg, Ficus bengalensis Linn. bark 75 mg, Mesua ferrea Wight. Arn. Prdr. 25 mg, Mimosa pudica Linn. 25 mg is grounded and filled in capsules which are given thrice a day.

3. **Anti-Ulcerogenic tonic** : Asparagus 150 mg, Emblica officinalis Gaertn. 150 mg, Musa paradisiaca Linn. 200 mg is given twice or thrice daily.

Asparagus officinalis Linn.

**Common Name : Sparrow grass**

Hindi – Nag down, halyun

Dutch – Asperge

English – Grass, Sparagrass

French – Asperge

German – Spargel, Schwamerwartz

Greek – Asparigel, Asparagonia

Italian – Cornudo

Russian – Sparja

Spanish – Esparrago

The root contains diuretic virtues, which are more abundant in shoots. An infusion made from these roots assist against jaundice and congestive inactivity of the liver.

In England, a medicinal tincture is made from the whole plant, which allays urinary irritation and does well against rheumatic gout.

Syrup of Asparagus is employed medicinally in France and Air-les-Bains for cure of rheumatic patients.

In the United States of America, Asparagus is undeniably sedative and a palliative in all heart affections attended with excited action of the pulse.

Asparagus filicinus Buch-Ham-ex. D.Don

Kashmiri and Punjabi – Allipalli

In Kanawar, a sprig of this is put in the hands of small pox patients as a curative measure.

The root is considered vermifuge and taenifuge in Annam. It is given in cholera and acts as a powerful diuretic. It is also used as a cure for rheumatism due to dampness.

Asparagus gonoclados Baker
Tribes of Cannore district of Kerela use the leaf for muscular pain.

According to ancient literature, the root is considered nourishing and aphrodisiac. Boiled with oil, it is applied to cutaneous diseases. It is also given in gonorrhoea in 15 grains per dose.

CONCLUSION

During the present investigations attempts were made to find out use of traditional medicinal system including tribal and non tribal to cure different ailments in various ways by use of roots and different parts of this plant. Asparagus commonly known as Musli has several species which are used directly or in various combinations by different tribal groups.

REFERENCES