

# Herbs that Heal

*Herbs having been used in the treatment of diseases and for revitalising body systems in almost all ancient civilizations. Plants were the mainstay 'of medicine and credited with mystical and almost supernatural powers of healing.*

*Curative properties of some herbs are mentioned in the Rigveda. Many of the plants mentioned in the Rigveda can be identified with reasonable certainty. A more detailed account is found in the Athamaveda. Information about herbs has been recorded in Charaka Samhita and Shusruta Samhita the two most important works on Ayurvedic system of medicine. The latter deals with as many as 700 herbs, some of which have not even originated in India. In subsequent years, more and more plants were used in indigenous medicine and their number gradually increased to 1500.*

*The Chinese also have a compilation of 1,000 ancient herbs. Even in these modern times Chinese herbal medicine is relied upon.*

*Herbs play a significant role in modern times, when the damaging effects of food processing and over medication have assumed alarming proportions. They are now being increasingly used in cosmetics, foods and teas, as well as alternative medicines. The growing interest in herbs is a part of the movement towards change in life styles. This movement is based on the belief that the plants have a vast potential for their use as a curative medicine. The ultimate objective of their use is that they should interact directly with our body chemistry. They may be used in various forms like food, medicine, cosmetics, or fragrance, but in all cases, their active constituents must be absorbed into the body for deriving the required benefits.*

*A word of caution. While most herbs have little or no harmful side effects, some herbs may cause undesirable reactions in some persons. Therefore, try only one herb at a time, beginning in small doses and wait and watch for side effects. If there are none, increase the use or dosage cautiously. Also, not all herbal applications are effective in every case in every person. And in no case should these be used as substitutes for professional medical attention in emergencies or serious chronic diseases*

<http://www.crystallotus.com/Herbs/023.htm>

## ***Index of Diseases and common ailments***

*which respond to healing power and curative properties of herbs.*

***Abdominal Pains :*** See under Chronic Peritonitis

***Acidity :*** Aniseed , Caraway Seeds , Cardamom , Celery , Cinnamon , Clove , Coriander , Cumin Seeds , Curry Leaves , Fenugreek , Ginger , Pepper , Rosemary , Tamarind , Turmeric

***Acne:*** See under Pimples

***Anemia :*** Celery , Chicory , Dill , Fenugreek , Onion

***Arthritis/Rheumatism :*** Celery , Garlic , Gokulakanta , Indian Gooseberry, Lemon Grass, Madhuca, Nutmeg, Pepper, Sage,

***Asthma/Bronchitis:*** Aniseed, Asafoetida, Celery, Chicory, Clove, Datura, Garlic, Ginger, Holy Basil, Indian Gooseberry, Turmeric,

***Burns, Scalds & Boils:*** Betel Leaves, Cumin Seeds, Curry Leaves, Dill, Madhuca, Marigold, Parsley, Tamarind, Turmeric,

***Cataract:*** Aniseed, Fenugreek, Garlic, Indian Mallow, Indian Sorrel, Parsley

***Catarrah:*** Aniseed, Clove, Fenugreek, Lemon Grass, Onion, Poppy Seeds,

***Abdominal Pains:*** Cumin Seeds , Ginger , Ispaghula , , Saffron,

***Common Cold:*** Cinnamon , Cumin Seeds , Ginger, Holy Basil , Nutmeg , Onion, Pepper,

***Constipation:*** Bael Fruit, Betel Leaves, Cassia, Chicory, Cinnamon, Fennel, Ispaghula, Liquorice, Parslane , Peepal, Tamarind

***Corns:*** Liquorice

***Cough/Sore Throat:*** Betel Leaves, Cardamon, Clove, Fennel, Fenugreek, Garlic, Ginger, Holy Basil, Liquorice, Madhuca, Pepper, Sage, Turmeric,

**Depression:** Cardamon

**Diabetes** Curry Leaves, Fenugreek, Indian Gooseberry, Madhuca,

**Diarrhoea & Dysentery** Bael Fruit, Chicory, Cumin Seeds.

**Diphtheria :** Garlic

**Dysentery :** See under Diarrhoea

**Earache :** Bael Fruit , Clove , Ginger , Holy Basil

**Falling Hail & Dandruff :** Curry Leaves , Fenugreek , Indian Hemp , Sage ,

**Flatulence :** See under indigestion

**Gall Stones :** Celery

**Glaucoma :** Indian Gooseberry

**Gout :** Celery , Holy Basil ,

**Headaches & Migraine :** Betel Leaves , Clove , Ginger , Indian Hemp

**Heart Disorders :** Garlic , Indian Gooseberry, Onion , Peepal

**High Blood Pressure :** Garlic

**Indigestion/Flatulence/Acidity:** Aniseed , Caraway Seeds , Cardamom , Celery , Cinnamon , Clove , Coriander , Cumin Seeds , Curry Leaves , Fenugreek , Ginger , Pepper , Rosemary , Tamarind , Turmeric

**Influenza :** Fenugreek , Holy Basil , Marjoram , Onion ,

**Insomnia :** Aniseed , Celery , Cumin Seeds , Indian Hemp , Nutmeg , Poppy Seeds

**Intestinal Worms :** Turmeric , Chicory

**Liver Problems:** Chicory , Garlic ,

**Low Back Pain Lumbago :** Betel Leaves , Garlic ,

**Menstrual Problems :** Asafoetida , Chicory , Ginger , Indian Hemp ,

**Muscular Cramps :** Clove , Ginger , Liquorice , Pepper

**Nausea :** Cassia , Carry Leaves , Hog Weed

**Ophthalmia :** See under Conjuclivitis ,

**Orchitis**

**Peptic Ulcer :** Madhuca, Bael Fruit

**Pharyngitis :** Cardamom

**Pimples/Arne :** Cinnamon , Fenugreek , Sandalwood

**Prickly Heat :** Sandalwood

**Pyorrhoea :** Holy Basil , Pepper

**Rheumatism :** Celery , Garlic , Gokulakanta , Indian Gooseberry, Lemon Grass, Madhuca, Nutmeg, Pepper, Sage,

**Sciatica :** Nutmeg

**Sinusitis :** Fenugreek

**Syphillis :** Poppy Seeds

**Toothache/Teeth Disorders :** Asafoetida , Banyan , Clove , Holy Basil , Onion , Pepper

**Tuberculosis :** Celery , Ginger , Indian Hemp , Onion ,

**Whooping Cough :** Garlic

# Aniseed

**Botanical Name:** *Pimpinella anisum*,

**Indian Name:** *Velaiti Saunf*



*Anise is an annual culinary herb belonging to ajwain or celery family.*

*It contains moisture, substantial amount of protein, fatty oil and crude fibre besides essential oil, sugars, starch and ash. It also contains choline. Anise oil is a colourless or pale yellow liquid, with the characteristic odour and taste of the fruit. Anise oil's chief constituent is anethole which is present in large quantity.*

## **Curative Properties**

*Aniseed properties are to relieve flatulence and to remove phelgm from the bronchial tube.*

*It increases the volume and discharge of urine and there is an excess of perspiration .*

**Digestive Disorders** *Aniseed is an ideal medicine for expelling wind from the stomach. It can also be taken, in combination with other digestives like ginger, cummin and pepper. Gripe water for infants contains aniseed extract. Ideal for indigestion. To prepare an infusion is to mix a teaspoon of aniseed in a cup of boiling water and leave it covered overnight. The clear fluid is then decanted and taken with honey. Useful in preventing gas and fermentation in the stomach .*

**Cataract** *The herb is useful in the treatment of cataract. 6 grams of aniseed should be taken daily in the morning and evening. The another way, is to powder an equal weight of aniseed and coriander seeds and to mix it with an equal weight of unrefined sugar. About 12 gram doses of this mixture is to be taken in the morning and evening.*

**Asthma** *Aniseed can be used in the treatment of asthma due to its expectorant properties.*

**Insomnia** *Tea made from aniseed can be used in the treatment of sleeplessness. To a boiling 375 ml of water and add a teaspoon of aniseed. Simmer for 15 minutes. It should then be strained and taken hot or warm.*

*Do not boil Aniseed too long as it loses its digestive properties and essential oil during the process.*

# Asafoetida

*Botanical Name: Ferula foetida, Ferula northex, Indian Name: Hing*



*Asafoetida is a resinous gum. It is dirty yellow in colour with a pungent smell. Its mineral and vitamin contents include substantial caldron besides phosphorus, iron, carotene, riboflavin and niacin. Asafoetida contains resin, gum, volatile oil and ash.*

## **Curative Properties**

*It expels wind from the stomach .*

*Also a nervine stimulant, digestive agent and a sedative.*

*Women's Ailments Several problems concerning women such as sterility, premature labour, unusually painful, difficult and excessive menstruation. About 12 centigrams of gum fried in ghee mixed with 120 grams of goat's fresh milk and a tablespoon of honey, should be given thrice daily for a month. It helps the secretion of progesterone hormone.*

