

Apamarga: “A Traditional Herb with Modern Relevance” A Review

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ABSTRACT

Apamarga (*Achyranthes aspera*) About 21 species make up the genus *Achyranthes* L., a perennial or annual herb is found throughout tropical and subtropical climates and is a member of the Amaranthaceae family.

The two species that have been used most frequently as medicinal plants in Asian nations for many years are ***Achyranthes bidentata* and *Achyranthes aspera***.

Commonly found in India, tropical Asian nations, and other areas of the world, *Achyranthes aspera* L. is also known as prickly chaff flower in English, aghara in Hindi, Puthkanda in local language, aghada in Marathi and Apamarga in Ayurveda. The plant's components are used by some Ayurvedic and Unani practitioners to treat a variety of conditions, including bronchial asthma, hemorrhoids, arthritis, wounds, snake and bug bites, renal and cardiac dropsy, urinary calculus, diabetes, skin conditions, STDs, and gastroenteritis.

Types:

- Shweta (White Variety)
- Rakta (Red Variety)

One notable medicinal plant is ***Achyranthes aspera* Linn.**, commonly known as Apamarga or Rough Chaff flower. This herb, part of the Amaranthaceae family, is found throughout India and in tropical regions. Its roots, seeds, and flowers are utilized in traditional medicine for various ailments, including dental issues, rheumatism, bronchitis, skin diseases, and even conditions like fever and diabetes.

KEYWORDS: Apamarga, Ayurveda, Taxonomy, Morphology, Pharmacological Action, Ayurvedic Formulations.

I. INTRODUCTION

Apamargatanduliya to stress that the dehusked seeds of Apamarga (*Achyranthes aspera*), rather than husked ones, are to be prescribed for therapeutic purposes. In addition to the bio-purification procedures, this chapter also explains the need for post-purification dietary regimen

(*samsarjanakrama*) to be followed in order to rekindle agni (digestive powers). It includes importance of gruels to eradicate specific diseases and re-kindle jatharagni (digestive powers) and provides detailed descriptions and procedures for yavagukalpana (preparation of yavagu, or a special form of gruel).



Fig 1.1: Apamarga Plant

1.2 According to Ayurveda

In Ayurveda, *Achyranthes aspera* is described as having bitter and pungent properties, being laxative and stomachic, and is used to treat a range of conditions such as vomiting, heart disease, piles, and abdominal pain. Notably, it has demonstrated spermicidal, antipyretic, antibacterial, antifungal, wound healing, anti-parasitic, and anti-hepatic activities, highlighting its versatility in therapeutic applications.

The synergistic action of the phytochemicals in this plant may enhance their efficacy while minimizing side effects compared to conventional allopathic medications. This makes *Achyranthes aspera* a valuable candidate for further research in drug development and therapeutic use.

Apamarga, a name synonymous with the herb *Achyranthes aspera*, has been deeply rooted in the annals of Indian traditional medicine, particularly Ayurveda. Its origins trace back to ancient times, where it was revered for its diverse therapeutic properties.

The name "Apamarga" itself is derived from Sanskrit, with "Apam" meaning "water" and

"Marga" meaning "path." This nomenclature hints at its potent diuretic properties, which have been recognized for centuries. The plant's ability to cleanse the urinary tract and promote kidney health has been a cornerstone of its traditional use.

In ancient Ayurvedic texts like the Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita, Apamarg is extensively discussed. These texts detail its various medicinal uses, including its efficacy in treating inflammatory conditions, skin diseases, digestive disorders, and respiratory ailments. The herb was often prescribed in combination with other herbs to enhance its therapeutic effects.

Throughout history, Apamarg has been a staple in traditional households. Its leaves, roots, and seeds have been used to prepare decoctions, infusions, and poultices. The plant's versatility has ensured its continued popularity, even in modern times.

While traditional medicine has long recognized the benefits of Apamarg, modern scientific research is increasingly validating its therapeutic potential. Researchers have isolated various bioactive compounds from the plant, including alkaloids, tannins, flavonoids, and saponins. These compounds have been shown to possess antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and antidiabetic properties.

As we delve deeper into the world of natural remedies, Apamarg stands as a testament to the wisdom of ancient medicine. Its enduring legacy is a testament to its efficacy and safety, making it a valuable resource for promoting overall health and well-being.

1.2 TAXONOMY

Kingdom- Plantae
Division- Mangoliophyta
Class- Mangoliopsida
Order- Caryophyllales
Family- Amaranthaceae
Genus- Achyranthes
Species- Aspera

Vernacular Names

English- Prickly Chaff Flower, Rough Chaff Tree
Hindi- Chirchita, Latjira
Sanskrit- Mayuraka, Durgraha, Pratyakpushpi
Marathi- Aghada
Telgu- Apamargam
Bengali- Apang

PROPERTIES:

Table 1.1: Properties of Apamarga Plant

General Properties	Apamarga Properties
Rasa	Tikta, Katu
Guna	Laghu, Tikshna
Virya	Ushna
Vipaka	Katu
Karma	Pachana, Lekhana

1.3 MORPHOLOGY

Habit and Size

- **Erect Herb:** Apamarga is an upright, herbaceous plant that typically grows to a height of 30-90 cm.
- **Branching Pattern:** It exhibits a branched growth pattern, with multiple stems arising from the base.

