



Indian Journal of Agriculture and Allied Sciences

ISSN 2395-1109

e-ISSN 2455-9709

Volume: 4, No.: 3, Year: 2018

www.ijaas.org.in

Received: 12.09.2018, Accepted: 22.09.2018

Publication Date: 30th September 2018

APPLIED ASPECT OF ARJUNA (*Terminalia arjuna*) IN AYURVEDIC TEXTS & NIGHANTUS

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Abstract: *Terminalia arjuna* is a tree of the genus *Terminalia*. It is commonly known as *arjuna* or *arjun* tree in English. *Terminalia arjuna*, commonly known as *Arjuna*, belongs to the family of *combretaceae*. It is a deciduous tree found throughout India growing to a height of 60-90 feet. *Arjuna*, one of the classical drugs of herbal origin, has been used by the Ayurvedic physicians, for the management of different disease conditions. It is being recommended to alleviate various disease conditions like *Hridayaroga* (Cardiac diseases), *Raktavikara* (Blood disorders), *Shotha* (Inflammation), *Raktapitta* (Epistaxis), *Pandu* (Anemia), *Swasa* (Asthma), *Kandu* (Itching), *Kustha* (Leprosy), *Charmaroga* (Skin diseases), *Jwara* (Fever), *Medoroga* (Obesity), *Asthibhanga* (Bone fracture), *Vrana* (Wound), *Yauvanpidika* (Acne), *Netraroga* (Eye diseases) and *Karnaroga* (Ear diseases). In all cardiac diseases its bark is given in “*ksheer paka*” formulation. Acharya used the herb in epistaxis, wounds, fractures and oedema etc. *Kakubh* (*Arjuna*) is indicated in tuberculosis, general weakness, blood disorder, hyperlipidemia, diabetes, and wounds healing. And also subside the excessive *kapha* & *pitta*. According to different *Nighantukara*, *Arjuna* possess wound healing, hyperlipidemic & antidiabetic properties.

Keywords: *Arjuna*, *Hridayaroga*, *Ksheer paka* etc

Introduction: *Terminalia arjuna* is a tree of the genus *Terminalia*. It is commonly known as *arjuna* or *arjun* tree in English. *Terminalia arjuna*, commonly known as *Arjuna*, belongs to

the family of *combretaceae*. It is a deciduous tree found throughout India growing to a height of 60-90 feet.

Taxonomical Classification of Plant

Kingdom	Plantae
Division	Magnoliophyta
Class	Magnoliopsida
Order	Myrtales
Family	Combretaceae
Genus	<i>Terminalia</i>
Species	<i>arjuna</i>

Description of Plant: *Arjuna* is about 20–25 metres tall tree in height.

Leaves: It's leaves resemble to the leaves of guava plant. Leaves are 7cm to 12 cm in length.

Leaves are sub-opposite, oblong or elliptic, coriaceous, cordate, shortly acute or obtuse at the apex.

Image 1: *Arjuna* Leaves



Image:2 *Arjuna* Bark



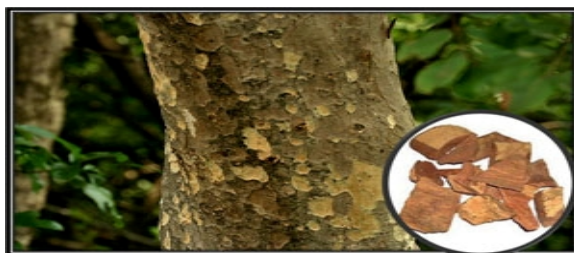


Image:3 Arjuna Bark

Bark: The thick, white to pinkish grey bark has been used in India's native Ayurvedic medicine for over three centuries, primarily as a cardiac tonic.

Fruits: Its glabrous, 2.5 to 5 cm fibrous woody fruit, divided into five wings, appears between September and November.

Flowers: It has pale yellow flowers which appear between March and June.

Native Place: This plant is found everywhere in India but commonly found in Himalaya, Nagpur, central India, Mumbai, Chennai and Rajasthan etc. It extends Northwards to the sub-Himalayan tract, where it is distributed along the banks of stream. In favorable localities,



Image :4 Arjuna Fruit

especially along the banks of streams, the tree attains very large size.

Ayurveda View: *Arjuna*, one of the classical drugs of herbal origin, has been used by the Ayurvedic physicians, for the management of different disease conditions. It is being recommended to alleviate various disease conditions like *Hridyarooga* (Cardiac diseases), *Raktavikara* (Blood disorders), *Shotha* (Inflammation), *Raktapitta* (Epistaxis), *Pandu* (Anemia), *Swasa* (Asthma), *Kandu* (Itching), *Kustha* (Leprosy), *Charmaroga* (Skin diseases), *Jwara* (Fever), *Medoroga* (Obesity), *Asthibhanga* (Bone fracture), *Vrana* (Wound), *Yauvanpidika* (Acne), *Netraroga* (Eye diseases) and *Karnaroga* (Ear diseases).

