

AN AYURVEDIC COMPILATION OF ARJUNA FROM VEDAS TO NIGHANTUS

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ABSTRACT

Arjuna is considered as an herbal hero of heart. It has many effective medicinal uses which make it such a valuable herb in treatment of various diseases in Ayurveda. In India *Arjuna* is one of the most religious and sacred tree. Leaves and flowers of *Arjuna* are used in various religious occasions. From ancient times this herb is used for various Ayurvedic preparations because of its versatile medicinal properties. *Arjuna* is also a name of warrior hero of *Mahabharata* who was a protector of his family. The herb *Arjuna* also was named for its traditional role of protecting. In Sanskrit the word *Arjuna* names bright silver or shining expressing the shining quality of the bark of very tall deciduous tree.

Keywords: *Arjuna*, *Terminalia Arjuna*, *Vedic review*, *puranic*

INTRODUCTION

Arjuna is used in Ayurveda for various diseases from 7th cent A.D. *Arjuna* is an evergreen tree of family combretaceae, which grows along the rivers of India. The name *Arjuna* for tree occurs in the Rig-Veda and Atharva-veda and means white or bright, probably denoting its creamy white color flowers or the shining quality of its bark. While mentioning *Krishna Baal Lela* there is a clear mention of *Arjuna* tree. In *Charka Samhita*, *Arjuna* is mentioned in various formulations in various diseases. It is mentioned in *udarada mahakashaya* and is referred as a plant of *jangala Desha*. In *Sushruta Samhita*, in *Drava sangrahaniya adhyay* *Arjuna* has been enumerated in *salasaradi gana*.

To make study easy and proper, historians has divided the period into ancient period (4000B.C to 6 cent

A.D). Medieval period (7th to 15th cent A.D) and modern period (16th cent A.D onwards)

SOURCES AND METHODS:

A detail study of drug is compiled from various Ayurvedic texts, scientific Journals and research papers and all available literature.

VEDIC REVIEW OF ARJUNA (Ancient period)

In *Rig-Veda* it seems that the word *Arjuna* indicates the white color whereas *Atharva-veda* has quoted the drug at three different places

RIGVEDA:-

As the water irrigates earth, same as holy people praise you, for a god of fire u hold a black colored flame and white colored beauty.¹ (M 10/Ch 4/su 44)

In *Rig-Veda* the term *Arjuna* is used in reference of white color.

ATHARVVEDA:-

O patient! The gem (*Mani*) made up of husk of barley of kapil *Varna Arjuna* bark and *til* included *manjiri*, should protect you from diseases all originating from particular area.² (2/3/8/3)

O *apsaras*! Spend a free time at a place where a swing is tied up with the trees of *Arjuna*.³ (4/7/37/5)

I destroy the whole white colored and all types of worms.⁴ (2/3/8/3)

PAURANIK REVIEW OF ARJUNA:

There are so many *puranas* in our culture, among which *Arjuna* drug is clearly mentioned in *Agnipurana* and *Matsya purana* at different places.

AGNI PURANA:-

In *kumbhadhivaas vidhi* trees of *palash*, *Arjuna*, *plaksha*, *kadamba*, *bakula*, mango is described.⁵ (57/9)

In *pushpadhyay kathanam* the fragrance of *neep*, *Arjuna*, *kadamba*, *bakul* trees are described.⁶ (202/8)

MATASYA PURANA:- In 118 chapters *Arjuna* is defined with mango and other trees and is also described with its synonym *bhandeer*. In 217 chapter tree *Arjuna* is defined with *priyangu*, *dhataki* *pushpa*, *mocha* and *asana*.

Mythological history of Arjuna: One of the greatest epic of Sanskrit literature, *valmiki Ramayana* is replete with great description of nature's glory. In this various plants which have sacred qualities, which are used for medicinal purposes and other which are commonly found plants of the particular geographical region. *Arjuna* tree is clearly mentioned in *baalkanda*, *aranyakanda*, *kishkindha kand* and in *Srimada Bhagvadapurana* 10th *Skanda*. While mentioning in *Krishna bal-Lila*, there is a situation, where Lord *Krishna* was tied to a mortar (*okapi*) by his mother *Yashoda*, after being tied Lord *Krishna* drags the mortar (*okapi*), along with him and was stuck between two *Arjuna* trees standing in

his courtyard. Tree was so strong that he forcefully pulled the mortar (*okapi*) to the other side, such that, both the *Arjuna* trees get uprooted and fall. In this way *Arjuna* is mentioned in the form of tree here.