*Respiratory Disorders like whooping cough, asthma and bronchitis. About 3 to 6 centigrams of this gum, mixed with 2 teaspoons of honey, a quarter teaspoon of white onion juice and 1 teaspoon of betel leaf juice, taken thrice daily would keep the patient away from such disorders.*

*Hysteria An effective remedy for hysteria. Inhaling prevents hysterical attacks.*

*Impotency The herb can be used in the treatment of impotency. About 6 centigrams of asafoetida should be fried in ghee and mixed with honey and a teaspoon of fresh latex of banyan tree. This mixture should be taken once a day for 40 days before sunrise.*

*Stomach Disorders An effective remedy for several diseases of the stomach. In case of flatulence and distension of the stomach, asafoetida should be dissolved in hot water and a pad of cloth steeped in it may be used for fomenting the abdomen.*

*Toothache After being pestled in lemon juice, it is slightly heated. A cotton piece, soaked in the lotion and placed in the cavity of the tooth, relieves pain .*

# Bael Fruit

*Botanical Name: Aegle marmelos*

*Other English Names: Stone apple, Bengal quince*

*Indian Name: Bel or Siriphal*



*The tree is the abode of Lord Shiva. This tree has been traced to Vedic period . The Yajurveda mentions the bael fruit. The bael tree abounds in the vicinity of temples. The leaves of the tree bark is traditionally used as sacred offering to Lord Shiva.*

*Several chemical constituents have been isolated and identified from various parts of the bael tree. These include alkaloids, coumarins and steroids sterol and aegelin. The fruit has marmorosin. Roots of the tree have been found to contain psoralin, xanthotoxin, scopoletin and tembamide.*

## **Curative Properties**

*In the ancient medical treatise in Sanskrit mention all parts of this tree stem, bark, root, leaves and fruit. At all stages of maturity have been used as medicine. The fruit's medicinal value is very high when it just begins to ripen. The fruit is cooling and a laxative. It stops secretion or bleeding. The unripe fruit is good for digestion. It is useful in curing scurvy.*

*Ear Problems A home remedy for curing ear problems. A stiff piece of the root is dipped in neem oil and lighted. The oil that drips from the burning end. An effective medicine for ear problems. The antiseptic properties of neem combined with the astringent extract of bael root curing infection, chronic inflammation and discharge.*

*Respiratory Disorders The leaves gives relief from recurrent colds and respiratory infections. A teaspoon oil should be massaged into the scalp before a head bath. Its regular use builds up resistance to colds and coughs. The oil is prepared, juice extracted from bael leaves mixed with an equal quantity of gingelly or sesame oil and heated thoroughly. A few seeds of black pepper and half a teaspoon of black cummin are added to the heated oil. Removed from the fire and stored for use when necessary.*

*Constipation Ripe bael fruit is the best of all laxatives. It clears and tones up the intestines. Its regular use for 2 or 3 months throws out even the old accumulated faecal matter. Taken in the form of sherbet, which is prepared from the pulp of the ripe fruit. After breaking the shell, the seeds are removed, with the contents spooned out and sieved. Milk and sugar are added to make it more palatable.*

### **Diarrhoea and Dysentery**

*The unripe fruit is the most effective remedy for chronic diarrhoea and dysentery. The bael fruit, when it is green is sliced and dried in the sun. The dried bael slices are powdered and preserved in airtight bottles.*

### **Peptic Ulcer**

*An infusion from bael leaves are soaked overnight in water. This water is strained and taken in the morning. An effective remedy for peptic ulcer. . Bael leaves are rich in tannin which reduces inflammation and help in the healing of ulcers.*

*Be careful that that the ripe fruit is not be taken regularly at a stretch. When used without a break, it produces a lack of normal elasticity of the intestines and consequent flatulence in the abdomen. The bael fruit should also not be taken in excess, as excessive intake may produce a sensation of heaviness in the stomach. The sherbet made of bael must not be very thin. It should be viscous so that it can be thoroughly chewed. It may produce heaviness in the stomach, if taken hurriedly.*

# Betel Leaves

*Botanical Name: Piper betle Indian Name: Pan*



*The betel plant is a aromatic creeper, rooting at the nodes. The plant has heart shaped, smooth, shining and longstalked leaves, with a pointed apex. It has five to seven ribs arising from the base; minute flowers and one seeded spherical small berries. The use of betel leaf can be traced as far back as two thousand years.*

*Betel leaves contain tannins, sugar and an essential oil. The essential oil is a light yellow liquid of aromatic odour and sharp burning in taste. It contains a phenol called chavicol which has powerful antiseptic properties.*

## **Curative Properties**

*Respiratory Disorders Betel leaves are useful in pulmonary affection in childhood and old age. The leaves, soaked in mustard oil and warmed, may be applied to the chest to relieve cough and difficulty in breathing.*

*Constipation In the case of constipation in children, a suppository made of the stalk of betel leaf dipped in castor oil can be introduced in the rectum. This instantly relieves constipation.*

*Sore Throat Local application of the leaves is effective in treating sore throat. The crushed fruit or berry should be mixed with honey and taken to relieve irritating coughs. Scanty or Obstructed Urination. Betel leaf juice has diuretic properties. Its juice, mixed with dilute milk and sweetened slightly, helps in easing urination.*

*Headaches The betel leaf has analgesic and cooling properties. Applied over the painful area to relieve intense headache.*

*Inflammation Applied locally, betel leaves are beneficial in the treatment of inflammation such as arthritis and orchitis, that is inflammation of the testes.*

*Wounds Betel leaves can be used to heal wounds. The juice of a few leaves should be extracted and applied on the wound. Then a betel leaf should be wrapped over and bandaged. The wound will heal up with a single application within 2 days.*

*Boils An effective remedy for boils. A leaf is gently warmed till it gets softened, and is then coated with a layer of castor oil. The oiled leaf is spread over the inflamed part. The leaf has to be replaced, every few hours. After a few applications, the boil will rupture.*

*Lumbago A hot poultice of the leaves mixed with some bland oil such as refined coconut oil can be applied to the loins .*

*Cancer of the mouth and lips has is frequent in areas where the betel chewing is a habit. Other effects of pan chewing like pyorrhoea, cancer of the tongue and cheeks have also been seen in habituated chewers.*

# Cardamom

*Botanical Name: Elettaria Cardamomu*

*Indian Name: Chhoti elaichi*



*Cardamom is one of the most valued spices in the world. The dried cardamom fruits of the plant constitute the drug. They have a pleasant aroma with a characteristic, slightly Pungent taste. They leave a warm feeling in the mouth. It is the seeds, that give the warm sensation.*

*An analysis of the cardamom capsule shows it to consist of carbohydrates, moisture, protein, ether extract, volatile oil, crude fibre, calcium, phosphorus and iron. The seeds contain a volatile oil. The principal constituents of the volatile oil are cineol, terpineol, terpinene, limonene, sabinene, and terpineol in the form of formic and acetic acids.*

## **Curative Properties**

*Depression Powdered seeds of cardamon are boiled in water with tea. It gives a very pleasing aroma to the tea. This can be used as a remedy in the treatment of depression.*

*Impotency The herb is useful in impotency and premature ejaculation. A pinch of powdered cardamom seeds boiled in milk and sweetened with honey every night would yield results. Any excessive use of cardamom at times may lead to impotency.*

*Bad Breath The aromatic flavour in cardamom is a breath freshener.*

*Oral Disorders Gargling with an infusion of cardamom and cinnamon cures pharyngitis, sore-throat, and hoarseness during the infective stage of influenza. Daily gargling protects one from the flu.*

*Hiccups: An infusion made by boiling a couple of pounded whole cardamoms in a cup of water along with 5 leaves of mint is useful in relieving hiccups.*

*Digestive Disorders Cardamom reduces the air and water elements, increases appetite and soothes the mucous membrane. It relieves gas and heart burn caused by garlic and onion. A tea made from cardamom is valuable in headache caused by indigestion.*

*Genito-Urinary Disorders An excellent diuretic for the treatment of gonorrhoea, cystitis, nephritis, burning micturation or urination and scanty urination. Its powdered seeds mixed with a tablespoon of banana leaf and amla juice taken thrice a day.*

# Celery

*Botanical Name : Apium graveolens*

*Indian Name : Ajmod or Ajwain*



*Celery is an important salad plant, consisting of the bulbous roots, green leaves and the stem. The leaves sprout directly from the fleshy roots. They are compound with long stalk; which are big and succulent. The fruits are small in size, dark brown in colour and have a peculiar flavour when cut open. The seeds are brown in colour. The fruits yield a volatile oil, pale yellow in colour. It consists of limonene dselinene sedanonic acid, anhydride and sedanolide*

## ***Curative Properties***

*Celeri which means quick acting, and refers to its therapeutic properties. The green leaves and stem of the bulbous root are all extremely rich in active ingredients that make celery an important medicinal plant. It has a well balanced content of the basic minerals, vitamins and nutrients, besides a good concentration of plant hormones and essential oils that give celery its strong and characteristic smell.*

