

Mandukaparni (*Centella asiatica* Linn.)

Family - Apiaceae (See Appendix-II for key features)

Synonyms

1. Manduki
2. Mahaushadhi
3. Divya
4. Divyateja
5. Twashtri
6. Saraswati

Vernacular Names

English- Indian penny wort

Hindi -Khulakudi



Habitat & Distribution -*Centella asiatica* is a water-loving, juicy herb. It is found throughout the country in moist situation, along water courses and irrigated canals, both in the coastal districts and at higher elevations upto 1500m. The herb is also distributed in Sri Lanka and other tropical & subtropical regions of the world.

Mandukaparni is a common weed found through-out India and especially grows in moist regions.

Botanical Description-

Morphology

Habit-Annual & prostrate herb.

Root-Tap root, branched.

Stem-Prostrate, herbaceous, weak, fistular, green. stolons are present, rooting at nodes.

Leaf-Simple, arising in groups from nodes, orbicular or reniform, crenate, lobed, glabrous, shining, petiolar, long petioled, stipulate, uncostate reticulate veined.

Inflorescence - Racemose, simple umbels, 3 to 6 flowers in each group.

Centella asiatica Linn.

Flowers-Pedicellate, bracteate, actinomorphic, bisexual, epigynous, complete, regular, pedicels and bracts are small, sepals are 5 in number, gamosepalous, petals are 5, polypetalous. Androecium has 5 stamens polyandrous, alternate to petals. Gynoecium has 2 carpels, with inferior ovary.

Fruit-Cremocarp, laterally compressed, cremocarp breaks into 2 mericarps, one seed in each mericarp.

More or less through-out the year.

Flowering & Fruiting - More or less through-out the year.

Medhya-rasayana (An intellect promoting drug) Juice of Mandukaparni should be used.

Chemical constituents -

Asiatic acid, centic acid, centellic acid, centoic acid, pectic acid, carotene, centellose, hydrocotylin, asiaticosides A & B B-caryophyllene, B-sitosterol vallerine etc.

Rasadi Panchaka-

1. Rasa - Tikta, Madhura
2. Guna - Laghu
3. Virya - Sheeta
4. Vipaka - Madhura

Karma (Action)

Medhya, Rasayana, Swarya, Smritivardhaka, Kushtaghna, Pandujit, Mehaghna, Kasahara, Vishaghna, Shothahara, Jwarahara, Hridya, Ayushyakara. Kandughna, Ruchikara, Shwasahara.

Doshakarma (Action on Dosha)

Tridosha Shamaka. Vatahara due to Madhura vipaka, Pittahara because of Shita virya, Madhura vipaka and Tikta Kashaya Madhura rasa. Kaphahara because of Tikta Kashaya rasa.

Specific formulations

Brahmipanak, Brahmi taila, Saraswatarishta, Saraswata ghrita.

Therapeutic Indications - Kushtha, Pandu, Prameha, Rak-tavikar, Kasa, Shotha, Jwara.

Therapeutic uses -

1. Kasa and Shosha (Cough & Emaciation)

Mandukaparni, Madhuka and Shunthi are also used according to the method as described for Nagabala (initial dose 5g gradual-ly increasing in a month upto 40g) with milk. Milk diet whitout cereals should be followed.

(Sushruta)

2. Swarabheda (Hoarseness of voice)

Mandukaparni combined with Bilva root, Kushtha and Shankhpushpi and mixed with honey is used for laryngitis and to relive hoarsness of the voice. (Bhavaprakasha)

3. Unmada (Insanity) -

Juice of Mandukaparni, combined with equal quantity of that of Dhattura leaves and Somavalli alleviates Un-mada. (Vangasena)

Parts used -Patra (Leaf) or Panchanga (whole herb).

Matra (Dosage)

Churna (Powder) -3 to 5 g

Swarasa (Juice) - 10 to 20 ml

Specific formulations

Brahmipanak, Brahmi taila, Saraswatarishta, Saraswata ghrita.

Grahya Laxana (Genuine Characteristics)

Sample of *Centella asiatica* consisting of reniform or orbicular leaves, up to 3.5 cm long and 2 cm broad with crenate or lobulate margins and broadly cordate base. Upper surface glabrous, greenish brown, lower surface grayish green, palmately veined. The leaves are borne on long wiry petioles. Has got strong odour and tastes bitter.

The fresh herb consists of long slender slightly succulent, creeping stems with long internodes and bearing rosettes of long stalked, frequently cupped leaves, crowded at nodes underside of which gives out fibrous roots.