



MURVA – AN AYURVEDIC LITERARY REVIEW

Surabhi Surendran¹, Latha K K², Anju K P³, Nimmy V S⁴

¹Research assistant, Department of Dravyaguna Vijnana, Vaidyaratnam Ayurveda College, Ollur, Thrissur, Kerala, India

²Principal, Vaidyaratnam Ayurveda College, Ollur, Thrissur, Kerala, India

³HOD, Department of Dravyaguna Vijnana, Vaidyaratnam Ayurveda College, Ollur, Thrissur, Kerala, India

⁴Assistant professor, Department of Dravyaguna Vijnana, Vaidyaratnam Ayurveda College, Ollur, Thrissur, Kerala, India

Corresponding Author: surabhi2485@gmail.com

<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj3810092022>

(Published Online: September 2022)

Open Access

© International Ayurvedic Medical Journal, India 2022

Article Received: 24/08/2022 - Peer Reviewed: 09/09/2022 - Accepted for Publication: 13/09/2022



ABSTRACT

Today *Ayurveda* is recognized worldwide as a system of medicine that provides a sound mind in a sound body. This traditional system of medicine in India has an enviable position in treating various ailments through medicinal plants. *Murva* is a controversial and well-known drug discussed in many *Ayurvedic* classics. References to *Murva* can be traced to the *Vedic* period. A detailed description of *Murva* on its synonyms, properties, and actions is given in the *Ayurvedic* literature. It is used in many *Ayurvedic* formulations as one of the ingredients for the treatment of Anaemia, Fever, Diabetes Mellitus, Psoriasis, and many more diseases. The present review article aims at exploring the literature for collecting the available information regarding the drug *Murva*.

Keywords: *Murva*, controversy

INTRODUCTION

Medicinal plants have become part and parcel of human society in combating diseases from the dawn of

civilization. The *Ayurvedic* health care system uses plants and plants-based products for treating various

ailments. The *Ayurvedic* literatures provide an immense source of knowledge regarding the therapeutic potentials of many plants. *Nighantus* are such literary works that give a wide range of explanations regarding the properties and therapeutic indications of herbal drugs. *Murva* is a key medicinal plant used in *Ayurveda*. A detailed description of *Murva* on its synonyms, properties, and actions is given by the *Nighantu karas*, and *Acharyas* like *Charaka*, *Susrutha*, and *Vagbhata* have also mentioned this drug in the *Samhitas*. Similarly, it is an extremely controversial drug. More than one botanical source is used under the name of *Murva* in different parts of India which led to controversy.

NIRUKTI

“*Moorvati badhnati iti*”

That which is used for binding as it has plenty of fibres¹

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Murva is an important drug and can be traced to the *Samhitas*. *Dalhana*, the commentator of *Susrutha*

Samhita has mentioned the name *Chorasnayu* for this drug. *Dalhana* quoted “*Dhanurguna upayogya*” meaning a bowstring can be made by using the fibres of the drug which ought to be very strong.² The *Sarvangasundari* commentary on *Ashtanga Hridaya* by *Acharya Hemadri* identified *Murva* as *Madhusrava*.³ *Arunadatta* has named *Murva* as *Peelupani* and *Madhuras*.⁴ The commentator of *Sarngdhara Samhitha*, *Adamalla* also mentioned *Chorasnayu* for *Murva*.⁵ *Hortus Malabaricus*, a botanical treatise that portrays the medicinal properties of the flora of the Malabar region describes the morphological characters of this drug under the name *Belutta-kaka-kodi*. The common present name of this plant is *Perumkurumba* in Kerala.⁶ A tremendous development has happened to *Dravyaguna* during the period of *Nighantus*. They have given a more detailed description of the place of origin, type, morphology, properties, and uses of medicinal plants through various synonyms.

CLASSIFICATION

The classification of *Murva* in different *Samhitas* and *Nighantus* is given in Table 1.