*Kidney and Gall Stones Those, who are prone to stone formation in the gall bladder or kidneys. Its regular use prevents stone formation.*

*Arthritis Celery has a high sodium content. Its organic sodium tends to prevent and relieve the arthritic joint deposits by keeping lime and magnesia in a solution form. It should be taken in the form of freshly extracted juice, using its leaves as well as the stem.*

*Rheumatism and Gout The alkaline elements in celery outweigh the acidic ones. It is very effective in diseases arising from acidity and toxemia, rheumatism and gout. A fluid extract of the seeds is very powerful.*

*Nervous Afflictions An abundant use of celery juice combined with carrot juice is beneficial in the treatment of nervous afflictions resulting from the degeneration of sheathing or the protective cover of the nerves.*

*Haemophilia caused by the inorganic mineral elements and salts taken into the body by means of devitalized foods and sedatives. The herb is used in diseases of the blood such as anaemia, leukaemia, Hodgkin's disease, purpura. The juice of celery in combination with carrot juice should be taken in the treatment of these disorders. This plant is very high in magnesium and iron content, a combination which is invaluable as a food for the blood cells.*

*Celery with thick ribs and crisply brittle stalks should be selected for use. Its green portions should never be discarded or scraped, as by doing so, valuable vitamins are lost.*



# Chicory

*Botanical Name: Chichorium intybus*

*Indian Name: Kasni*

*Chicory, or endive, is a perennial herb with a long tap root. It has condensed, round stems, numerous light or dark green leaves and pale blue flowers. The leaves have a bitter taste; flowers open at sunrise and close at dusk. Chicory has been mentioned as a special skin nourisher by ancient herbalists. A tea made from the pale blue flowers of this plant was said to give glowing skin. Seeds contain a bland oil and roots contain nitrate and sulphate of potash, mucilage and some bitter principle.*



## Curative Properties

*Chicory is a tonic herb when taken in moderate quantities.*

*It increases the secretion and discharge of urine. It is also a stimulant and a mild laxative.*

*This herb helps the functions of the liver and gall bladder.*

*Constipation The herb is a natural laxative. It is, therefore, beneficial in the treatment of chronic constipation.*

*Anaemia In combination with celery and parsley, is very helpful in anaemia. It is an effective blood tonic.*

*Liver and Gall Bladder Dysfunctions Chicory flowers, seeds and roots are medicinally used in the treatment of liver disorders. Endive or chicory juice, in almost any combination, promotes the secretion of bile and good for dysfunctions both liver and gall bladder .*

*Eye Defects Chicory contains food elements which are constantly needed by the optic system. A rich source of vitamin A which is useful for the eyes. The addition of juices of carrot, celery and parsley to chicory juice is a nourishing food for the optic nerve and the muscular system. It can bring amazing results in correcting eye defects. Half a litre to one litre daily of this combination has frequently corrected eye troubles within a few months, to the extent that normal vision was regained, making the use of glasses unnecessary.*

*Respiratory Disorders The combined juices of chicory, carrot and celery are most helpful in asthma and hay fever. Powder of the dry root in doses of half a teaspoon, mixed with honey if taken thrice daily, is a good expectorant in chronic bronchitis.*

*Obstructed Menstruation A decoction of chicory seeds is useful in treating obstructed menstruation.*

# Clove

*Botanical Name: Syzygium aromaticum*

*Indian Name: Laung*



*Clove is the dried unopened flower bud obtained from a handsome, middle sized, evergreen tree. The clove buds, stem and leaves, on steam distillation, yield a substantial amount of essential oil. The clove bud oil, derived from the dried buds by steam distillation, contains free eugenol, eugenol acetate and caryophyllene.*

## **Healing Power and Curative Properties**

*Cloves have many medicinal virtues. They are a stimulant. Useful in counteracting spasmodic disorders.*

*Stimulate's sluggish circulation and promotes digestion and metabolism. Clove oil contains ingredients that help stabilize blood circulation and regulate body temperature.*

*Earache A clove warmed in a teaspoon of sesame oil and 3 to drops of this oil put into the ear can cure earache.*

*Headaches A paste of clove and salt crystals in milk is a common household remedy for headaches. Salt, absorbs fluid and decreases tension.*

*Digestive Disorders Cloves boosts digestive functioning. They are used in various forms of gastric irritability and dyspepsia. Licking the powder of fried cloves mixed with honey is effective in controlling vomiting.*

*Cholera About 4 grams of doves are boiled in 3 litres of water until half the water has evaporated. This water, taken in draughts, will check sever symptoms of the disease.*

*Coughs Chewing a clove with a crystal of common salt eases expectoration, relieves the irritation in the throat and stops cough in the inflammation of the pharynx. Chewing a burnt dove is also an effective medicine for coughs.*

*Three to five drops of clove oil mixed with honey and a clove of garlic helps the painful spasmodic coughs in tuberculosis, asthma and bronchitis.*

*Asthma Clove is an effective remedy for asthma. A teaspoon of decoction prepared by boiling 6 cloves in 30 ml of water can be taken with honey thrice daily as an expectorant.*

*Teeth Disorders The use of a clove in toothache decreases pain. It also helps to decrease infection due to its antiseptic properties. Clove oil, applied to a cavity in a decayed tooth, also relieves toothache.*

# Cumin Seeds

*Botanical Name: Cuminum cyminum*

*Indian Name: Jeera*



*Cumin is an annual herb, with a smooth surface and long, slender root. It grows up to a height of 35 to 45 cm. It produces a stem with many branches which bear long, finely divided, deep green leaves and small flowers, white or rose in colours. The plant has aromatic seed like fruit, commonly known as cumin seed. It is oval shaped, approximately 6 mm long and light yellowish brown in colour.*

## Curative Properties

*The fruit is a rich source of thymol. Thymol is used against hookworm infections and also as an antiseptic in many proprietary preparations. It strengthens the functions of stomach and arrests any bleeding.*

*Common Cold Dilute cumin water is an antiseptic beverage and very useful in common cold and fevers.; To prepare cumin water, a teaspoon of cumin is added to boiling water, which is allowed to simmer for a few seconds and set aside to cool. If the cold is associated with sore throat, a few small pieces of dry ginger should be added to the water. It soothes throat irritation.*

*Amnesia Cumin seeds are valuable in amnesia or dullness of memory. Three grams of black cumin seeds are mixed with 12 grams of pure honey and licked to get rid of in this condition.*

*Boils Black cumin ground in water is applied as a paste over the boils.*

*Digestive Disorders Cumin seeds are very useful in digestive disorders like biliousness, morning sickness, indigestion, diarrhoea, and flatulent colic. One teaspoon of cumin seeds is boiled in a glass of water and the decoction mixed with one teaspoon of fresh coriander leaf juice and a pinch of salt. This decoction can be taken twice daily after meals as a medicine for diarrhoea.*

*Piles About 60 grams of the Black cumin seeds, of which half should be roasted, should be ground together. Three grams of this flour should be taken with water.*

*Insomnia Cumin is valuable in relieving sleeplessness. A teaspoon of the fried powder of cumin seeds mixed with the pulp of a ripe banana can be taken at night to induce sleep.*

*Renal Colic Black cumin seeds mixed with caraway seeds and black salt is useful in renal colic. About 20 grams of cumin seeds, 12 grams of caraway seeds and 6 grams of black salt are ground together and mixed with a little vinegar. This mixture can be taken in doses of 3 grams every hour till relief is obtained.*

# CURRY LEAVES

*Botanical Name: **Murraya koenigi***

*Indian Name: **Curry patty***



*Curry leaves are derived from a beautiful, aromatic and more or less deciduous shrub or a small downy tree, up to 6 metres in height and 15 to 40 cms in diameter. The leaves are slightly bitter and aromatic, Their mineral and vitamin contents are calcium, phosphorus, iron, nicotinic acid and vitamin C. Fresh leaves on steam distillation under pressure yield a volatile oil. Besides the oil, the leaves contain a residual glucoside named as koenigin.*

## ***Curative Properties***

*Premature Greying of Hair Liberal intake of curry leaves prevents premature greying of hair. These leaves have the property to nourish the hair roots. New hair roots that grow are healthier with normal pigment.*

*Hair Tonic: When the leaves are boiled in coconut oil till they are reduced to a blackened residue, the oil forms an excellent hair tonic to stimulate hair growth and in retaining the natural pigmentation.*

*Curry leaves possess the qualities of a herbal tonic. They strengthen the functions of stomach and promote its action. They are also used as a mild laxative.*

*Digestive Disorders Fresh juice of curry leaves, with lime juice and sugar, is an effective medicine in the treatment of morning sickness, nausea and vomiting due to indigestion and excessive use of fats. The curry leaves, ground to a fine paste and mixed with buttermilk, can also be taken on an empty stomach in case of stomach upsets.*

