

SHATAVARI (Asparagus Racemosus Willd.) - A BOON TO FEMALE HEALTH

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has the oldest and the most developed herbal system in the world. The herbs are viewed as the spiritual essence. *Shatavari* (*Asparagus racemosus* Willd.) is one amongst the millions of plants having multitude of benefits. However, in relation with female health, *Shatavari* holds a significant role. It serves as the *Ayurvedic* rejuvenative for women. It nourishes and cleanses the blood and the reproductive organs. Estrogen is one of the major hormones in females. Its deficiency leads to number of disorders in females. Chemical constituents of *shatavari* contribute to its estrogenic property. *Shatavari* has been mentioned by various *Acharyas* used in various preparations which are beneficial in various gynecological disorders, infertility as well as in restoring female health. An effort has been put forth to focus on the benefits of *Shatavari* in relation to female health.

Keywords: *Ayurveda*, *Shatavari*, female health

INTRODUCTION

Shatavari, or *Asparagus racemosus*, has been used for centuries in *Ayurveda* to support the reproductive system, particularly for females, and as a support for the digestive system, especially in cases of excess *pitta*. In Sanskrit it means “having one hundred roots” and also referred to as meaning “having one hundred husbands”. *Shatavari*'s name gives reference to its traditional use as a rejuvenative tonic for the female reproductive system. *Shatavari* is relied

on heavily for all stages of a woman's reproductive cycle, beginning with the menarche, supporting the female system through menses, ovulation and fertility, uterine strength during pregnancy, childbirth and ample lactation (flow and quantity of milk), and hot flashes, irritability, irregular memory and dryness during menopause. In *Ayurveda*, *Shatavari* is the primary uterine tonic.

AIM & OBJECTIVE

1. To study the *Ayurvedic* properties of *Shatavari*.
2. To collect and study all benefits of *Shatavari* concerned with female health as mentioned in the *Ayurvedic* treatises.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Table 1: *Ayurvedic* Properties:

Text	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka	Doshaghna
<i>Bhavaprakash</i> ¹	Madhura, tikta	Guru	Sheeta	-	Tridosha with rakta
<i>Raj Nighantu</i> ²	madhura	Hima	-	Tikta	Vata-kapha
<i>Kaideva Nighantu</i> ³	Tikta, madhura	Guru, snigdha	Sheeta	-	Vata-pitta
<i>Dhanwantari Nighantu</i> ⁴	Tikta, madhura	Hima	-	-	Vata-pitta

Gana:

Charaka – *Balya, Vayasthapana, madhuraskandha*

Sushruta- Vidarigandhadi, Katakapanchamula, pittaprashamana.

Kashyapa has given immense importance to *Shatavari* by keeping a chapter in *Kalpasthan* on its name i.e *Shatapushpa-shatavari kalpadhyaya*. He has described the qualities of *Shatavari* which is beneficial in various sorts of menstrual disorders and other gynecological problems.

Morphology:

It is a branched, scandent, spinous shrub with tuberous roots, found throughout India. Stem-woody, terete; branches- triquetrous, smooth and striate; spines-suberect or sub-curved, 6-12mm long; leaves-minute, scaling, bearing in their axils, tufts of axillary cladodes; flowers-racemes, white and minute; fruit- berry, globose, 4-6mm in diameter.

It is a conceptual study about *Shatavari* (*Asparagus Racemosus*) concerned with female health.

DESCRIPTION

Botanical name- *Asparagus racemosus Willd.*

Family- Liliaceae

Synonyms- *Bahusuta, Vari, Shatavirya, Narayani, Bhiru.*

Chemical Constituents:

- **Phyto-chemicals-** It includes saponin, flavonoids, iosgenins, glycosides, sistosterol, stigmasterol, sarsapogenin, sistosterol β-D-glucoside. Saponins (also known as shatavarins) and flavonoids are the main contributors towards the estrogen regulating properties of *Shatavari*.
- **Carbohydrates-** polysaccharides and mucilage.
- **Minerals-** Calcium, manganese and zinc in trace amounts.
- **Others-** Small amounts of vitamin A, B-complex and essential fatty acids.

Benefits of *Shatavari* in various phases of female health:

a) Menstrual disorders-

Kashyap mentioned the use of *Shatavari* in curing amenorrhoea, delayed menarche, excessive and heavy menstruation (menorrhagia, metrorrhagia, meno-metrorrhagia),

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