INTERNATIONAL AYURVEDIC MEDICAL JOURNAL



Review Article ISSN: 2320 5091 Impact Factor: 5.344

A PHARMACOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE OF AYURVEDIC *UPAVISHA – SNUHI* (EUPHORBIA NERIFOLIA LINN)

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Published online: September, 2019

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ABSTRACT

Snuhi (Euphorbia nerifolia Linn) is herb extensively used in the Indian system of medicine. As a traditional medicine, the plant is useful in abdominal trouble, bronchitis, tumor, leukoderma, anemia, and piles. The milky latex is used to remove warts, expectorant, purgative. When we get in contact with latex it can causes symptoms like, formation of blisters or if it gets in contact with eye causes conjunctivitis or loss of vision. If it is taken internally, it causes irritation in GI tract, diarrhea, vomiting etc. It contains Euphol, Nerifolene, Euphorol etc. The present article highlights overall information about the plant Snuhi, its therapeutic uses, toxicological aspect, management, medico-legal aspect and classical references of snuhi in different Ayurvedic literatures.

Keywords: Snuhi, Snuhi-ksheera, Toxic symptoms, Chemical constitution

INTRODUCTION

Snuhi and its compound formulations are widely used in Ayurvedic classics to treat vitiated conditions. The flower is yellowish green in color; it is found all over the India. Snuhi is a large branched, erect, glabrous, xerophytic shrub occurring wild on rocky ground throughout central India and extensively grown as a hedge plant ⁽¹⁾. Rasaratnasamucchaya mentioned eleven types of Upavisha ⁽²⁾ and Snuhi is one among them. Upavisha are the group of drugs which were less toxic in nature and not so lethal but produce certain toxic symptoms on consumption. Upavisha are the substances, which exert toxic effects on the body. But not

quick action, Charakacharya mention, acute poison becomes an excellent drug if it is administered properly and vice-versa (3)

Charakacharya mentioned it in *Virechana Dravya* and its twenty *Virechana* formulations in *Sudha kalpa Adhyaya of Kalpasthan* ⁽⁴⁾. It's *Rasapanchaka* and therapeutic properties are explained in different Ayurvedic literatures. Hence, in this article an attempt has been made to collect information regarding *Snuhi* and its Pharmacological activities from available classical literatures and previous research articles in a systematic manner, which can be useful in conducting

further Researches. Charakacharya described two varieties, *Alpakantaka, Bahukantaka. Bahukantaka snuhi* is considered as *Sreshta* because of its drastic purgative action. Latex is useful in preparation of *Ksharsutra* which is one of the best medicines in Ayurved for *Bhagandara* (5).

METHODOLOGY:

Collection of Data: Data was collected from all the Nighantus, Samhita's and text book of modern toxicology and research articles.

Observation and Result: (6) Taxonomical classifica-

tion of Euphorbia Nerifolia is follow:

Kingdom: Plantae Order: Malphigiales Family: Euphorbiaceae Sub-family: Euphorbioideae Sub-tribe: Euphorbieae Tribe: Euphorbieae Genus: Euphorbia Species: nerifolia

(Unranked): Angiosperms

Botanical Name: Euphorbia nerifolia Linn.