Table 01: Classification of *Murva*

<i>Samhitas and Nighantus</i>	<i>Varga/Gana</i>
<i>Charaka Samhita (CS)</i> ⁷	<i>Triptighna varga, Sthanyashodana varga</i>
<i>Susrutha Samhita (SS)</i> ⁷	<i>Aragwadadhi gana, Padoladi gana</i>
<i>Ashtanga Samgraha (AS)</i> ⁷	<i>Padoladi, Veerataradi, Vatsakadi and Aragwadadhi Gana</i>
<i>Ashtanga Hrudaya (AH)</i> ⁷	<i>Padoladi, Veerataradi, Vatsakadi and Aragwadadhi Gana</i>
<i>Amarakosha</i> ⁸	<i>Vanoushadhi varga</i>
<i>Sodala Nighantu (SN)</i> ⁹	<i>Guduchyadi varga</i>
<i>Madanapala Nighantu (MN)</i> ¹⁰	<i>Abhayadi varga</i>
<i>Hridayadeepika Nighantu (HN)</i> ¹¹	<i>Dwipada varga</i>
<i>Raja Nighantu (RN)</i> ¹²	<i>Guduchyadi varga</i>
<i>Kaiyyadeva Nighantu (KN)</i> ¹³	<i>Oshadi varga</i>
<i>Bhavaprakasha Nighantu (BpN)</i> ⁷	<i>Guduchyadi varga</i>
<i>Saraswathi Nighantu (S.N)</i> ¹⁴	<i>Latadi varga</i>
<i>Nighantu Adarsh (NA)</i> ¹⁵	<i>Arkadi varga</i>
<i>Saligrama Nighantu (SaN)</i> ¹⁶	<i>Guduchyadi varga</i>
<i>Priya Nighantu (PN)</i> ¹⁷	<i>Sharadi varga</i>
<i>Dhanwanthari Nighantu (DN)</i> ¹⁸	<i>Guduchyadi varga</i>

SYNONYMS

During the ancient period, synonyms were the only tool for describing plants. Various synonyms pertaining to the morphological characters, properties, and actions are available in the *Samhitas* and *Nighantus*. (Table 2)

Table 02: Synonyms of *Murva*

No.	Synonyms	AH ⁷	DN ¹⁸	SN ⁹	MN ¹⁰	Sa N ¹⁶	RN ¹²	KN ¹³	Bp N ⁷	S. N ¹⁴	NiA ¹⁵	PN ¹⁷
1	<i>Morata</i>		+	+	+		+		+	+	+	
2	<i>Devi</i>		+	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+
3	<i>Madhurasa</i>		+	+	+		+	+	+	+	+	+
4	<i>Tejani</i>			+			+		+	+	+	+
5	<i>Srava</i>			+					+	+	+	
6	<i>Madhulika</i>			+			+		+	+	+	
7	<i>Madhusreni</i>			+			+		+	+	+	
8	<i>Gokarni</i>						+		+	+	+	
9	<i>Peeluparni</i>			+	+		+	+	+	+	+	
10	<i>Madhusrava</i>	+		+	+		+	+				
11	<i>Prithak twacha</i>			+				+				+
12	<i>Laghuparni</i>						+					
13	<i>Devasreni</i>		+	+	+		+	+				
14	<i>Gopavalli</i>			+			+					
15	<i>Soochiparni</i>			+								
16	<i>Prithakparni</i>		+		+							
17	<i>Snigdhaparni</i>		+		+		+					
18	<i>Thikta</i>						+					
19	<i>Atirasa</i>							+				
20	<i>Triparni</i>		+				+					
21	<i>Dridasootrika</i>					+						
22	<i>Dhanurguna</i>					+						
23	<i>Thiktavalli</i>					+						

INTERPRETATION OF SYNONYMS¹⁵

According to morphological characters:

Peeluparni - The leaf resembles the leaf of *Peelu*

Gokarni - The leaf is similar to that of a cow's ear

Triparni - It has a compound leaf with three leaflets

Prithakparni - It possess a simple leaf

Gopavalli - A creeper

Snigdhaparni - It is shiny in appearance

Laghuparni - Leaves are light weight

Prathak twacha - Bark is easily removable

Sruva - It produces secretions like that of *ghrita*

Soochiparni - The leaf resembles a needle-like appearance

Dridasootrika - It possesses string-like tough fibres

According to properties:

Madhurasa - It possesses *madhura rasa*

Thikta - It possess *thikta rasa*

Madhusreni - It possesses *madhura rasa* similar to *madhu*

According to action:

Devi - It alleviates all diseases

Morata - It alleviates the *tridoshas*

Tejani - It stimulates the digestive fire

According to use:

Dhanurguna - It is used for making bow strings

PHARMACOLOGICAL PROPERTIES AND ACTIONS

The pharmacological properties of *Murva* are described in various *Nighantus* (Table 3) and the actions are given below in Table 4.