Classification

Classification of *Arjuna* in Ayurvedic Texts

<i>Charaka Samhita</i>	<i>Kashayaskandha, Udarda-prashamana</i>
<i>Sushruta Samhita</i>	<i>Nyagrodhadi, Salasaradi</i>
<i>Ashtanga Hridayam</i>	<i>Nyagrodhadi, Vitarvadi</i>
<i>Bhavaprakash Nighantu</i>	<i>Vatadi</i>
<i>Dhanvantari Nighantu</i>	<i>Amradi, Swati Nakshatra Vriksha</i>
<i>Raj Nighantu</i>	<i>Prabhadradi</i>
<i>Kaiydeva Nighantu</i>	<i>Aushadhi</i>
<i>Nighantu Adarsh</i>	<i>Bibhitakad</i>

Synonyms: Various Nighantukara Gives different synonyms for *arjuna*

Dhanwantari nighantu: अजुनः ककुभः पाथश्चित्रयोधि धनंजयः वीरान्तकः किरोटो च नदोसर्जापि पांडवः॥ (ध. नि – 104) ^[1]

Raj nighantu: अजुनः शम्बरः पाथश्चित्रयोधि धनंजयः वीरान्तकः किरोटो च गाण्डोवी शिवमल्लकः सव्यसाची नदोसजः कनारिः कुरुवीरकः कौन्तेय इन्द्रसूतश्च वीरद्र कृष्णसारथिः पृथाजः फाल्गुनो धन्वी ककुभश्चैर्कावशति॥ (राज निघंटु-117) ^[2]

kaiydeva nighantu: अजुनः फाल्गुनः पाथः ककुभो धूतभूरुहः श्वेतवाहो नदोसजः मधुगंधिप्रसूनकः ॥ (कैयदेव निघंटु-819) ^[3]

Acharya Bhavprakash: ककुभो अजुननामाख्यो नदोसजंश्च कोतितः इन्द्रदुर्वारवृक्षश्च वीरश्च धवलः स्मृतः॥ (भा. नि. वर्ताद-26) ^[4]

Table:4 Few common synonyms of *Arjuna* with their probable interpretation

Synonym	probable interpretation
<i>Arjuna</i>	The tree has spreading branches
<i>Dhananjaya, Dhurandhara, Veera</i>	It gets victory over diseases
<i>Dhawal, Shvetvaha, Dhurtbhuruh, Gaur</i>	The outer bark is whitish in colour
<i>Kakubha</i>	It is large tree covers large area
<i>Madhugandhi prasunaka</i>	Flower are sweet scented
<i>Nadisarja</i>	It grows near the river bank
<i>Veeravraksha, Veertaru</i>	It is useful in many diseases
<i>Viradru, Virantaka</i>	It is potent drug
<i>Krishna sarthi</i>	As the <i>Arjuna</i> is supportive to the lord <i>Krishna</i> this drug is very useful for human being
<i>Kuruviraka</i>	It is brave tree against disorders of heart
<i>Pandav, Partha</i>	As the name of <i>Arjuna</i> mentioned in <i>Bhagwadgeeta</i>
<i>Shwasaneswara</i>	Relieves <i>swasa</i>

5 Rasa panchaka & pharmacological study of Arjuna

Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka	Prabhav	Dosh karma	Karma	Rogahnata
Kashaya	Laghu, Ruksha	Sheeta	Katu	Hridya	Kaphapita shamaka	Hridya Rakta prasadan Mutrasangrahaniya Sandhaniya Medohara Vishaghna Vranaropana Balya Rasayana	Hridyaroaga Raktavikara Shotha Raktapitta Prameha Shukrameha Kustha Medoroga Asthibhagna

Different varieties: There are two types with similar effects.

Arjuna: *Terminalia arjuna*—white variety.

Kakubha: *Terminalia alata* (*Terminalia tomentosa*)—black variety, *Terminalia arjuna* being taken as the source of Arjuna. But some recommends *T. panniculata* & *T. tomentosa* as Arjuna. Although, *Sterculia urens* is considered as Arjuna in Rajasthan & some parts of Pakistan.

Applied Aspect of Arjuna According to Ayurvedic Literature

Charaka samhita

- Bark powder is given in the form of *Hima kalpana* along with honey in *Raktapitta* (epistaxis). Other formulation of bark like juice, decoction can also be applied along with honey.^[5]
- *Arjuna*'s leaves are applied on wounds due to its healing property because it has *kashaya rasa*.^[6]
- Leaves has anti inflammation property and also subside the pain. Hence juice, decoction of leaves given to the patients suffering from piles.^[7]
- Its decoction formulation is indicated to patients suffering from leprosy for bath, drink and applying on skin.^[8]

Sushruta Samhita

- Bark powder is given in form of *Hima kalpana* along with honey in patients suffering from *Raktapitta* (Epistaxis).^[9]
- Patients suffering from *shukrameha* treated with decoction of *Santalum album* & *Terminalia arjuna*.^[10]

Ashtaang Hridayam

- Decoction of Arjuna bark is also indicated in patients suffering from *mutraghata* (urethritis).^[11]
- Medicated Gauze deeped in decoction of *Arjuna* bark & *Sirisha* bark should be inserted in female suffering from obstructed labour.^[12]

- Paste formed by *Arjuna* bark powder & milk should be applied on face in melena, skin patches, dark spots etc.^[13]

Other Literature

- In *Chakradutta*, *Arjuna* is mentioned as *Rasayana* and helpful to regain weight and enhance immunity.^[14]
- Acharya *Harita* indicates decoction of *Arjuna* in Burning micturition (*Mutra daah*) with puss.
- Acharya *Vangsen* indicated *Arjuna kshara* in treating *grahani* & *Aam Atisara*.
- Acc to Acharya *Vrinda*, *Arjuna* bark powder if taken with milk does bone ossification thus helpful in fractures of bones/joint.