• Vernacular Name ⁽⁷⁾
Sanskrit Name: *Snuhi*Hindi Name: *Thuhara*

English Name: Common Milk Hedge

Marathi Name: *Nivdunga* Telgu Name: Akujemuda Arabic Name: Jakum

Table 1: Classification

Sr.No	Samhita	Classification
1	Modern	Irritant organic vegetative poison ⁽⁸⁾
2	Ayurvedic	Sthavara Upavisha varga. ⁽⁹⁾
3	Charaka-Samhita	Shodhanarthaprayukta Vruksha (10)
		Tikshanavirechana dravya ⁽¹¹⁾
4	Sushruta-Samhita	Shyamadi gana ⁽¹²⁾
		Adhobhagahara dravya ⁽¹³⁾
5	Ashtang-Hrudaya	Virechanakaraka dravya ⁽¹⁴⁾
		Mushakadi gana (15)
	NIGHANTU	
6	Dhanvantari-Nighantu	Guduchyadi varga (16)
7	Shodhala-Nighantu	Guduchyadi varga ⁽¹⁷⁾
8	Madanpala-Nighantu	Abhayadi varga ⁽¹⁸⁾
9	Kaiyadeva-Nighantu	Aushadhi varga ⁽¹⁹⁾
10	Raja –Nighantu	Shalmalyadi varga ⁽²⁰⁾
11	Bhavaprakasha-Nighantu	Guduchyadi varga ⁽²¹⁾
12	Shaligrama-Nighantu	Guduchyadi varga ⁽²²⁾
13	Priya Nighantu	Shatapushpadi varga ⁽²³⁾
14	Nighantu Adarsha	Aamalkyadi varga ⁽²⁴⁾
	OTHER:	
13	Yogaratnakara	Upavisha ⁽²⁵⁾
14	Rasaratnasamucchaya	Dughada-varga ⁽²⁶⁾

Table 2: Paryayi Nam:

Synonyms	Ch. Su. ^(10,11,12,13)	Amar- kosh.	Dha. Ni. ⁽¹⁶⁾	Sho. Ni. ⁽¹⁷⁾	Ma. Ni ^{.(18)}	Kai. Ni ^{.(19)}	Ra. Ni ^{.(20)}	Bha. Ni. ⁽²¹⁾	Pri. Ni ^{.(23)}
Snug	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Snuk	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	-
Snuhi	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	+
Sudha	+	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	+
Sehunda	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Guda	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	-
Bahustrava	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-
Vajree	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	-
Vajratunda	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-
Vajrakantaka	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	-	-
Vajravruksha	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	+
Mahavruksha	+	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	-
Nistrinsh-patraka	+	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	-
Nanda	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vajradu	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sihunda	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Simhatunda	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
Bahukshiri	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Asipatra	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Mahataru	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Kalishidrum	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Ksheeri	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Shakhakanta	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Bahushakha	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Vatari	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Vyaghranakha	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Vajradrum	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-

The different species are. Nerifolia Linn: Patra Snuhi, E. Nivulia Buch: Ham, Anti quorum Linn: tridharasehuda, E. royleana Boiss: thuhara, E. tirucalli: Kanda Snuh ⁽²⁷⁾.

Botanical Description: It considers as a small tree or a large shrub which grows Up to 6-20ft height, the flowers are yellowish green in colour, it is found all over the India ⁽²⁸⁾.

Active Principle: Euphol, Nerifoliol (29).

Fatal Dose: Root Powder: 0.5-1g, Stem Juice: 5-

10ml, Milky Latex: 125-50mg (30)

Fatal Period: 12hrs ⁽³⁰⁾.

Chemical Composition: Euphol, Nerifoliol, taraxerol, neriifolione, flavonoids (31)

Cultivation and Propagation: Euphorbia nerifolia is an easy species to grow that is suited for any well drained soil in full sun. It needs no maintenance. It is more commonly sold as crests that tend to stay leafier longer, but normal forms are ornamental as well and good landscaping Euphorbias for smaller gardens (32).

Table 3: Season of Collection of *Snuhi* and Part to be collected According to different Acharya: Comparison Table-^(33, 34, 35)

Sr. No.	Prayojyanga	Charakokta	Sushruta	Ra.Ni
1	Mula	Grishma-Shishira	Pravruta	Shishira
2	Patra	Varsha-Vasanta	Varsha	Varsha
3	Pushpa	Yatharitu	_	Vasanta
4	Twaka	Sharada	Sharada	_
5	Kshira	Sharada	Hemanta	_
6	Kaanda	Sharada	_	_
8	Pushpa	Yatha Rutu		Vasanta

Shodhana of Snuhi-Ksheera (36,37)

Yogaratnakara described that *Snuhi-Ksheera* itself is purified; it does not need further purification. However, *Rasa-tarangini* described Two *Pala chincha-*

patra rasa is prepared and 2pala Snuhi ksheera is added to it. Whole solution is dried in Sun. Dried powder of Snuhi-Ksheera is used for preparation.