References of Arjuna tree in Ramayana :(about 1000BCE): Following are the verses where glory of *Arjuna* tree is defined:

- *Arjuna* tree, tell me if you know a timid lady, daughter of *Wanaka* and my beloved, fond of *Arjuna* tree. Is the living or not ?¹⁰(3.60.14)
- The forest jampacked with *dhava*, *ashvakarna*, *kakubha*, *bilva*, *tinduka*, *patala*, and *badari* trees, how frightening these forest could be.¹¹(1.24.15)
- dear the moist winds have ceased to blow as before and are carrying the fragrance of *kutaj* and *Arjuna* flowers.¹²(4.30.25)
- Elephants roam the forestland inhabited by peacocks making noise out of joy, where the grassy land is filled with crawling *indragopa* insects and the fragrance of *kaamba* and *Arjuna* blossoms.¹³(4.28.41)
- This mountain scented by the fragrance of *Arjuna* and *ketaka* flowers is bathed in rain water just as *sugriva*, tranquilized by the destruction of the enemy is consecrated in streams of sacred water.¹⁴(4.28.9)
- See the uniform rows of sandalwood trees and *Arjuna*, it looks as though they are arranged together imaginatively.¹⁵(4.27.24)
- The place is delightful with bushes of *jasmine*, *kunda* and *sindhuvava*, *sireeshaka*, *kadamba*, *Arjuna* and *sarja* in bloom.¹⁶(4.27.10)
- *muchkunda*, *Arjuna*, *ketak*, *uddalaka*, *shirisha*, *shimpshupa*, and *shava* all in full bloom on the mountain peaks.¹⁷(4.1.80)

ARJUNA TREE IN SHRIMAD BHAGWAT

GEETA: Sharing it's name with the warrior hero of *Mahabharata*, one of the most iconic figures in ancient Hindu mythology, *Arjuna* tree is clearly mentioned in *shrimad bhagvat geeta* in 10 *skand* while mentioning *krishnabal Leola* in verse 22-23 While mother *Yashodha* was busying in household affairs,

the supreme lord *Krishna* observed twin trees *Yamala- Arjuna*, which is a former millennium had been the demigod sons of *Kuvera*. (Verse-22) In the former birth these two sons k/as *Nalakurva* and *Maligreva*, were extremely opulent and fortunate. But because of pride and false prestige they did not care about anyone and thus *narad muni* cursed them to become trees. (Verse -23).¹⁸

IMPORTANCE OF ARJUNA TREE IN VEDIC ASTROLOGY:

Those have faith in *Vedic* astrology believe that stars (*nakshatras*) exercise influence on people through-

out their life. There are 27 *nakshatras* present and every individual has a *nakshatra* assigned to her or him depending on the date and time of birth.

Every *nakshatra* has a specific symbolic tree associated with it. Hindu scriptures enjoin persons to plant and care for their particular *nakshatra* associated tree to attain peace and prosperity and ward off evil influences. The *Arjuna* tree is associated with the 15th star *Swati*. Thus it is believed that those born under *Swati nakshatra* should plant and look after *Arjuna* trees.

Medieval period (7th to 15th Cent A.D)

SAMHITA REVIEW OF ARJUNA:

