

## Role of Ayurveda in COVID-19: Pros & Cons

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### ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is a great science. If it is followed properly gives miraculous benefits. These days COVID-19 is an emerging disease as a pandemic with various signs and symptoms. A lot of Ayurvedic whether herbal or herbo-mineral drugs are used for the treatment as per the protocols suggested. Among all these opportunities in front of doctors and vaidyas Ayurveda which was emanated since times from our ancient sages is perpetuating more than before as to serve the humanity. There are a lot of preparations used these days for COVID-19 by the Ayurvedic physicians. Sometimes common people use these preparations as self-medications without knowing the side effects. The word "Natural" in case of herbals equivalent to "safe" is a misleading perception. Herbs are neutraceutical in nature and are vastly available in market known as functional foods. These are used as immunity boosters namely Turmeric, Dry ginger, Shigru, Ashwagandha, Pippali, Kali marich, Mulethi, Haritaki, Dalchini & Tulsi. All the herbs can said to be plethora of immunity boosters if used with utmost care.

**KEYWORDS:** Ayurveda, COVID-19, Herbal, Neutraceutical, Immunity.

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### INTRODUCTION

#### TURMERIC (CURCUMA LONGA)

It is used as spice in India since long times. Now-a-days "Golden milk" is available in market as immunity enhancer or booster. It is Kaphavaatshaamaka, Pittarechaka, Pittashaamaka, analgesic. In some studies, it is said to cause antiimplantation due to its negative affect on blastocyst stage, implantation and post-implantation embryo development. It is antispermatogenic too. It can be safely used in 2-4 gm dosage per day. If used in raw form, it is more effective for Kaphaj diseases as sahpana or anupana.

#### Curcuma longa

*Haridra katuka tikta rukshoshna kaphpittanuta* |<sup>1</sup>

#### Curcuma amada

*Sa sheetala vaatala mata* |

*Pittahrinmadhura tikta* |<sup>2</sup>

#### Dose

60 Kg person can consume 2-2.5 gm/ day safely<sup>3</sup>.

1-4 gm<sup>4</sup>

#### SHUNTHI (ZINGIBER OFFICINALE)

It is Kaphavaatshaamaka<sup>5</sup>. Dried ginger is called as Shunthi. It has an effect as anticoagulant so long-term use is prohibited. Over anticoagulation may cause epistaxis<sup>6</sup>. In pregnancy it can be used safely in the dose of 0.5-2 gm / day or 0.5-1 gm /day but for only 3-5 days continuously. In children > 6 yrs age can be used but below this age it is not preferred<sup>7</sup>. In patients with myeloid leukemia using daunorubicin salt can have side effects like rise in hair loss (temporarily), rashes, nausea, vomiting due to excessive accumulation of this salt in body.

#### Dose

6 gm / day along with protein rich diet for good effects<sup>8</sup>.

#### SHIGRU (MORINGA OLEIFERA)

It is most extensively used herb these days. It acts as good immunity booster. In some animal studies it is said that it impairs the morphology and functioning of kidney. Alanine and Aspartate Transaminases are the primary enzymes of the liver but are also present in the kidneys. After administration of Moringa oleifera leaves, elevated levels of

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urea, alanine and aspartate transaminases implies that administration of extract resulted in adverse effects on the blood filtration capacity of kidneys due to dysfunctioning of glomerular membranes for 21 days in the doses of 250, 500, 750 mg / Kg body weight on rats<sup>9</sup>.

In Bhavparkash Nighantu, Guruchyadi Varga, Shigru seeds are said to cause loss of libido<sup>10</sup>.

*Chakshushyam shigrujam beejam teekshanoshnam vishnashnam /*

*Avrishyam kaphvaatghanam tatrasyen shiroartinut //*<sup>11</sup>

So long term use and its self-medication should be discouraged.

### Shigru leaves properties

*Shigrushakamhimamswaduchakshushyamvaatpitthrit / Brahnashukrkrishnigdamruchyamadrakrimiparnut //*<sup>12</sup>

These are cool in potency, palatable, good for eyes, Vatapittapacifier, energizer, spermatogenesis booster, snigdha, appetizer, antiseptic and relieves confusion called as katzenjammer. It is contraindicated in kidney diseases. Mostly root bark is recommended for use in Ayurvedic texts in the dose of 4-8 gm. It acts as abortifacient in the dose of 175 mg / Kg body weight<sup>13</sup>.

### Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera)

It is Kaphavaatshamaka.<sup>14</sup>

It has cortisol lowering effect, so it regulates thyroid hormones.