Table 4: Rasa-Panchaka of Snuhi:

Acharya	Rasa	Vipaka	Veerya	Guna	Dosha-ghanta
Charak ^(10.11)	-	-	-	Tikshna	-
Yo.Ra ^{(25).}	Katu	Katu	-	Tikshna, Guru	Vata shaman
Dha.Ni. ⁽¹⁶⁾	Tikta	-	Ushna	Guru, Ushna	Kapha vata shaman
Sho. Ni ^{.(17)}	-	Katu	-	Sara	-
Ma. Ni. (18)	Katu	Katu	-	Tikshna, Guru	Vata shaman
Ra.Ni ^{.(20)}	-	-	Ushna	Ushna	Pitta-vata shaman
Kai. Ni. (19)	Tikta-madhur	Madhur	Ushna	Tikshna, Guru, Ushna	Vata-kapha shaman
Bha.Pra. Ni. ⁽²¹⁾	Katu	Katu	Ushna	Tikshna, Guru	Vata-kapha shaman
Sha. Ni. (22)	Katu-Tikta	Katu	Ushna	Tikshna, Guru, Ushna, Sara	Kapha-vata shaman
Ni. Ada ^{.(24)}	Katu-Tikta	Katu	Ushna	Tikshna, Guru	Kapha-vata shaman
Pri. Ni. ⁽²³⁾	-	-	-	Tikshna	Kapha-vata shaman

Table 5: Karma of Snuhi

Karma	Charak ^(10,11)	Yo. Ra ^{.(25)}	Dha. Ni ^{.(16)}	Sho. Ni. ⁽¹⁷⁾	Ma. Ni. ⁽¹⁸⁾	Kai. Ni. ⁽¹⁹⁾	Ra. Ni. ⁽²⁰⁾	Bha. Pra.Ni. ⁽²¹⁾	Sha. Ni. ⁽²²⁾	Pri. Ni. ⁽²³⁾
Tikshna Virechaka	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Shodhana	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Shophahara	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	+	-
Vrana- Shodhana	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Veeshahar	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-
Shulhara	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	-

Table 6: Rogaghnata:

Rogaghnata	Charaka	Yo.	Dha.	Sho.	Ma.	Kai.	Ra.	Bha.	Sha.	Pri.
	(10,11)	Ra. (25)	Ni. (16)	Ni. (17)	Ni. (18)	Ni. (19)	Ni. ⁽²⁰⁾	Pra.Ni. ⁽²¹⁾	Ni. (22)	Ni. (23)
Kushta	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	-
Dushivisha	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	+	+	-
Shula	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	+	+	-
Arsha	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	+	-
Shoth	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-
Daha	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-

Table 7: Formulations of *Snuhi*:

Sr. No.	Yoga/ Formulation	Rogadhikar / Adhyaya	References
1.	Mansyadi lepa	Kushta chikitsa	Ch.Chi.7/86
2.	Sanshodhan ghrita	Mishrak Adhyaya	Su.Su. 37/16
3.	Kasisadi taila	Arsha chikitsa	A.H.Chi.8/16
4.	Dhatumarana kalpana	Vajrya taila	Sha.Sa.Ma9/185

Traditional uses of e. Nerifolia (38)

The leaf of *E. Nerifolia* is heated and tied over the affected area of pain and inflammation, the fresh juice from the leaf is poured inside the ears to treat earache. The milk latex of *Nerifolia* is applied over warts as part of treatment. Oil processed from the leaf of *Nerifolia* and sesame oil is used for external application to treat joint pain. The paste of the leaf of *E. Nerifolia* is applied over the skin to treat skin diseases.

Toxic signs and symptoms (39)

External symptoms: Juice cause vescication when applied to skin, Inflammation involving eyesight when droop into eyes.

Internal symptoms: Latex taken inside, it causes irritation in gastro-intestinal tract, Vomiting, diarrhea, Burning sensation in abdomen, convulsions, coma.