Root System

- **Taproot:** The plant possesses a well-developed taproot that penetrates deep into the soil, enabling it to withstand harsh conditions.
- **Adventitious Roots:** Additionally, it develops adventitious roots from the nodes of the stem, further anchoring the plant and aiding in nutrient absorption.

Stem

- **Quadrangular:** The stem is distinctive due to its quadrangular shape, with four prominent ridges running along its length.
- **Hairy Texture:** The stem is covered with short, stiff hairs, giving it a rough texture.
- **Node and Internode:** The stem is segmented into nodes and internodes. Nodes are the points where leaves and branches arise, while internodes are the segments between the nodes.

Leaves

- **Simple Leaves:** Apamarga bears simple, oppositely arranged leaves.
- **Shape:** The leaves are typically lanceolate or ovate-lanceolate, with a pointed apex and a tapering base.
- **Margin:** The leaf margin is entire, without teeth or lobes.
- **Venation:** The leaves exhibit prominent reticulate venation, with a distinct midrib and lateral veins branching out.
- **Hairy Texture:** Similar to the stem, the leaves are also covered with short, stiff hairs, contributing to their rough texture.

Inflorescence

- **Spicate Inflorescence:** The flowers of Apamarga are arranged in dense, spike-like inflorescences.
- **Bracts:** Each flower is subtended by a pair of dry, persistent bracts.
- **Flower Structure:** The flowers are small, inconspicuous, and greenish-white in color. They are bisexual, possessing both male and female reproductive organs.
- **Perianth:** The perianth is composed of five sepals that are fused at the base.
- **Stamens:** The flowers typically possess five stamens with versatile anthers.
- **Pistil:** The pistil consists of a superior ovary, a style, and a two-lobed stigma.

Fruit

- **Utricle:** The fruit of Apamarga is an utricle, a dry, indehiscent fruit that encloses the seed.
- **Spiny Texture:** The fruit is covered with spines, which aid in seed dispersal by attaching to the fur of animals or clothing.

Seeds

- **Small and Numerous:** The seeds of Apamarga are small and numerous.
- **Seed Coat:** The seed coat is hard and impervious, enabling the seeds to survive adverse conditions.



Fig 1.2: Morphology of Apamarga

1.4 PHYTO CONSTITUENTS:

- **Fatty Acids:**
 - Oleic acid
- **Triterpenoids:**
 - Oleanolic acid

- Ecdysterone

- **Sterols:**

- Spinasterol

- **Carbohydrates:**

- D-Glucose
- L-Rhamnose
- D-Glucuronic acid

- **Alkaloids:**

- Achyranthine

- **Carbohydrates:**

- D-Glucose
- L-Rhamnose
- D-Glucuronic acid

- **Alkaloids:**

- Achyranthine

1.5 PHARMACOLOGICAL ACTIONS

- Anti inflammatory
- Cardiac Depressant and Stimulant
- Vasodilator
- Purgative
- In ear infection
- Antifungal
- In Piles
- Diuretic
- Hypoglycemic
- Hypotensive
- Spasmolytic
- In Diabetic Wounds
- In stones

1.6 AYURVEDIC FORMULATION OF APAMARGA

- **Combination of PratisaraneeyaKshara along with BilvādiAgada** (antitoxic oral medicine) exhibit effectiveness in the management of Molluscum contagiosum (painless bumps).
- **ApamargaKsharataila** (prepared from *Acyranthesaspera* and sesame oil) is used in ear disorders such as deafness, sound in ears, and Karna Purana (filling of ears with oil).
- **Combination of ApamargaKsharaBasti (2 g Kshara in 10 ml of normal water)** and Triphalaguggulu (herbal formulation) on 129 patients with bleeding piles in which 55 patients get marked relief.

- **Apamargakshara along with some other plants, kshara taken along with goat's urine** is used to remove Mutraashmari (urinary stone).
- Chakradatta has mentioned that **paste of Apamarga root kshara and haridra** should be applied on Lingarsha (Condition similar to piles,itching,burning and pain in anal region).



Fig 1.3: Ayurvedic Powder of Apamarga

II. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Atlast we only conclude that Apamarga is king of herbs because it will wipe away mostly all diseases. Mainly it is beneficial in curing disease caused by hunger and thirst, defects of organs, physical stability and all other disorders.

It is the plant whose each part has therapeutic value. Its allocation is done in ayurveda, different vedickalas, various Nighantus. With its pharmacological action its benefits are also considered in astrology and sprituality. In astrology Apamarga tree is linked with Anuradha Nakshatra which is associated with purification so it is considered to remove obstacles and negative energies. In spiritual way it is believed that it bring happiness and prosperity.

Apamarga is versatile herb. After reading various case studies we also conclude that this plant is used in wound healing in diabeties, also in lepromatus treatment, in udarshula special case of biliary colic and more.

In market, apamarga is come in combination with different herbs to cure many diseases. Lastly we conclude that Apamarga is lord of all plants.

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