

**ASHWAGANDHA (*Withania somnifera* (L) Dunal.)**

**Family-** Solanaceae

**Synonyms**

1. Gandhpatri
2. Varahkarni,
3. Ashwakanda
4. Ashwarohaka
5. Kanchuka
6. Putrada
7. Balda
8. Hayavyaha

**Vernacular Names-**

- English -Winter cherry, Indian Ginseng
- Hindi -Asagandh
- Sanskrit - Ashwagandha
- Indian Ginseng

**Part used-** Mula (Root)

**Rasadi panchaka**

**Rasa -** Tikta, Kashaya

**Guna –** Laghu, Snigdha

**Vipaka -** Madhara

**Virya -** Ushna

**Action of Desha:** Kaphavatahara

Kaphahara - Because of Ushna virya & Tikta, Kashaya rasa.

Vatahara Because of Ushna virya and Madhura vipaka.

**Karma (Action)-**

Balya ,Kantivardhaka ,Shwitraghni ,Shwasahara ,Shophahara

**Rogagnata: (Therapeutic Indications)**

Kshaya ,Vatavyadhi ,Klaivya ,Vranaa ,Kasa ,Shopha ,Shwitra ,Shotha ,Kandu ,Krimi ,Visha ,Shwasa



### **Amyika Prayoga (Therapeutic Uses)-**

1. Vandhyatwa( Infertility) - Ashwagandha kashaya is made into ghrirts and administered after Ritu-snana. (Chakradatta)
2. Kshaya (Emaciation) - Equal quantities of Pippali churna, Sharkara and Ashwagandha are administered with ghee and honey. (Sushruta)
3. Shwasa (Dyspnoea) - Ashwagandha kshara is orally given with honey and ghee. (Charaka)
4. Krishna (Lean personality)- Ashwagandha powder may be administered with milk, ghee, oil or luke warm water. (Ashtangahridaya).

### **Matra (Dose)**

Churna (Powder) - 3 to 5 g

Alkali (kshara) -1-2 g

**Specific formulations-** Ashwagandhavalehya. Ashwagandharishta, Katukadya taila, Tiktadi kwatha, Tiktaka ghrita.

**Distribution** - *Withania somnifera* is found growing wild throughout drier parts of india in waste palces, bunds of cultivated fields and fish & fresh water ponds. New Delhi (U.T.). Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu are the states where this plant is found in wild condition from plains upto an altitude of 1700 m.

The taxon is wide spread from southern Med-iterranean area to the Canary Islands and to the South & East Africa, Congo, Madagascar; from Palestine to North India covering Israel, Jordan, Egypt, Sudan, Iran, Afghanistan, Bal-t uchistan and Pakistan.

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### **External Morphology**

Erect, perennial under shrub shrub, 0.35-1.5m high, stellate hairy allover. Root fleshy or fibrous and hard, elongate, unbranched, or branched with more fibrous secondary roots; stem generally profusely branched. Leaves petiolate, simple, alternate or sub opposite in the upper part, ovate- elliptic, 5-10 x 3-5.5 cm, entire. Flowers few in axillary short pedi-celled fascicles-umbellate cymes, inconspicuous; calyx greenish, 0.5cm long, 5 (-6) -lobed or toothed, persistent, accrescent and inflated in fruit to attain an ovoid- elongate, slightly 5-angled shape, upto 2.5 cm long and 1.5cm across with converged calyx teeth; corolla greenish yellow. 51-6)-lobed, 0.4-0.5 cm in diameter, stamens 5. Fruit a berry, globose, 0.5-0.8 cm in diam, green,

turning to red or orange red at maturity, enclosed by inflated calyx. Seeds many, yellowish, about 0.2 cm in diam, reniform with reticulate or pitted surfaces.

**Grahya Laxana (Genuine Characteristics)**

Root-Cylindrical, straight or slightly tortuous, mostly unbranched roots, 5 to 8 mm in diameter, occurring whole or in pieces of varying length; upper portion of the roots are more often topped with stem bases. Outer surface fawn coloured or light brown, finely wrinkled longitudinally : a transversely cut portion of the root shows a creamish starchy surface with a thin, closely adhering bark, followed by a narrow cortex and a large woody portion cortex and a large woody portion surrounded by a prominent cambium ring of brownish colour.

**Substitution**

- Ashwagandha is a substitute for--
- Kakoli (*Lilium polyphyllum*)
- Kshirakakoli (*Fritillaria roylei*)