*Diabetes Eating 10 fresh fully grown curry leaves every morning for three months prevents diabetes due to heredity factors. It also cures diabetes due to obesity, as the leaves have weight reducing properties. As the weight drops, the diabetic patients stop passing sugar in urine.*

*Burns and Bruises Curry leaves can be effectively used to treat burns, bruises and skin eruptions. They should be applied as a poultice over the affected areas.*

*Eye Disorders Fresh juice of curry leaves suffused in the eyes, makes them look bright. It also prevents the early development of cataract.*

# Datura

*Botanical Name: Datura stramonium*

*Indian Name: Dhatura*



*Datura is a bushy plant growing upto one metre in height. It has large egg shaped leaves, very large white flowers and egg shaped fruits, covered with prickles. The dried leaves, top portion of the flower and seeds of the plant constitute the drug. Datura is referred to in ancient Indian literature as shivashekhera because the flowers are believed to be associated with Lord Shiva. They regarded the drug as an intoxicant, with emetic, digestive and healing powers. Smoking of datura seeds as a treatment for asthma was known during the vedic period. The leaves of the plant contain alkaloids. Some amount of alkaloids are there in dried seeds and fruits.*

## Curative Properties

*The dried leaves and seeds of datum are used as antispasmodic under critical conditions of asthma and whooping cough. Datum possesses properties analogous to those of belladonna. It counteracts spasmodic disorders and induces deep sleep.*

*Asthma Datum is very useful in asthma, when the smoke from the burning leaves is inhaled. The leaves rolled into cigarettes can be smoked to relieve asthmatic attacks.*

*A valuable remedy for heart disorders.*

*It relieves cardiac pains, distress, palpitation and aortic disorders.*

*Baldness Datura seeds with other ingredients is useful in patchy baldness. A paste made with datura seeds, liquorice, saffron and cream is heated in coconut oil thoroughly till the solid mass converts to a charred powder. The oil when applied on bald patches stimulates hair growth. As datura is poisonous, hands should be washed thoroughly after handling the oil. Do not use the mixture on the scalp of children.*

*Malaria Datura fruit is a specific remedy for phlegmatic and bilious types of malarial fever. A desired quantity of the fruit should be placed in an earthen pot and covered with a plaster composed of cloth and clay. It should be parched in 10 to 12 grams of cowdung cakes. When the fire gets extinguished and the pot is cold, the burnt fruit should removed, powdered and kept safely in a phial for use in malarial fever.*

# Fenugreek

*Botanical Name: Trigonella foenum graecum*

*Indian Name: Methi*



*Fenugreek is an erect, strongly scented, robust, annual herb, about 30 to 80 cms high. It has compound leaves of light green colour, 2 to 2.5 cms long, yellow flowers and thin pointed pods.*

*Its regular use helps keep the body clean and healthy. The volatile oils are absorbed into the cell tissues to do their job of rejuvenating our body. Some of them finally find their way into the sweat glands to cleanse and awaken any sluggishness in these parts. The seeds exercise soothing effect on the skin and mucous membranes, relieving any irritation of the skin and alleviating swelling and pain. They also stop any bleeding and have an aphrodisiac effect. They are the best cleansers within the body. Oils from fenugreek seek out and penetrate the most remote crevices and creases of the membranous linings within the body cavities.*

*Beauty Aid: A paste of the fresh leaves applied over the scalp regularly before taking bath, helps hair grow, while preserving the natural colour and keeping the hair silky. It improves the complexion and makes one look years younger. The paste applied on the face every night before going to bed and washed with warm water, prevents one from getting pimples, blackheads, dryness of the face and early appearance of wrinkles.*

*Anaemia The leaves help in blood formation. The cooked leaves help prevent anaemia. The seeds also help in recovering from anaemia, being rich in iron.*

*Deadened Senses Salivary glands which become clogged with mucus. The seeds help restore the deadened senses of taste or smell. Similarly, the sense of smell is obstructed due to prolonged accumulations of mucus and other impurities in the nose where the special sensory nerve of smell are based.*

*Fevers Tea made from fenugreek seeds is equal to quinine in reducing fevers. Fenugreek seeds, when moistened with water. This tea made from with them has the power to dissolve sticky substance like mucus.*

*Stomach Disorders This tea soothes inflamed stomach and intestines, cleansing the stomach, bowels, kidneys and respiratory tract of excess mucus.*

*Respiratory Infections During the early stages of bronchitis, influenza, sinusitis, and suspected pneumonia, fenugreek tea helps the body to perspire, dispel toxicity and shorten the gestation period of fever. During the treatment, no other food or nourishment should be taken, as fasting aids the body to correct these respiratory problems in a few days.*

*Bad Breath and Body Odour Unpleasant odours emanate from the body due to accumulations of hardened mucus and other toxins in the nasal and oral passages, the gastro intestinal tract, the urinary tract, the blood and the vagina.*

*Diabetes The normal dose is 2 teaspoons of powdered seeds taken daily in broth or milk. Two teaspoons of the seeds can also be swallowed whole, daily. Alternatively, they may be soaked in a cup of water at night and the water taken in the morning.*

*Mouth Ulcers The herb helps in the healing of mouth ulcers. An infusion of the leaves is used as a gargle for recurrent ulcers.*

*Sore throat A gargle made from fenugreek seeds is good for ordinary sore throat. Two tablespoons of fenugreek seeds are put in a litre of water and allowed to simmer for half an hour over a low flame. It is cooled to room temperature and strained. The entire liquid is used as a gargle.*

# Garlic

*Botanical Name: Allium Sativum*

*Indian Name: Lahsoon*



*Garlic is an erect biennial herb of the onion family, normally grown as an annual. It has irregular roots, condensed, flattened stem and narrow, flat leaves. The bulb consists of 6 to 35 bulblets called cloves, enclosed in a thick whitish, glistening and transparent covering.*

*In herbal medicine, garlic has been traditionally used for asthma, deafness, leprosy, bronchial congestion, arteriosclerosis that is hardening of arteries fevers, worms and liver and gall bladder trouble. Garlic is good for the heart, a food for the hair, a stimulant to appetite, a strength giving food, useful in leucoderma, leprosy, piles, worms, catarrhal disorders, asthma and cough.*

*The unpleasant odour in garlic is due to its sulphur content. Garlic juice has a most beneficial effect on the entire system. The ethers in garlic juice are so potent and penetrating, that they help dissolve accumulation of mucus in the sinus cavities, bronchial tubes and the lungs. They help in the expulsion of poisons from body through pores of the skin.*

*Heart Attack Garlic helps to break up cholesterol in the blood vessels, thereby preventing any hardening of arteries which leads to high blood pressure and heart attack.*

*Cancer Garlic preparations, including extracts and juices, have been used successfully against cancer. Garlic preparations have been found to retard tumour growth not only in animals, but also in human beings.*

*Digestive Disorders Garlic is good for the lymph, and aids elimination of noxious waste matter in the body. It movement of the intestines and the secretion of the digestive juices. Crushed cloves of garlic may be infused in water or milk and taken for all disorders of digestion. It has an antiseptic effect and is an excellent remedy for infectious diseases and inflammations of the stomach and intestine.*

*The herb is an excellent worm expeller. It is also good in treating various forms of diarrhoea. Problems such as colitis, dysentery and many other intestinal disorders can be successfully treated with fresh garlic or garlic capsules. One garlic capsule taken thrice a day is usually sufficient to correct mild cases of diarrhoea or dysentery. For more persistent cases, upto 6 capsules a day can be taken. Garlic has the ability to destroy harmful bacteria in the intestines without affecting the beneficial organisms which aid digestion.*

*High Blood Pressure Garlic is one of the most effective remedies for lowering blood pressure. Pressure and tension are reduced because it has the power to ease the spasm of the small arteries. It also slows the pulse and modifies the heart rhythm The average dosage should be 2 to 3 capsules a day to reduce the blood pressure.*

*Rheumatism Garlic is used extensively in the treatment of rheumatism and associated diseases. . Its anti inflammatory property accounts for its effectiveness in the treatment of arthritis and rheumatism.*

*Whooping Cough Syrup of garlic should be taken in doses of five drops to a teaspoon, two or three times a day in treating this condition. it should be given more often if the coughing spells are frequent and violent.*

***Blood Disorders*** The herb is regarded as a rejuvenator. It help remove toxins, revitalise the blood, stimulate circulation and promote intestinal flora, or colony of bacteria that prevent infection by harmful bacteria.

***Skin Disorders*** Pimples disappear without a scar when rubbed with raw garlic several times a day. Even very persistent forms of acne, have been healed with garlic. The external use of garlic helps to clear the skin of spots pimples and boils.

***Diphtheria*** Chewing a clove of garlic cures the infected mucous membranes, reduces temperature and provides relief. About 30 to 60 grams of garlic can be used in this way in three or four hours for the membranes to disappear in a week.

