

Vasa (Adhatoda vasica Nees)

Botanical Name: Adhatoda vasica Nees.

Family: Acanthaceae

Introduction

Vasa, commonly known as Malabar Nut, is one of the most important medicinal plants in Ayurveda, Unani, and Siddha medicine. It is primarily used for respiratory disorders like asthma, cough, bronchitis, and tuberculosis. The leaves of the plant are rich in alkaloids, flavonoids, and essential oils, making them highly effective in treating lung and throat infections.

Names in Different Indian Languages

English: Malabar Nut, Vasaka

Hindi: Adusa, Arusa

Kannada: Adusoge, Vasa

Malayalam: Atalotakam

Sanskrit: Vasa, Vasaka, Simhaasya, Bhishangmatee

Tamil: Adathodai

Telugu: Addasaramu

Unani: Bansa



Synonyms

Vasaka (Best herb for respiratory issues)

Simhaasya (Lion-faced flowers)

Shwetapushpa (White-flowered plant)

Raktapushpa (Red-flowered variety)

Bhuunimba (Similar to neem in its bitter taste and medicinal use)



Classification According to Ayurveda

Charaka Samhita:

Shwasahara (Relieves asthma & respiratory problems)

Kasahara (Cough suppressant)

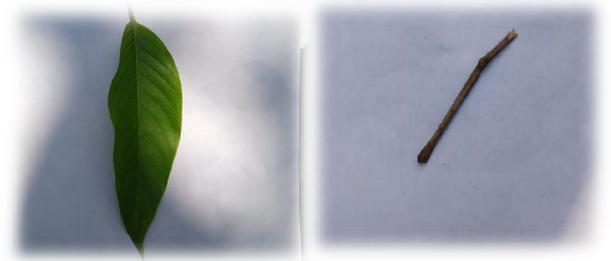
Jwarahara (Reduces fever)

Krimighna (Antimicrobial, kills worms & infections)

Sushruta Samhita:

Raktapittahara (Balances blood disorders, stops bleeding disorders)

Swedopaga (Supports sweating therapy, helps in fevers & detoxification)



Vagbhata:

Shirovirechana (Cleanses sinuses and respiratory pathways)

Hikkanigrahana (Stops hiccups & throat irritation)

Varieties & Adulterants (CV – Controversy, AD – Adulterants)

Varieties:

Adhatoda vasica Nees. – Commonly used in Ayurvedic medicine

Adhatoda beddomei – Found in South India

Adhatoda zeylanica – Sri Lankan variety

Adulterants:

Justicia gendarussa – Sometimes sold as Vasa but lacks medicinal potency

Part Used

Leaves (most commonly used)

Roots

Flowers

Bark

Morphology

Type: Evergreen shrub

Leaves: Opposite, lance-shaped, dark green, bitter in taste

Flowers: White or purple, funnel-shaped

Fruit: Small, capsule-shaped

Seeds: Tiny, brownish, found inside the capsules

Habitat & Distribution

Found in tropical and subtropical regions of India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Myanmar.

Grows in forests, along roadsides, and near riverbanks.

Chemical Constituents

Alkaloids: Vasicine, Vasicinone, Adhatodic acid

Flavonoids: Luteolin, Quercetin

Essential Oils: Eugenol, Cineole

Tannins: Gallic acid, Ellagic acid

Beta-Sitosterol

Properties According to Ayurveda

Rasa (Taste): Tikta (Bitter), Kashaya (Astringent)

Guna (Qualities): Laghu (Light), Ruksha (Dry)

Virya (Potency): Sheetala (Cooling)

Vipaka (Post-digestive effect): Katu (Pungent)
Karma (Therapeutic actions):
Shwasahara (Relieves breathing difficulties, asthma, and bronchitis)
Kasahara (Suppresses cough and throat infections)
Raktapittahara (Stops nosebleeds and bleeding disorders)
Krimighna (Kills intestinal parasites and infections)
Jwarahara (Reduces fever and detoxifies the body)
Yakrit-Utttejaka (Liver stimulant, useful in liver disorders)

Indications

Respiratory Disorders – Asthma, chronic cough, bronchitis, tuberculosis
Bleeding Disorders – Hemoptysis (coughing up blood), nasal bleeding, heavy menstrual bleeding
Fever & Infections – Viral fever, malaria, flu, pneumonia
Skin Disorders – Wounds, eczema, skin allergies
Digestive Issues – Indigestion, diarrhea, ulcers
Liver Disorders – Hepatitis, jaundice

Dosage

Powder: 2-4 g
Juice (Swarasa): 10-20 ml
Decoction (Kwath): 50-100 ml
Syrup: 5-10 ml (commonly found in Ayurvedic pharmacies)

External Uses

Wound Healing: Leaves crushed and applied on wounds.
Joint Pain: Paste made from leaves applied externally.
Skin Allergies: Leaf decoction used for bathing.

Internal Uses

Respiratory System

Expels mucus and clears airways.
Relieves breathlessness, chronic bronchitis, and asthma.
Reduces cough by soothing throat irritation.

Digestive System

Helps in loss of appetite, indigestion, and diarrhea.
Works as an anthelmintic (expels intestinal worms).

Circulatory System

Stops internal bleeding and purifies the blood.

Urinary System

Diuretic, helpful in urinary tract infections (UTIs).

Reproductive System

Reduces excessive menstrual bleeding (menorrhagia).

Satmikaran (Rejuvenation)

Acts as a general immune booster.

Useful as an energy tonic after long illnesses.

Important Ayurvedic Formulations (Yogas)

Vasa Avaleha (Vasaka Lehyam) – Used for chronic cough, bronchitis, asthma.

Vasa Churna (Powder) – Used in tuberculosis and bleeding disorders.

Sitopaladi Churna – Combined with Vasa for cough and respiratory problems.

Vasa Arishta – Alcohol-based preparation for lung infections.

Brahmi Vasa Ghrita – Medhya Rasayana (brain tonic).

Important Research Work on Vasa

1. Anti-Asthmatic Activity – Relieves bronchial asthma and chronic cough.
2. Expectorant & Mucolytic – Helps in clearing mucus from lungs.
3. Anti-Bacterial & Anti-Fungal Properties – Effective in treating infections.
4. Anti-Tubercular Activity – Supports treatment for tuberculosis.
5. Anti-Inflammatory Effects – Reduces lung and throat inflammation.
6. Hepatoprotective – Protects liver from toxins.

Therapeutic Uses

1. Asthma & Cough – Vasa juice mixed with honey relieves asthma.
2. Bleeding Disorders – Vasa decoction controls excessive bleeding.
3. Fever & Infections – Mixed with Tulsi for flu and fever relief.
4. Tuberculosis – Regular use helps in TB management.
5. Liver Detoxification – Supports liver health and improves digestion.

Vasa is one of the best natural remedies for respiratory diseases, known for its bronchodilator, expectorant, and anti-inflammatory properties. It is a powerful herb for lung health, blood purification, and fever management, making it an essential part of Ayurvedic treatments.