Snuhi poisoning differentiated due to as-

Calatropis- Vescication and redness externally, conjunctivitis, internally burning pain in GIT, diarrhea.

Bhilava: Vescication on skin externally, GIT irritation.

Table 8: Pharmacological actions:

Following Pharmacological actions of Euphorbia Nerifolia Linn, have been established:

Sr.	Pharmacological	Observations
No	actions	
1	Immunomodulatory	The Hydro alcoholic extract of <i>E. nerifolia</i> possessing significant protection against E. coli
	Activity ^(40.41)	induced abdominal sepsis, significant increase in total leucocyte count, differential leucocyte counts and phygocytic index were determined.
		These results indicate Immunomodulatory activity of Hydro alcoholic extract of dried leaves
		of E. nerifolia.
2	Wound healing Activity ⁽⁴²⁾	The latex of <i>E. nerifolia</i> showed facilitated healing process as evidenced by increase in tensile strength, DNA content, epithelisation and angiogenesis.
		This indicates wound healing property of <i>E. nerifolia</i> .
3	Anti-Bacterial activ- ity ⁽⁴³⁾	The phytochemical analysis of leaf extracts of medicinal plant <i>E. nerifolia</i> and their antibacterial activities against bacterial isolates <i>Staphylococcus aureus</i> , <i>E. coli</i> , <i>Pseudomonas fluroscens</i> were investigated.
		The phytochemical analysis revealed the presence of flavonoids, saponin, tannins, cadenoids, phenol, and terpenoids. Maximum activity observed in chloroform extract against K. pneu-

	ı	
		monia (5mm). The water and ethyl acetate extract exhibited very less activity.
		This research support the local use of the leaf of plant E. neriifolia for wound healing
		property and other forms of bacterial infections.
4	Hepato-	Papiya Bigoniya et al (2010) investigated the Hepatoprotective activity of saponin fraction
	protectiveactivity ⁽⁴⁴⁾	isolated from leaf of E. neriifolia on CCl ₄ induced hepatotoxicity of rats.
		CCl ₄ (5mg/kg) is a hepatotoxic agent which induces per oxidative degeneration of membrane
		lipids causing hypo perfusion of membrane.
		They found that SGPT, SGOT, ALP elevates in blood and hepatic glutathione and SOD
		decreases.
		This hepatoprotection activity was compared with silymerin a well-known standards
		hepatoprotectants and they found that <i>E. Neriifolia</i> shows good Hepatoprotective property.
5	Anti-inflammatory-	The Hydro-alcoholic extract was also evaluated for analgesic action using Eddy's hot plate
	Analgesic activity ⁽⁴⁵⁾	method and tail-flick method in albino rats.
		It showed significant reduction in the carrageenan induced paw oedema in rats and analgesic
		activity evidenced by increase in reaction time by Eddy's hot plate method and tail-flick
		method in albino rats.
		Anti-inflammatory activity of latex of petroleum ether fraction of <i>E. nerifolia</i> was also
		investigated by Papaya Bigonia (2010).

Treatment of poisoning (46) According to Ayurveda:

For external symptoms: Apply the *lepa* of termind (*chincha*) in cold water on blisters.

For Internal symptoms: Give sugar dissolved in cold water, give buffalo milk with sugar, give *kamdudha* with *mauktik*.

Autopsy findings: Gangrenous patches can be seen in stomach; Spleen is in rotten condition.