***Chest Diseases*** Garlic reduces foetidity or stinking of the breath in pulmonary gangrene and in the treatment of tuberculosis. Garlic boiled in milk is a wonderful drug for tuberculosis. One gram of garlic, 250 ml of milk and a litre of water are boiled together till its reduces to one fourth of the decoction. It should be taken thrice a day. Taken in sufficient quantities, it is a marvelous remedy for pneumonia.

***Asthma*** Three cloves of garlic boiled in milk, can be used every night with excellent results in asthma. A pod of garlic is peeled, crushed and boiled in 120 ml pure malt vinegar. It is strained after cooling and an equal quantity of honey is mixed and preserved in a clean bottle. One or two teaspoons of this syrup can be taken with fenugreek decoction in the evening and before retiring. This has been found effective in reducing the severity of asthmatic attacks.



# Ginger

*Botanical Name: Zingiber officinale*

*Indian Name: Aduk*



*Ginger is a perennial herb, with underground branching stems which are tough. The leaves and rhizomes of ginger have a characteristic fragrance when cut or bruised. Rhizomes are dug out after the leafy parts are dried.*

*Ginger grown in India showed the following important ingredients: volatile oil, oleoresin (acetone extract), water extract, cold alcohol extract, substantial amount of starch, total ash, water soluble ash, acid insoluble ash and alkalinity of ash of unpeeled ginger. On steam distillation, dried, cracked and crushed ginger yields a pale yellow, viscid oil. The oil possesses the aromatic odour but not the pungent flavour of the spice. The odour of the oil is lingering.*

## **Curative Properties**

*Aches and Pains Ginger can cure all types of pain. In headaches ginger ointment made by rubbing dry ginger with a little water and applied to the forehead affords relief. It helps a toothache when applied to the gum. In case of earache, a few drops of ginger juice gives relief.*

*Digestive Disorders Ginger is extremely useful in the treatment, flatulence, colic, vomiting, spasms of the stomach and the bowels, not accompanied by fever. Chewing a piece of fresh ginger regularly after meals prevents these ailments. This protective action is due to the excessive secretion of saliva.*

*Coughs and Cold Extracted juice of ginger with honey is taken three or four times a day in case of coughs. In case of colds, ginger cut into small pieces is boiled in a cup of water. Ginger tea, prepared by adding a few pieces of ginger into boiled water before adding tea leaves, is another effective remedy for frequent colds and associated fevers.*

*Respiratory Disorders A teaspoon of fresh ginger juice mixed with a cup of fenugreek decoction and honey to taste, makes an mixture to proliferate sweating and reduces fever in influenza. It acts as an expectorant in bronchitis, asthma, whooping cough and tuberculosis of the lungs.*

*Menstrual Disorders A piece of fresh ginger is pounded and boiled in a cup of water for a few minutes. The infusion, sweetened with sugar, is taken thrice daily after meals for painful or irregular menstruation caused by exposure to cold winds or by cold bath.*

# Holy Basil

*Botanical Name: Ocimum sanctum*

*Indian Name: Tulsi*



*Holy basil is a many branched, erect, stout and aromatic herb. It grows upto the height of about 75 cms and is hairy all over. The plant has tender, egg shaped leaves, usually smooth. This herb has been known from as early as the vedic period. Hindus regard it as an earthly manifestation of goddess Vrindavani who is dear to Lord Vishnu. The leaves of holy basil yield an essential oil . It has the property of destroying bacteria and insects.*

*The plant has medicinal properties. The leaves are a nerve tonic and sharpen memory. They promote the removal of catarrhal matter and phlegm from the bronchial tubes. The leaves strengthen the stomach and induce copious perspiration. The seeds of the plant are mucilaginous or starchy and nourishing. They have a soothing effect on the skin and the mucous membranes. They also increase the volume of urine.*

*Fevers During the rainy season, when malaria and dengue fever are widely prevalent, tender leaves, boiled with tea, act as a preventive against these diseases. In case of acute fevers, a decoction of the leaves roiled with powdered cardamom in half a litre of water and mixed with sugar and milk brings down the temperature.*

*Kidney Stones Basil has strengthening effect on the kidney. In case of renal stones, the juice of basil leaves arid honey, if taken regularly for six months, will expel them via the urinary tract.*

*Heart Disorders Basil has a effect in cardiac disease and the weakness resulting from them. It reduces the level of blood cholesterol.*

*Stress Basil leaves are regarded as an adaptogen or anti stress agent. Recent studies have shown that the leaves 'afford significant protection against stress. Even healthy persons can chew 12 leaves of basil, twice a day, to prevent stress. It purifies blood and helps prevent several common ailments.*

*Insect Bites The herb is a prophylactic or preventive and curative for insect stings or bites. A teaspoon of the juice of the leaves is taken and repeated after a few hours. Fresh juice must also be applied to the affected parts. A paste of the fresh roots is also effective in cases of bites of insects and leeches.*

*Skin Disorders Applied locally, basil juice is used in the treatment of ringworm and other skin diseases, It has also been tried successfully by some naturopaths in the treatment of leucoderma.*

*Eye Disorders Basil juice is a remedy for sore eyes and nightblindness, which is generally caused by deficiency of vitamin A. Two drops of black basil juice should be put into the eyes daily at bedtime.*

*Teeth Disorders 'The herb is useful in teeth disorders. Its leaves, dried in the sun and powdered, can be used for brushing teeth. It can also be mixed with musturd oil to make a paste and used as tooth paste.*

*Mouth Infections The leaves are quite effective for the ulcers and infections in the mouth. A few leaves chewed will cure these condtions.*

*Other Diseases A decoction of the leaves give results in gout and gonorrhoea. This decoction is also useful in neuralgia. The juice of the leaves is a well known remedy for earache and dullness of hearing. A few drops of the juice can be put in the ear for the treatment of these conditions. The seeds of the plant are useful in diarrhoea, chronic dysentery, habitual constipation, gonorrhoea, internal piles, cough, kidney disorders and fever.*

# Amla

*Botanical Name: Emblica officinalis*

*Indian Name: Amla*



*Indian gooseberry is a small or middle sized deciduous tree. It has small, very closely set, 10 to 13 mm long, leaves. The branches of the tree appear feathery. The tree has pale green flowers usually in small dense dusters below the leaves. The fruits are fleshy, round with its contour indistinctly marked into 6 lobes. The fruit has a seed inside with three angles and three sides. The seeds of the Indian gooseberry contain a fixed oil, phosphatides and an essential oil. The fruits, bark and the leaves of the tree are rich in tannin.*

*A wonder herb. It contributes greatly towards health and longevity. The fruit is acrid, cooling, refreshing and laxative. It increases the volume of urine. The raw fruit is a mild purgative. The flowers of the tree are cooling refreshing and mild purgative. The root and bark of the tree are useful in arresting secretion or bleeding. A tablespoon each of fresh gooseberry juice and honey mixed together is a very valuable medicine for the treatment of several ailments. Its regular use every morning promotes vigour in the body within a few days. When fresh fruit is not available, dry powder can be mixed with honey.*

*Ageing Indian gooseberry has revitalising effects, as it contains an element which is very valuable in preventing ageing and in maintaining strength in old age. It improves body resistance and protects the body against infection. It strengthens the heart, hair and different glands in the body.*

*Scurvy Indian gooseberry is one of the best remedies for scurvy. Powder of the dry herb, mixed with an equal quantity of sugar, can be taken in doses of 1 teaspoon, thrice daily with milk.*

*Diarrhoea and Dysentery The dried fruit is also useful in diarrhoea and dysentery. A drink made from amla, mixed with lemon juice and sugar controls acute bacillary dysentery.*

*Respiratory Disorders Indian gooseberry is beneficial in the treatment of respiratory disorders. It is especially valuable in tuberculosis of the lungs, asthma and bronchitis.*

*Diabetes This herb, due to its high vitamin C content, is effective in controlling diabetes. A tablespoon of its juice, mixed with a cup of fresh bitter gourd juice, taken daily for two months will stimulate the pancreas and enable it to secrete insulin, thus reducing the blood sugar in diabetes. Diet restrictions should be strictly observed while taking this medicine. It will also prevent eye complications in diabetes.*

*Heart Disorders Indian gooseberry is considered an effective remedy for heart disease. It tones up the functions of all the organs of the body and builds up health by destroying the harmful and disease causing elements. It also renews energy.*

*Eye Disorders The juice of Indian gooseberry with honey preserves eye sight. Beneficial in the treatment of conjunctivitis and glaucoma. It reduces intraocular tension in a remarkable manner. A cup of this juice mixed with honey can be taken twice daily for this condition.*

*Rheumatism To treat rheumatism, a teaspoon of the powder of the dry fruit mixed with 2 teaspoons of jaggery can be taken twice daily for a month.*

# Indian Hemp

*Botanical Name: Cannabis sativa*

*Indian Name: Bhang or Ganja*



*Indian Hemp is a robust, tall, erect, annual herb, 1 to 5 metres high, usually with male and female plants in roughly equal numbers. It has angular stems bearing palmately or hand shaped divided leaves with greenish flowers. The hemp plant provides three products, namely, fibre from the stems, oil from the seeds and narcotic from the leaves and flowers. Indian hemp have been in use as intoxicants in Asiatic countries and Africa. Bhang, ganja and charas have been habitually used in these parts of the world. The leaves of the plant are used as a drug to reduce excitement, irritation and pain as well as to induce deep sleep.*