Table 03: Pharmacological properties of *Murva*

<i>Nighantus</i>	<i>Rasa</i>	<i>Guna</i>	<i>Veerya</i>	<i>Vipaka</i>
<i>Bp N</i> ⁷	<i>Swadu Thikta</i>	<i>Sara, Guru</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhura</i>
<i>RN</i> ¹²	<i>Thikta Kashaya</i>		<i>Ushna</i>	
<i>SaN</i> ¹⁶	<i>Swadu Thikta Kashaya</i>	<i>Sara, Guru</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>
<i>MN</i> ¹⁰	<i>Swadu Thikta</i>	<i>Sara, Guru</i>		
<i>KN</i> ¹³	<i>Swadu Thikta</i>	<i>Sara, Guru</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhura</i>
<i>DN</i> ¹⁸	<i>Swadu</i>		<i>Ushna</i>	
<i>API</i> ¹⁹	<i>Madhura Thikta</i>	<i>Sara, Guru</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhura</i>

Table 04: Actions of *Murva*

<i>Doshakarma</i>	<i>Bp N</i> ⁷	<i>Sa N</i> ¹⁶	<i>RN</i> ¹²	<i>SN</i> ⁹	<i>MN</i> ¹⁰	<i>KN</i> ¹³	<i>DN</i> ¹⁸	<i>API</i> ¹⁹
<i>Tridosha samana</i>	+	+			+	+		+
<i>Kaphavata samana</i>			+				+	
<i>Kaphapitta samana</i>				+				

- Action on skin – *Twak doshahara, kushtaghna*
- Action on the digestive system – *Deepana, ama pachana, anulomana, soola prashamana, krimighna*
- Action on circulatory system – *Rakta shodhana*
- Action on the urinary system – *Pramehaghna*
- Action on the female reproductive system – *Sthanya shodana*²⁰

USEFUL PART - Root

THERAPEUTIC INDICATION

According to *Ayurveda* classical textbooks, *Murva* is indicated in curing many diseases. (Table 5)

Table 05: Indications of *Murva*

Indications	<i>BpN</i> ⁷	<i>KN</i> ¹³	<i>RN</i> ¹²	<i>DN</i> ¹⁸	<i>PN</i> ¹⁷	<i>MN</i> ¹⁰	<i>SN</i> ⁹	<i>API</i> ¹⁹
<i>Prameha (Diabetes mellitus)</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+		+
<i>Raktapitta (Bleeding disorders)</i>	+	+				+	+	+
<i>Kushta (Leprosy)</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+		
<i>Hridroga (Cardiac disorders)</i>	+	+	+	+		+		+
<i>Jwara (Fever)</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+		+
<i>Trishna (Thirst)</i>	+	+				+	+	+
<i>Kandu (Itching)</i>	+	+		+		+		+
<i>Vamana (Emesis)</i>		+	+	+				
<i>Krimi-roga (Worms)</i>		+						+
<i>Mukhasosha (Wasting)</i>		+					+	+
<i>Arshas (Piles)</i>								+
<i>Medoroga (Obesity)</i>		+						+

IMPORTANT FORMULATIONS

It is widely used in various formulations. (Table 6)

Table 06: Formulations of *Murva*

Formulations ²¹	Indications
<i>Manjishtadi kashayam</i>	<i>Kushta, vatarakta, ardita, netraroga, medo dosha</i>
<i>Maharasnadi kashayam</i>	<i>Sarvanga vata, sophia, swasa, kasa, amavata, sootika roga</i>
<i>Patoladi kashayam</i>	<i>Visphota, visarpa, vishahara, twak dosha</i>
<i>Varunadi kashayam</i>	<i>Mandagni, adyavata, sirasoola, gulma, antar vidradhi</i>
<i>Marma gulika</i>	<i>Sarva marmavikarajit</i>
<i>Mahayogaraja guggulu</i>	<i>Vatarakta, arshas, gulma, pandu</i>
<i>Sudarsana choorna</i>	<i>Pandu, jwara, kasa, swasa, hridroga</i>
<i>Kumaryasavam</i>	<i>Prameha, apasmara, asmari, soolahara, udararoga</i>
<i>Lodhrasavam</i>	<i>Prameha, pandu, grahani, sthoola</i>
<i>Ayaskriti</i>	<i>Prameha, pandu</i>
<i>Lakshadi taila</i>	<i>Jwara, sosha, apasmara, rajayakshma</i>
<i>Mahat panchagavya ghrita</i>	<i>Jwara, apasmara, bhagandara, pandu, graha hara, sophia</i>
<i>Mahathiktaka ghrita</i>	<i>Kushta, pandu visarpa, timira, grahani, apasmara, visha</i>
<i>Aragwadhadhi kashayam</i>	<i>Kushta, twak dosha</i>

SUBSTITUTE

According to *Bhavaprakasha Nighantu*, *Jingini twak* is used as a substitute for *Murva*.⁷

Botanical name – *Ocimum sanctum* Roxb.

Family name – *Compositae*

CONTROVERSY

Murva is known to be a highly controversial medicinal plant in Ayurveda. Different plant species are used as *Murva* in various parts of India. The dried root of *Marsdenia tenacissima* Wight. & Am (Apocynaceae family) is accepted as *Murva* as per Ayurveda Pharmacopoeia of India.¹⁹

CONCLUSION

Raw drugs are the backbone of *Ayurvedic* medicines. The demand for *Ayurvedic* medicines is increasing tremendously so there is a need for focussed research on medicinal plants along with the documentation of traditional knowledge. The present review article aims at exploring the literature regarding the drug *Murva*. Since it is a controversial drug further research should be done regarding the identification and standardisation of the drug in order to solve the controversy.