References ¹⁹	Uses	References ²⁰	Uses	References ²¹	Uses
C.S.SU. 3/5	<i>Bahiparimarjana</i>	S.S.SU. 14/36	<i>Raktaatipravritti</i>	A.H.SU 2/2	<i>Dantadhawana</i>
C.S.SU 4/43	<i>Udardprashmana mahakashaya</i>	S.S.SU 38/12	<i>Medo dhatu shoshaka</i>	A.H.SU 15/41	<i>Medoroga</i>
C.S.SU 5/73	<i>Dantadhawana</i>	S.S.SHA 2/8-9	<i>Kunapgandhi sukra dosha</i>	A.H.SU 29/72	<i>Vrana</i>
C.S.SU 25/49	<i>E.g. Of sarasava</i>	S.S.CHI 1/98	<i>Vrana</i>	A.H.SA 2/44	<i>Mudagarbha</i>
C.S.VI 8/144	<i>Kasahyaskandha</i>	S.S.CHI 2/65	<i>Vrana ropaka</i>	A.H.CHI 6/53	<i>Kapahaja prameha</i>
C.S.CHI 3/258	<i>Daha and jwara</i>	S.S.CHI 3/6	<i>Bhagna</i>	A.H.CHI 11/37	<i>Mutraghata</i>
C.S.CHI 4/75	<i>Raktapitta</i>	S.S.CHI 9/7	<i>Pittaj kushtha</i>	A.H. CHI 12/7	<i>Kaphaja hridroga</i>
C.S.CHI 6/27	<i>Kapahaja prameha</i>	S.S.CHI 11/8	<i>Sukrameha</i>	A.H.CHI 12/8	<i>Pittaja prameha</i>
C.S.CHI 6/31	<i>Pittaj prameha</i>	S.S.CHI 11/9	<i>Prameha</i>	A.H.CHI 12/17	<i>Vata and kaphaja prameha</i>
C.S.CHI 7/129	<i>Kushtha</i>	S.S.CHI 15/23	<i>Sutika vedana</i>	A.H.UT 22/28	<i>Sheetada</i>
C.S.CHI 8/129	<i>Rajyakshama and atisar</i>	S.S.CHI 18/10	<i>Pittaj granthi</i>	A.H.UT 22/82	<i>Mukhroga</i>
C.S.CHI 14/214	<i>Arsha</i>	S.S.CHI 19/31	<i>Pittaj updansha</i>	A.H.UT 25/59	<i>Vrana</i>
C.S.CHI 23/100	<i>Krimi</i>	S.S.CHI 25/28	<i>Palitya</i>	A.H.UT 27/14	<i>Sandhiroga</i>
C.S.CHI 23/204	<i>Kitta and luta dansha</i>	S.S.CHI 25/32	<i>Blackening of hair</i>	A.H.UT 32/16	<i>Vyanga</i>
C.S.CHI 25/95	<i>Vrana</i>	S.S.KA 6/3	<i>Sarpdansha</i>	A.H.UT 34/47	<i>Rajodosha</i>
C.S.CHI 25/113	<i>Twak sanjanana</i>	S.S.KA 6/22	<i>Sarpvisha</i>	A.H.UT 37/36	<i>Vrishchika dansha</i>
C.S.CHI 26/98	<i>Kapahaja hridroga</i>	S.S.KA 8/114	<i>Rakta luta dansha</i>		
C.S.CHI 26/272-73	<i>Palitya</i>	S.S.UT 12/11	<i>Rakta abhishyanda</i>		
C.S.CHI 29/143	<i>Vatarakta</i>	S.S.UT 39/252	<i>Jeerna jwara</i>		
C.S.CHI 30/92	<i>Yoni and rajodosha</i>	S.S.UT40/96	<i>Atisara</i>		
		S.S.UT 45/23	<i>Raktapitta</i>		
		S.S.UT 45/35	<i>Raktapitta</i>		
		S.S.UT 45/36	<i>Raktapitta</i>		

CLASSIFICATION OF ARJUNA:

- Charaka: *Kashayaskandha, Udardaprashamana*
- Sushruta: *Nyagrodhadi, Salasaradi*
- Vagbhatt: *Nyagrodhadi, Virtarvadi*

- Bhavaprakash Nighantu: *Vatadi*
- Bhavaprakash: *Nyagrodhadi, Salasaradi*
- Dhanvantari Nighantu: *Amradi, Swati Nakshatra Vriksha*

- *Raj Nighantu: Prabhadradi*
- *Kaidev Nighantu: Aushadhi*

- *Nighantu Adarsh: Bibhitakadi*

Arjuna in nighantu`s and other textual literature of ayurveda

Name	B.P.N	D.N	R.N	P.N	K.N	M.N	G.R.M	Database	API
Kaubha	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
Arjuna	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	
Gandeev	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	
Partha	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+
Dhananjaya	+	+	+	-	-	-	+	-	
Karnari	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	
Nadisarja	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	
Indradu	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	
Veervriksha	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	
Veer	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	
Dhawal	+	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	
Chitrayodhi	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	
Veerantaka	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	
Kireeti	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	
Padava	-	+		-	-	-	-	-	
Phalguna	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	
Dhurtabhuruha	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	
Shwetavaha	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+
Madhugandhi	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	
Prasunaka	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	
Nad	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	
Munj	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	
Shathadruma	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	
Shambara	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	
Shivamallaka	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	
Savyasachi	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	
Kuruveeraka	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	
Kauntaiye	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	
Indrasunu	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	
Veedru	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	-	
Krishnasarathi	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	
Prithaya	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	