*Used as a drug to counteract spasmodic disorders, to increase the secretion and discharge of urine and arrest any secretion or bleeding. Three types of narcotics are produced from the hemp plant, namely Bhang or hashish which constitute the dried leaves and flowering shoots of male and female plants. Ganja which is the dried unfertilized female inflorescences of special varieties grown in India and charas, which is the crude resin collected by rubbing the tops of the plant with the hands or beating them with a cloth. In all these drugs, the active principle is a resin from the glandular hairs on its leaves, stems and inflorescences.*

*Insomnia The leaves help in insomnia. They can be administered to induce sleep where opium cannot be used.*

*Charas which is the active principle of hemp, as well as ganja, are effective drugs to induce deep sleep.*

*Digestive Disorders Bhang or hashish is considered useful in digestive disorders like dyspepsia and other bowel complaints. It also acts as an appetizer when taken in small doses.*

*Diarrhoea and Dysentery The leaves are beneficial in the treatment of diarrhoea and dysentery. Two grams of dried leaves can be taken with sugar and black pepper.*

*Nervous Disorders Charas is of great value in periodical headaches, migraine, acute mania, insanity and delirium, nervous vomiting, nervous exhaustion, convulsions and neuralgia. It should be taken in 1.5 to 6 centigram doses.*

*Gonorrhoea The seeds of the plant are not narcotic. Their infusion is useful in gonorrhoea. Bhang or hashish can also be taken in this disorder.*

*Skin Disorders A paste of the fresh leaves is useful in resolving tumours. The powder of the leaves serves as a useful dressing for wounds and sores. Ganja is externally applied to relieve pain in itchy skin diseases.*

*Excessive consumption of hemp is physically and mentally harmful. If consumed for long time, it causes loss of appetite and gastric derangement. Hemp drugs act chiefly on the cerebrum wherein they resemble the action of alcohol or opium.*

# Liquorice

*Botanical Name: Glycyrrhiza glabra*

*Indian Name: Mulethi*

*Liquorice is a tall, erect herb, growing upto about 1.5 metres in height. It has compound leaves, lilac or light violet flowers, flat fruit and is densely covered with small spinous outgrowths. The dried roots and underground stems or rhizomes of the plant constitute the drug. Liquorice was used for its rejuvenating properties especially when used for long periods. It was used to quench thirst, alleviate feverishness, pain, cough and distress of breathing.*



*The root of the plant is a laxative and expectorant. When externally used it has a soothing effect on the skin. Powdered liquorice is very popular in allopathic medicine.*

*Stomach Disorders Liquorice is an excellent remedy for relieving pain, discomfort and other symptoms caused by acrid matter in the stomach. It should be taken in powder form.*

*Sore Throat The herb is a recognized home remedy for sore throat. A small piece of raw liquorice if chewed or sucked, provides relief by soothing the inflammation.*

*Cough Lubricating the throat with a decoction of liquorice mixed with honey brings relief in dry cough.*

*Myopia Liquorice is used in the treatment of myopia. Half a teaspoon of the powder of the root, mixed with an equal amount of honey and half the quantity of ghee, can be given twice daily with milk on an empty stomach in this case.*

*Constipation Liquorice is also used as a laxative in constipation. Its Powder is taken with jaggery and water in this condition.*

*Stomach Ulcer Liquorice is effective in treating pain due to stomach ulcers, as it soothes the irritation caused by acids. Pieces of the dried root soaked overnight in water and the infusion taken with rice gruel helps in the cure of ulcers. Continuous and uninterrupted use of liquorice in the treatment of stomach ulcer is not advisable as it may cause increase in weight and puffiness of body.*

*Muscular Pains Liquorice alleviates muscular pains. Taking an infusion of the roots soaked overnight relieves any chronic joint problems.*

*Baldness The herb is effective in treating patchy baldness. Small pieces of the root are ground in milk with a pinch of saffron to a paste. When this paste is applied over the bald patches at bedtime regularly, hair growth is seen within a few weeks. This prescription is very effective in the initial stages of baldness, excessive hair loss and dandruff.*

*Wounds and Scalds Liquorice powder mixed with butter or ghee and honey, can be applied on cuts and wounds with good results. The leaves of the plant, applied as a poultice, is a remedy in scalds of the head and body.*

*Corns The herb heals corns which are just appearing. A paste of liquorice sticks mixed with sesame or mustard oil, if rubbed into the hardened skin at bed time softens the skin and the corn decreases in size.*

# Madhuca

*Botanical Name: Madhuca indica*

*Indian Name: Mahua*

*Madhuca, also known as butter tree, is a large deciduous tree, 20 metres in height with a spreading top. It has thick leathery leaves and small, fleshy, pale or dull white musk scented flowers in dusters near the end of branches. Its fruits are fleshy, greenish, with brown and shining seeds. The bark, leaves, flowers and seeds of the tree constitute the drug. The trade name, madhuca, is based on the Sanskrit name of the plant. The leaves of the tree contain alkaloid glucosidic saponin. The seeds contain a fatty oil.*

*Madhuca is useful in arresting secretions or bleeding because of its tannin content. The bark of the tree is an astringent and tonic. The flowers promote the removal of catarrhal matter and phlegm from the bronchial tubes. They also exercise a soothing effect on the skin and mucous membranes. A spirit prepared from the flowers is considered to be nutritive and a tonic.*

*Bleeding Gums A lotion is made by mixing 4 ml of the liquid extract of the bark of the madhuca tree with 300 ml of water is an excellent gargle for bleeding and spongy gums.*

*Tonsillitis This lotion can also be used as a gargle in the treatment of acute and chronic tonsillitis and pharyngitis.*

*Skin Disorders The ash of the leaves, mixed with butter, is often used as a dressing for burns and scalds. For the cure of itching, a paste of the bark is applied locally. The oil extracted from the seeds can also be applied locally in skin diseases.*

*Eczema The leaves of madhuca are effective in the treatment of eczema. The leaves, smeared with sesame oil, warmed over a fire and bandaged on the affected parts provide relief. They should be changed after every 3 to 4 hours.*

*Bronchitis The flowers of the tree are effective in bronchitis and coughs. They should be given in doses of 30 grams with 250 ml of milk.*

*Rheumatism A decoction of the bark can be given internally in rheumatic diseases. The oil extracted from the seeds can also be applied locally on the affected area.*

*Piles Madhuca oil extracted from the seeds has laxative properties. It cures piles by relieving chronic constipation.*

# Margosa

*Botanical Name: Azadirachta indica*

***Indian Name: Neem***



*Margosa is a very common tree in India. It is a large evergreen dense tree growing some 10 to 10.5 metre tall with a girth of about 2 to 3 metres. The leaves of this tree are divided into numerous leaflets, each resembling a full-grown leaf. The tree has small, white flowers in auxiliary bunches and 1.2 to 1.8 cm long green or yellow fruits with a seed in each.*

*The margosa tree has played a key role in Ayurvedic medicine and agriculture. The seeds contain substantial amount of essential oil, known as margosa or neem oil. The bitter constituents separated from this oil are nimbin, nimbinin and nimbidin. The main active constituent of these is nimbidin which contain, sulphur. The flowers contain a bitter substance and an irritant bitter oil. The fruits contain a bitter principle, baka yanin and the trunk bark yields nimbin, nimbidin, nimbinin and an essential oil.*

*Neem tree is generally considered to be an air purifier and a preventive against malarial fever and cholera. All parts of the tree possess medicinal properties. The leaves are useful in relieving flatulence, promoting the removal of catarrhal matter and phlegm from the bronchial tubes, and in increasing secretion and discharge of urine. They also act as an insecticide. The bark is a bitter tonic and a stimulant. It arrests secretions and bleeding besides counter acting any spasmodic disorders. The root bark has the same properties as, the bark of the trunk. The gum discharged by the stem is a stimulant and tonic with a soothing effect, the skin and mucous, membranes.*

*Neem is very useful at the time of child birth. Administration of the juice of neem leaves to the woman in labour before childbirth produces normal contraction in the uterus and prevents possible inflammation. It corrects bowel movements and checks onset of fevers, thereby facilitating the normal delivery. The use of a tepid decoction of neem leaves as a vaginal douche heals any wounds caused during delivery and disinfects the vaginal passage.*

*Neem is a powerful insecticide to kill soil nematodes and other plant parasites and is useful as a mosquito repellent. Neem twig is also used as a toothbrush, and its juice in toothpastes and contraceptives.*

*Malaria An infusion or a decoction of the fresh leaves is a bitter vegetable tonic and alterative, especially in chronic malarial fevers because of its action on the liver. It should be taken in doses of 15 to 60 grams.*