Dhanwantari nighantu: ककुभस्तु कषायोष्णः कफघ्नो व्रणनाशनः। पित्तश्रमत्प्रातिघ्नो मारुतामयकोपनः॥ (ध. नि. १०५) Acharya *Mahendra bhaugik* in *Dhanwantari Nighantu* says *Arjuna* is Astringent, Hot in properties. It reduced excessive cough and heals the wound., Acharya Also indicated *Arjuna* to Subside *pitta*, thirst but increases *vata* disorders.^[15]

Raj nighantu: अजुनस्तु कषायोष्णः कफघ्नो व्रणनाशनः। पित्तश्रमत्प्रातिघ्नो मारुतामयकोपनः॥ (राज निघंटु- 118) Acharya *Narhari pandit* follows *Dhanwantari Nighantu* when described Implementation of *Arjuna* in various diseases.^[16]

Kaiydeva Nighantu: अजुनस्तुवरः शीतो जयेत् पित्तकफव्रणान् । मेदोमेहास्त्रहृद्रोगस्वेदभग्नक्षत क्षयान् ॥ (कैयदेव निघंटु-820) Acharya *Kaiydeva* indicated *Arjuna* in tuberculosis, general weakness, blood disorder, hyperlipidemia, diabetes, and wounds healing. *Arjuna* also subside the excessive *kapha* & *pitta*, but specially mentioned in *Asthi bhagna* (fractures) & excessive sweating.^[17]

Bhavprakash nighantu: ककुभः शीतलो हृद्भक्षतक्षर्यावषास्त्रजितः । व्र नि : र्ति तह ॥ (. प्र. र्ति -27)

In all cardiac diseases its bark is given in “*ksheer paka*” formulation. Acharya used the herb in epistaxis, wounds, fractures and oedema etc.

Kakubh (Arjuna) is indicated in tuberculosis, general weakness, blood disorder, hyperlipidemia, diabetes, and wounds healing. And also subside the excessive *kapha & pitta*.^[18]

According to different *Nighantukara*, *Arjuna* possess wound healing, hyperlipidemic & antidiabetic properties.

Table:6 Few common formulation given in texts:

S. N.	Formulation	References	Uses
1.	<i>Arjuna Ghrutam</i>	BR, BBRVol-1	<i>Hridyaroga</i>
2.	<i>Arjunadi Kshiram</i>	BBRVol-1, YR	<i>Hridyaroga</i>
3.	<i>Arjunadi Lepa</i>	BBRVol-1	<i>Balroga, Twacharoga</i>
4.	<i>Dhananjay vati</i>	BBRVol-3, YR	<i>Kasa</i>
5.	<i>Kakubhtwachadi Yoga</i>	BBRVol-1	<i>Kasa, Rajayakshma</i>
6.	<i>Kakubh Leha</i>	BBRVol-1	<i>Kasa, Kshaya, Pittanashak</i>
7.	<i>Kukubhadi Dhoop</i>	BBRVol-1, YR	<i>Krumi, Shiroroga</i>
8.	<i>Laksha Guggula</i>	BR, BBRVol-4	<i>Bhagna, Shool</i>
9.	<i>Prabhakar vati</i>	BBR Vol-3, BR	<i>Hridyaroga</i>

Dose of *Arjuna*

- Bark powder: 3-6 gm
- Bark decoction: 50-100 ml
- For *kshirapaka*: 5-10 gm

Part Used: Bark is widely used for medicinal purpose by various *Ayurveda acharyas*

- Bark
- Leaves
- Fruits

Contraindication

- Because it can lower blood pressure and blood sugar levels, people on medication for BP and diabetes need to take precaution to avoid over-dosing.
- It is safe to use in children and during lactation. Being a species of *Terminalia* it is not advised during pregnancy.
- *Arjuna* contain tannin in large amount, hence iron rich diet or iron containing formulations are generally not recommended to the patients as tannin interact with iron and cause blackening of teeths.

Conclusion: *Arjuna* is most common plant found through out the India. As it's synonyms suggest *dhananjaya & Veera* etc. It get won over various disease. Now a day *arjuna* is mostly used as cardiogenic drug. But despite its cardiogenic properties it also diminished various ailments such as obesity, Diabetes, asthma. Despite that it is considered good herb for fracture healing and it is useful in epistaxis due to its astringent properties. So *Arjuna* should be used in various disease by practitioner. Its scope in *ayurveda* won't be limited upto only cardiogenic properties

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