Karma	B.P	D.N	R.N	P.N	K.N	M.N	G.R.M	API	Database
Raktasthambhana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Sandhaniya	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Vranaropan	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Stambhana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
Hridya	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	+
Hridyotejjak	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+

<i>Raktaprasadana</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Shothahara</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Kaphaghna</i>	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+
<i>Mutrasangrahaniya</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Jwaraghna</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Medohara</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
<i>Vishaghna</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
<i>Balya</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Pittavikarnashaka</i>	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	-
<i>Shramaghana</i>	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Pipasahara</i>	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Vaatprakopaka</i>	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Raktadoshanashaka</i>	+	-	-	+	-	+	+	-	-

<i>Rogaghna</i>	<i>B.P</i>	<i>D.N</i>	<i>R.N</i>	<i>P.N</i>	<i>K.N</i>	<i>M.N</i>	<i>G.R.M</i>	<i>API</i>	<i>Database</i>
<i>Vrana</i>	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	+
<i>Raktastrava</i>	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+
<i>Asthibhagna</i>	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+
<i>Raktatisara</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+
<i>Grahini</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Arsha</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Kshayajkasa</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Prameha</i>	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	+	+
<i>Pooyameha</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Shukrameha</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Raktapradar</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Shwetapradar</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Kushtha</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
<i>Kandu</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+
<i>Charmaroga</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Jeernajwara</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Medoroga</i>	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Visha</i>	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+
<i>Daarbalya</i>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+
<i>Urahkshata</i>	+	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	+
<i>Kshaya</i>	+	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	-
<i>Raktapitta</i>	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
<i>Hridroga nashaka</i>	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-
<i>Swedadhikya</i>	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-

Main formulations:

- *Kakubhadi churna*
- *Arjunarishta*
- *Arjuna ghrita*
- *Arjunadisiddha kshira*
- *Kakubhadi kshira*
- *Shankara vati*
- *Laksha guggulu*
- *Nyagrodhyadya ghrita*
- *Dhatakyadi tail*

- *Devadarvyarishta*

DISCUSSION

The above study shows the importance of *Arjuna* tree from *Vedas* to modern period. Since *Vedic* time it is indicated as very important medicinal plant. According to *samhitas* and *nighantus* different part of *Arjuna* is used in making different formulations for different diseases.

So the above study result from *Vedas* to *nighantus* indicates that *Arjuna* is very important medicinal plant and it possesses many qualities including *hridroga*, *pradeha*, *updamsha*, *visuchika*, *rasayana*, *kshudraroga*, etc. *Arjuna* has different synonyms like *kakubha*, *partha*, *veertaru*, *dhananjaya* etc. Accordingly different part of *Arjuna* is used in making different formulations for different diseases.

It is well documented in classics that dried stem bark of *Arjuna* has been widely used as a medicine as a cardio tonic, for injury or wound, emaciated condition, poison, blood disorders, obesity, urinary disorders and ulcer or wound. The use of *Arjuna* barks powder as an astringent and diuretic which is mentioned in *charka samhita*. About 1200 years ago in *Ashtanga hridayam acharya vagbhatta* firstly described the cardio protective property of bark.

It is observed that *Arjuna* has been used as an ingredient of 125 formulations comprising of 103 internal and 22 external formulations. In which the highest number of formulations found in *hridroga*, *prameha*, *updansha*, *agnimandya*, *ajeerna*, *striroga*, *kasa*, *raktapitta*, *amlapitta* in external applications, the formulations are indicated for *charmaroga*, *striroga*, *Baal roga*, and *updansha*.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of this we can conclude that tree *Arjuna* possesses importance not only because of its medicinal properties but also considered as a sacred and religious because of mythological history behind it.

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Source of Support: Nil

Conflict Of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Kamayani Mishra & Vijeta Baarange: An Ayurvedic Compilation Of Arjuna From Vedas To Nighantus. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2018 {cited August, 2018} Available from: http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/1699_1705.pdf