*Piles The use of 3 grams of the inner bark of neem with 6 grams of jaggery every morning, is very effective in piles. To check bleeding piles, 3 or 4 neem fruits can be administered with water.*

*Hair Disorders If there is any hair loss or it has ceased to grow, washing with the decoction of neem leaves may help. This will not only stop hair from falling but also help their growth. Frequent application of neem oil also destroys insects in the hair.*

*Eye Diseases Neem is very useful in eye diseases. Application of the juice of neem leaves to the eyes every night is highly effective in the treatment of night blindness. The leaves should be pounded and made into a thin paste with water. The juice should then be pressed out through a clean piece of cloth and applied to the eyes with an eye rod. The juice obtained by rubbing a few neem leaves with a little water and strained through a clean piece of cloth is useful in pain in the eyes caused by conjunctivitis.*

*Ear Ailments Steam fomentation with neem decoction provides immediate comfort in cases of earache. A handful of neem leaves should be boiled in a litre of water and the ear fomented with the steam thus produced. The juice of*

*neem leaves mixed with an equal quantity of pure honey is an effective remedy for any boils in the ear. The juice is to be warmed a little and a few drops fused in the ear. Regular application for a few days will provide relief from such ailments.*

*Oral Disorders* *Cleaning the teeth regularly with a neem twig prevents gum diseases. It firms up loose teeth, relieves toothache, evacuates the bad odour and protects the mouth from various infections.*

*Leprosy* *The sap of the neem tree has been found effective in leprosy, when taken in daily doses of 60 grams. Simultaneously the patient's body should be massaged with the sap. This regimen should be continued for 40 days. If the sap is not available, 12 grams of neem leaves and three decigrams of pepper can be ground in water and taken.*

*Skin Disorders* *The leaves, applied externally, are very useful in skin diseases. They are especially beneficial in the treatment of boils, chronic ulcers, eruptions of smallpox, syphilitic sores, glandular swellings and wounds. They can be used either as a poultice, decoction or liniment. An ointment prepared from neem, leaves is also very effective in healing ulcers and wounds. This ointment is prepared by frying 50 grams of the leaves in 50 grams of pure ghee and mashing the mixture thoroughly in the same ghee till an ointment consistency is obtained. A paste prepared from the bark by rubbing it in water can also be applied on wounds.*



# Nutmeg

*Botanical Name: Myristica fragrans*

*Indian Name: Jaiphal*

*Nutmeg is the dried kernel of the seeds of an evergreen tree. It has a strong aroma with a slightly bitter taste. Nutmeg contains an essential oil and saponin. The dry ripe seeds of the fruit contains a volatile oil and a fixed oil. The dry leaves of the tree yield an essential oil consisting of myristicin.*

*Nutmeg was used in the preparations of various medicine in ancient times. It is used in several pharmaceutical preparations. The oil extracted from the herb is used in liniments, perfumery, hair lotions and as an antispasmodic carminative.*

*Nutmeg should be taken in very small doses; in appreciable doses it excites the motor cortex and produces epileptic convulsions and lesions in the liver. Even a teaspoon of nutmeg can produce toxic symptoms such as burning in the stomach, nausea, vomiting, restlessness and giddiness with hallucinations.*



*Dehydration In treating dehydration caused by vomiting and diarrhoea, particularly in cholera. An infusion prepared from half a nutmeg in half a litre of water given with tender coconut water in doses of 15 grams at a time, is an effective treatment.*

*Digestive Disorders The powder of nutmeg, about 5 to 15 grams, mixed with apple juice or banana, is used as a specific remedy for diarrhoea caused by indigestion of food. The same quantity of nutmeg powder taken with a tablespoon of fresh amla juice thrice daily is effective for indigestion, hiccups and morning sickness.*

*Insomnia The powder of nutmeg, mixed with fresh amla juice, is also an medicine for insomnia, irritability and depression.*

*Rheumatism A nutmeg coarsely powdered and fried in til oil, until all the particles become brown, is very useful as an external application to relieve any rheumatic pain, neuralgia and sciatica. The oil, should be cooled and strained before application.*

*Common Cold In case of a running nose, a paste made from this with cow's milk and 75 mg of opium should be applied to the forehead and the nose, it will provide quick relief.*

# Onion

*Botanical Name: Allium, cepa*

*Indian Name: Piyaz*



*The physicians of ancient Egypt prescribed onions in various diseases. It is high in food value, moderate in protein content and rich in calcium and riboflavin. There is considerable variation in the composition between different varieties, it also varies with the stage of maturity and the length of storage.*

*Onions contain an essential oil and organic sulphides. The odour in onion is due to organic sulphur compounds, and is produced only when the tissues are cut or injured by enzyme friction on a water soluble amino acid. Heat or freeze drying prevents the enzyme action, so that cooking produces a different flavour and pungency.*

*Onions have great therapeutic value. They are stimulants and a mild counter irritant. They have diuretic properties and promote the removal of catarrhal matter and phlegm from the bronchial tubes. White onion is preferable to the red and yellow varieties. Onions should be taken with meals preferably raw, as fried or cooked onions are comparatively difficult to digest. For therapeutic purposes, it is advisable to use onion juice instead of the whole onion. Its being a stimulating and irritating food, one should avoid excess consumption.*

*Respiratory Diseases Onion has the property to liquify phlegm and prevent its recurrence. It has been used as a herbal remedy in colds, coughs, bronchitis and influenza. Three to four teaspoons of onion juice and honey, mixed in equal proportion can be taken daily in treatment of these conditions.*

*Anaemia Onions are noted for their easily assimilable iron content. They are, therefore, beneficial in treating anaemia.*

*Heart Attack onion is an effective preventive against heart attack. This benefit is due to the presence of its essential oil, allylpropyl disulphide, catechol, protocatechuic acid, thiopropiono aldehyde, thiocyanate, minerals and vitamins.*

*Cholera Onion is an effective remedy for cholera. About 30 grams of onion and seven black peppers can be finely pounded and given to the patient. It allays thirst, restlessness and also lessens vomiting and diarrhoea immediately.*

*Urinary Disorders Onions are highly beneficial in the treatment of the disorders of the urinary system. For burning sensation while passing urine, 6 grams of onion should be boiled in 500 grams of water. When the water is reduced to half, it should be cooled, strained and given to the patient. This relieves the burning sensation. Onion grated with water on a stone slab and mixed with 60 grams of sugar, is effective in treating retention of urine; it brings about free urination within a short time.*

*Piles Onions are very effective in bleeding piles. About 30 grams of onions should be finely ground on a slab with water and 60 grams of sugar added to it. Taken twice daily this brings relief within a few days.*

*Skin Disorders Onion is irritating to the skin and stimulates the circulation of blood in the mucous membranes.*

*Warts sometimes disappear when rubbed with cut onions.*

*Ear Disorders Cotton wool dipped in onion juice and put into the ear is a popular Russian remedy for noises in the ears. Heated juice dropped in the ear relieves earache.*

*Aphrodisiac: Onion is one of the most important aphrodisiac, second only to garlic. It increases libido and strengthens the reproductive organs.*

# Peepal

*Botanical Name: Ficus religiosa*

*Indian Name: Peepal*



*Venerated by the Hindus and the Buddhists. The rishis of yore meditated under it. It was beneath a peepal that Gautam Buddha attained enlightenment, and that, particular tree came to be called Bodhi, the 'tree of wisdom'. In the popular Indian folkore, the peepal is considered as the female to the male banyan.*

*The bark and leaves of peepal are useful in many common ailments. Its leaves are laxative and a tonic. They relieve feverish feeling and produce a feeling of coolness. They are also useful in arresting secretion or bleeding about 50 ml of raw juice of the leaves or 1 teaspoon of powdered dried leaves can be taken with water in such cases.*

*A popular remedy for excessive urine output amongst jaundice patients is to soak a piece of tender bark of the peepal in water overnight and allow the water to be taken the following morning.*

*Heart Diseases The leaves of the peepal are used in the treatment of heart diseases. They are infused in water at night, distilled the next morning and then stored in white bottles. About 15 mg of this infusion is administered thrice daily. It is highly effective in relieving palpitation of the heart and cardiac weakness.*

*Constipation The leaves of the tree are useful in constipation. They should be dried in the shade and powdered. Pills can be prepared by adding the required quantity of a solution of anise and jaggery with water. One pill taken with warm milk at bedtime ensures proper bowel movement the following morning. Its fruits can be dried in shade, powdered and mixed with an equal quantity of sugar. This compound in doses of 4 to 6 grams, taken at bedtime with milk, serves the same function.*

*Dysentery Its leaves are very effective in treating dysentery. Equal parts of tender leaves, coriander leaves and sugar are chewed slowly to relieve the condition.*

*Bruises Its leaves are also useful in bruises and wounds. They are ground fine, mixed with 25 grams of jaggery and made into 8 pills. One pill taken daily with milk can also relieve pain due to injury.*