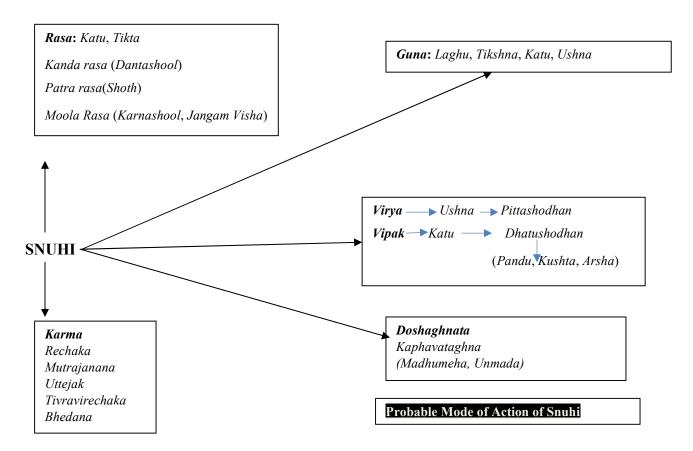
Medico legal Importance: It is used for the purpose of criminal abortion, uses rarely for the homicide; Latex is applied on eyes and genital organs for the punishment of adultery.

DISCUSSION

Snuhi, the *Upavisha*, is classified under different categories by different Acharyas, according to therapeutic properties. Acharya Charak classified *snuhi* in *tikshna Virechana dravya* (11), Acharya Sushruta in

shyamadi gana and adhobhagahara dravya (12,13) and Acharya Vagbhata in mushakadi gana (15). In most of the Nighantus it is taken in guduchyadi varga.

Synonyms of *Snuhi* indicates its morphological properties, i.e. Plant with straight stem circular in appearance (*Guda*), full of latex (*samantadugdha*), *Vatari* (Balances *vata dosha*) (10-23) etc. There are different species of *Snuhi* i.e. *Patra Snuhi*, *Tridhara Sehuda* (27). *Euphorbia Nerifolia Linn* easily cultivated with ample amount for therapeutics because it need less water, space, efforts, maximum use of *Snuhi* latex for preparation of *Snuhi kshara sutra* in Ayurveda because of it is easily available (32). Acharya Charak advised collection of *Snuhi-Ksheera* towards the end of *Shishira Rutu*, as it yields very high amount of latex during this session i.e. It is collected in early morning hours, when humidity is high and temperature is low (33-35)



As per Yogaratnakara and Rasatarangini, generally *Snuhi ksheera* is used as it is without *Shodhana* (36-37). It has various proved pharmacological actions like Immunomodulatory, wound healing, Anti-Bacterial activity, Hepatoprotective activity, Antiinflammatory, Analgesic, Antioxidant, Diuretic, Antipsychotic activity (40-45). Different Acharyas described different formulation some of them mostly used for therapeutics, e.g. Kasisadi taila. It possesses sign and symptoms, Juice cause vescication when applied to skin, Inflammation involving eyesight when droop into eyes on local contact. Latex taken inside, it causes irritation in gastro-intestinal tract, Vomiting, diarrhea, Burning sensation in abdomen, convulsions, coma, internally (39). Euphorol and Nerifolene are the major active constituents (29), Snuhi Ksheera used in Ayurveda as Tikshna Virechana and latex is useful in preparation of kshara sutra, which is one of the best medicines for Bhagandara in Ayurveda. Chemically Euphol and Nerifolia, Nerifolene constituted in Euphorbia Nerifolia (31).

CONCLUSION

Snuhi can easily be cultivated with ample amount for therapeutic uses because it needs less water, space, efforts. Snuhi latex is used mostly for preparation of Snuhi kshara sutra in Ayurveda because of its efficacy and easily availability. Considering therapeutic efficacy of Snuhi ksheera as Ksharsutra for treatment of Bhagandara, it is needed in ample amount. From the research study conducted earlier, it can be concluded that for better yield of Snuhi ksheera, it should be collected towards the end of Shishira rutu, as it yields very high amount of latex during this session. Hence it should be collected in early morning hours, when humidity is high and temperature is low. But to avoid untoward effects of Snuhi ksheera, it should be used with due precautions for internal as well as external use.

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Source of Support: Nil Conflict Of Interest: None Declared

How to cite this URL: Nishigandha Pradip Jagtap & Nilima Wadnerwar: A Pharmacological Perspective Of Ayurvedic Upavisha – Snuhi (Euphorbia Nerifolia Linn). International Ayurvedic Medical Journal {online} 2019 {cited September, 2019}

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