REFERENCES

1. Bapalal G Vaidya. *Nighantu Adarsh*. Volume II, Second edition, Varanasi: Chaukhamba Bharati Academy; 1999; p36-39
2. Sushruta, Sushruta samhitha, Priya Vrat Sharma. *Sushruta samhitha of Sushruta with Nibandhasangraha commentary of Sri Dalhanacharya*, Sutrasthana 25/21. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Prakashan; p117
3. Vagbhattacharya, Astanga Hridayam with Sarvangasundhara of Arundatta and Ayurveda Rasayana of Hemadri, collated by Dr. Anna Moreshwar Kunte and Krishna Ramachandra Shastri Navre, Sutrasthana 15/33. Varanasi; Chaukhamba surabharathi prakashan, Reprint 2010; p407
4. Keerthana J, Javagal V, Sheregar R. A controversial medicinal plant *Murva*: a review. *Int J Health Sci Res*. 2021; 11(1):152-156.
5. Sharma Priyavat, *Dravyaguna Vijnana*, Volume 5; Varanasi, Chaukhambha Bharati Academy; Reprint 2014; p230-31.
6. Manilal K. S, Van Rheede's *Hortus Malabaricus*, Volume 9; English edition, Thiruvananthapuram: University of Kerala; 2003
7. Bhavamishra, *Bhavaprakasha Nighantu*, Hindi commentary by K. C Chuneekar, 1st edition, Varanasi: Published by Chaukhamba Bharathi Academy; 2002; p420

8. Amarasimha. Amarakosha. Sastri Haragovind (Ed). Varanasi: Chaukambha Sanskrit Sansthan; 2012. p.201
9. Acharya Shodala, Shodala Nighantu, Commentary by Pandey Gyanendra, Edited by Prof. Dwivedi.R. R, Varanasi, Chaukambha Krishnadas Academy, first edition 2019, p538.
10. Madanapala Nrupa, Madanapala Nighantu, Illustrated by Sastry J.L.N, Varanasi; Chaukambha orientalia, 2017, p183-184.
11. Bopadeva. Hridayadeepika Nighantu. Sharma PV. Varanasi: Chaukambha Amarabharati Prakashan; 2013.p52
12. Narahari Pandir, Rajanighantu, Commentary by Sankhyadhar Satish Chandra, Completed by Sankhyadhar Deepika; Varanasi, Chaukambha Krishnadas Academy, Reprint edition, 2017.p35-38
13. Kaiyadeva Acharya, Kaiyadeva Nighantu, Pathyapathya Vibodhaka, Sampadde Acharya Priyavrit Sharma and Guruprasad Sharma; Varanasi, Chaukambha Orientalia.p145-147.
14. Jayatilak J.P. Kamat S.D. Saraswathi Nighantu. [online]. Delhi: Chaukambha Sanskrit Pratisthan; 2006[cited 26 Mar 2012] Available from niihm.nic.in/eBooks/e-Nighantu/Saraswati_nighantu
15. Bapalal G Vaidya, Nighantu Adarsh, Volume II, Second edition, Varanasi: Chaukambha Bharati Academy; 1999.p36
16. Vaishya Lala Saligrama. Saligram Nighantu Bhushan Bhaag7,8. Das Khemaraj Srikrishna. Mumbai: Sri Venkateshwara Prakashan; 1980.p439
17. Sharma P.V. Priya Nighantu. Second edition. Varanasi: Chaukambha Surbharati Prakashan; 1995. P127
18. Bhogika Mahendra, Dhanwantari Nighantu, Commentary by Sharma Guruprasad, Edited by Sharma Priyavrit, Reprint edition, Varanasi: Chaukambha Orientalia Publication, 2016.p18
19. Ministry of Health and Family welfare. Ayurveda Pharmacopoeia of India. 1st edition. Government of India, Part 1. Vol 3.p124
20. Sharma P.V. Dravyaguna Vijnana. Volume II. Reprint: Chaukambha Bharati Academy; 2006.p699-700
21. Krishnan Vaidya K V and Pillai S. Gopala, editors. Sahasrayogam. Commentary by Sujanapriya .26th edition. Alappuzha: Vidyarambham Publishers;2006

Source of Support: Nil

Conflict of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Surabhi Surendran et al: Murva – An Ayurvedic Literary Review. International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2022 {cited September 2022} Available from:

http://www.iamj.in/posts/images/upload/2540_2545.pdf