#### C/I

Hyperthyroidism may cause thyrotoxicosis so heart failure can occur, pregnancy, autoimmune diseases, MS. In case of autoimmune diseases, it may cause overactive immune system so may worsen the symptoms. In case of hypotension due to blood pressure lowering effect, along with fish oil. It can cause some side effects like constipation, anorexia. Its intake must be stopped at least 2 weeks before the planned surgery.

#### Dose

Extract 300 mg BD After meals for 60 days can be taken. It can be prescribed in cancer treated patients in the dose of 2gm per day. It is safe upto 3 months of regular use<sup>15</sup>.

### PIPPALI (PIPER LONGUM)

It is Kaphavaatashaamaka<sup>16</sup>.

Its recommended dose is 250-500 mg and above that dose it causes decrease in courtship latency in males and antifertility in females according to some animal studies.

#### C/I

Pregnancy, breast feeding<sup>17</sup>.

### MARICH (PIPER NIGRUM)

It is Kaphavaatshaamaka<sup>18</sup>. In animal studies antispermatic and antifertility effects are seen in animal studies if given in 25-100mg/Kg body weight / day for more

than 20 days<sup>19</sup>. If used in excess dose can cause stomachache, vomiting, burning in rectal and urethral region. Urticaria may occur.

#### Dose

250-500 mg/day<sup>20</sup>

### MULETHI (GLYCORRHIZA GLABRA)<sup>21</sup>

It is Guru, Snigdha, Madhura Rasa, Sheetavirya, Pittashaamaka, Vednasthapaka and nervine tonic. It must not be used as food supplement. On long term use in overdose may cause increase in cortisol levels in body so imbalance in body fluids and electrolytes with symptoms of fatigue, headache, oedema, hypertension, cramping. Excessive accumulation may cause kidney failure, paralysis, congestive heart failure.

#### C/I

Pregnancy, breast feeding. Intake in pregnancy may cause adverse neurological effects in children later in life. People who have kidney or liver dysfunction. Along with digoxin, losartan, warfarin, estrogen based contraceptives, celecoxib, diclofenac, fluvastatin, NSAID, frusemide. In normal doses it gives effects as hydrocortisone.<sup>22</sup>

#### Dose

1-5 gm orally. Its half-life is 6-10 hrs. so prescription must be 6-10 hourly for 2 weeks only.

### HARITAKI (TERMINALIA CHEBULA)

It is preferred as Rasayana. It is tridoshhara<sup>23</sup>.

#### C/I

*Haritaki tu trishnayaam hanustambhe galgraha / Shoshe navjware jeerno guvinyam neiv shasyate //*<sup>24</sup>

It is not suitable and not advised in thirst, tetanus, throat stiffness, weakness or TB, acute fever, senility, and pregnancy.

#### Dose

3-6 gm/day.

### DALCHINI (CINNAMOMMUM ZEYLANICA)

It is Kaphavaatshaamaka<sup>25</sup>. Its maximum dose is 6 gm / day only for 5 days than 2 days rest is mandatory. Maximum of 6 weeks it can take otherwise toxicity levels may reach causing liver damage so may cause failure<sup>26</sup>.

#### C/I

Pregnancy due to its effect of induction of premature labour.

Damaged liver. Liver may be damaged due to presence of Coumarin salt (0.4- 0.8%).

### TULSI (OCIMUM SANCTUM)

It is Kaphavaatashaamaka<sup>27</sup>. Acts as Rasayana by chelation of iron metal in body. Iron causes lipid oxidation so tulsi retards iron catalysed lipid oxidation reactions. So reduces oxidative stress. It can be taken upto 3 months daily but after that side effects will continue to start e.g., hypoglycemia.

**C / I**

Hypoglycemia. It can worsen hypothyroidism so C/I in hypothyroidism. Due to its effect of slow blood clotting, it should be stopped at least 2 weeks before the scheduled surgeries. On long term use it gave antifertility effects according to some animal studies and fertility revived to normal 2 weeks after withdrawal<sup>28</sup>.

If taken in 300mg/ Kg body weight, then it has antifertility action<sup>29</sup>. Moreover, if taken 2gm /day brings about reduction in sperm count and also non-viable spermatozoa due to decreased levels of LH<sup>30</sup>. In women its leaves can give abortifacient effects as well as antifertility actions. DNA damage may occur on long term use so it can cause dryness of vagina due to lipid peroxidation which leads to decreased secretions<sup>31</sup>. Pregnancy, lactation and in dose of 300mg / Kg body weight<sup>32</sup>.

**Dose<sup>33</sup>**

Leaves Kalka- 10-20 gm

Seed Churna – 1-1.5 gm

Kwatha -20-50 ml

Swarasa- 10 -20 ml

**CONCLUSION**

There are a lot of Ayurveda dravyas for health which enchant our life by their pharmacology but their dose and duration before intake is the point of consideration.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

None.

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