*Scrofula In Ayurveda, a peepal grown on a cemented wall, with its roots still in the masonry and not reaching the ground is a specific for scrofula a serious disease of the neck, characterised by swollen lymphatic glands of the region. A plaster like paste prepared by rubbing its root with water can be applied on the glands of the affected people.*

*Mumps Peepal leaves are used in the treatment of mumps. They should be smeared with ghee, warmed over a fire, and bandaged over the inflamed part to get relief.*

*Boils The leaves are also used in boils. A leaf smeared with ghee can be bandaged lukewarm on the boil. If there is any pus formation, it will burst, if it is in preliminary stages, the growth will subside.*

# Pepper

*Botanical Name: Piper nigrum*

*Indian Name: Kali mire*

*Known as the "king of spices". The pepper plant is a stout smooth evergreen creeper, much swollen at its nodes. Black pepper is the whole dried fruit.*

*Black pepper is stimulant, pungent, aromatic, digestive and a nervine tonic. Its pungency is due to the resin chavicine, which is most abundant in the mesocarp. Black pepper is useful in relieving flatulence.*



***Digestive Disorders** Pepper has a stimulating effect on the digestive organs and produces an increased flow of saliva and gastric juices. Powdered black pepper, thoroughly mixed with malted jaggery, taken in the treatment of such conditions. Alternatively, a quarter teaspoon of pepper powder mixed in thin buttermilk can be taken during indigestion or heaviness in the stomach. For better results, an equal part of cumin powder may also be added to the buttermilk.*

***Common Cold** Pepper is beneficial in the treatment of cold and fever. Six pepper seeds finely ground and mixed in a glass of warm water along with 6 pieces of batasha a variety of sugar candy, taken for a few nights for good results.*

***Coughs** Pepper is an effective remedy for coughs caused due to throat irritation: Three peppers sucked with a pinch of caraway seeds and a crystal of common salt provides relief.*

***Muscular Pains** As an external application, pepper dilates the superficial vessels and acts as a counter irritant. A tablespoon of pepper powder fried in sesame oil until it is charred can be applied beneficially as an analgesic liniment for myalgia and rheumatic pains.*

***Teeth Disorders** Pepper powder and common salt mixture is an excellent dentifrice. Its daily use prevents dental caries, foul breath, bleeding from the gums, painful gums, toothaches, and cures the increased sensitiveness of the teeth.*

***Pyorrhoea** Pepper is useful in pyorrhoea or pus in the gums. Finely powdered pepper and salt mixture when massaged over the gums relieves inflammation.*

# Poppy Seeds

*Botanical Name: Papaver somniferum*

*Indian Name: Khas-khas.*



*The milky ooze from poppy plant obtained by incision from the unripened capsules and thickened by spontaneous evaporation, is known as opium. Opium is one of the most valuable medicines available in the sap of the plants, and if properly administered, can serve as a very useful drug. Poppy seeds are found in poppy heads. They are recommended in many prescriptions for tonics. The plant is endowed with roots of strong fragrance.*

*Poppy seeds are effective in thirst, fever, inflammation and irritation of the stomach. The root is employed as one of the ingredients in several cooling medicines. An infusion of the root is given as a febrifuge, or fever relieving drink and a powder in bilious complaints. The essence of the root is used as tonic because of its stimulating qualities. It is believed to check vomiting in cholera.*

*Opium is useful in rheumatism, tumours of different kinds, cancers, carbuncles, abscesses, ulcers, leprosy, syphilis, tuberculosis of the lymph node. The commencing dose is 6 centigram of the extract. Beyond this, it is unsafe to go without any professional advice. This may be combined with 12 or 18 centigrams of camphor. Opium is very effective in spasms of bowels, relieving of pain and irritation of the bladder caused by stone.*

*Opium can cause great harm if used without proper precautions, or in cases where the person is intolerant to its action or gets upset even with a smallest dose. In such cases, the drug should be avoided. Infants and young children have poor tolerance to opium and they should be administered only under medical advice. It should be avoided during pregnancy and in kidney diseases.*

*Pains and Aches Poppy seeds on the stalks, which have not been slit to produce opium have soporific properties and are used for relieving pain. They can be used beneficially in griping pains after child birth, colic and pain in the testicles.*

*Heat and Burning Sensation As an external remedy, the poppy plant has many uses. A paste of the root rubbed on the skin can remove burning sensation of the body. A paste of its pulverised roots in water can be used as a cooling agents. It finds use in external application in fevers.*

*Dry Itch Poppy seeds ground to paste with lime juice are effective when rubbed on the areas affected by dry itch.*

*Muscular and Other Pains Opium is useful as a liniment for soothing both muscular and neuralgic pains. The liniment can be prepared by mixing 90 centigrams of opium in 15 grams of coconut oil. It even soothe painful piles. In painful teeth cavities, a centigram of opium is put into the hollow of the tooth, but the saliva should not be swallowed.*

*Insomnia About 30 grams of milk extracted from the seeds mixed with sugar can be used for treating insomnia: A teaspoon of poppy seed oil taken every night is also very effective.*

*Dysentery Here is an easy to make home remedy for dysentery About quarter teaspoon of the powder of poppy seeds are sauted to a golden brown in honey. Taken twice a day, it gives relief from the symptoms As these seeds have a sedative effect, they should not be take for more than three days continuously.*

# Sandalwood

*Botanical Name: Santalum album*

*Indian Name: Chandan*

*Sandalwood is a medium sized evergreen tree with almost drooping branches, dark rough bark and scented mature wood. It has opposite leaves, shining on the upper surface, with small dull purplish flowers in small bunches and roundish, purple black succulent fruits. Sandalwood yields an essential oil which contains santalol. Both the sandalwood, and the essential oil obtained after fractional distillation, have been used in Ayurveda for many centuries. The wood is bitter, sedative, cooling and a cardiac tonic. It arrests secretion or bleeding and in promoting the flow of urine. Moreover, sandalwood oil is a stimulant and an antiseptic. It has a soothing effect on the skin and mucous membranes.*



*Genito Urinary Disorders Sandalwood powder mixed with milk or made into pills, as also sandalwood oil, is beneficial in the treatment of gonorrhoea. Sandalwood oil is used in treating, painful and difficult urination and inflammation of the bladder. It is taken in doses of five drops in the beginning and gradually increased to 10 to 30 drops. Its efficacy can be increased by the addition of ajwain water or infusion of ginger.*

*Gastric Irritability . About 22 grams of a watery emulsion of the wood mixed with sugar, honey and rice water, should be administered in the treatment.*

*Dysentery Sandalwood is also beneficial in the treatment of dysentery. It should be administered as for gastric irritability.*

*Prickly Heat Sandalwood paste is a household remedy for prickly heat. It prevents excessive sweating and heals inflamed skin. Dry sandalwood powder can be mixed in rose water and applied over parts where there is profuse sweating.*

*Skin Diseases An emulsion or a paste of the wood is a cooling dressing in inflammatory and eruptive skin diseases such as an inflammatory disease of the face, and an itchy eruption. The oil is useful for scabies too. This oil mixed with twice its quantity of mustard oil is used for removing pimples. In summer, regular application of sandalwood paste on the body, especially for children, has a refreshing effect, which heals any tiny infected spots.*

*Fever Sandalwood paste applied on the temple relieves headache and brings down the temperature in fevers.*

# Tamarind

*Botanical Name: Tamarindus indica*

*Indian Name: Imli*



*Tamarind is a large, handsome, symmetrical spreading tree. It has small compound leaves, yellowish flowers with reddish streaks and fleshy, brown fruits. The seeds are dark brown and shiny. The fleshy fibrous pulp of the fruit is acidic. Tamarind was an important item of diet of sailors in olden times as its acid and sugar content helped them to offset their starchy diet. The pulp contains tartaric and other acids, sugars like invert a broken up starch, and pectin. The pectin present in the pulp is of good quality.*

*The whole plant has medicinal virtues. Its leaves are cooling and antibilious, while the bark is an astringent, a tonic and reduces fever. The fruit pulp is digestive, arrtiflatulent, cooling, laxative and antiseptic. Its seeds are also astringent.*

*Scurvy Tamarind pulp, being rich in vitamin C, is valuable in preventing and curing scurvy. It is significant that tamarind does not lose its antiscorbutic property on drying as in case of other fruits and vegetables.*

*Common Cold Tamarind pepper rasam, a clear soup is considered an effective home remedy for colds in South India. It is prepared by boiling a very dilute tamarind water in a teaspoon of hot ghee and half a teaspoon of black pepper powder for a few minutes. This steaming hot rasam has a flushing effect. As one takes it, the nose and eyes water and the nasal blockage is cleared.*

*Fevers 'The pulp of tamarind fruit is useful in treating fevers.' It is generally taken in 15 gram doses.*

*Digestive Disorders Ripe fruit pulp is beneficial in the treatment of bilious vomiting, flatulence and indigestion. It is also useful in constipation. An infusion of the pulp prepared by softening it in water, is particularly useful for loss of appetite and lack of inclination for food intake.*