

Treasure of Ayurveda – Periwinkle

Bharti Sao¹ and Ashutosh Sharma²

¹Ph. D. Scholar, Department of Floriculture and Landscape Architecture, IGKV Raipur, (C.G.)

²Assistant Professor, Assistant Professor (Agricultural Extension & Communication) Rani Lakshmi Bai Central Agricultural University Jhansi, (U.P.)

Corresponding Author

Bharti Sao

Email: bhartipink62@gmail.com

 OPEN ACCESS

Keywords

Medicine, Ayurveda, Periwinkle

How to cite this article:

Sao, B. and Sharma, A. 2021. Treasure of Ayurveda – Periwinkle. *Vigyan Varta* 2(6): 63-66.

ABSTRACT

Modern medicines and treatments cure diseases while also becoming the body addicted to its constituents. Periwinkle is a stunningly gorgeous flower that can treat and even reverse the symptoms of a variety of ailments. Consumption of Periwinkle increased insulin secretion, which is a hormone that regulates blood sugar levels. Because of the presence of vincamine, a main alkaloid in periwinkle, it aids in the treatment of a variety of ailments.

INTRODUCTION

Periwinkle also known as the ‘ever-blooming blossom’ or ‘Sadabahar’ is a well-known flower that has secured its place both in modern medicine and herbal remedies. Roman writer Apuleius described about Periwinkle, in his book ‘Herbarium’ during second century BC. He described its virtues “against the devil sickness and demoniacal possessions and against snakes and wild beasts.” In Indian Ayurveda it is often referred to as Nityakalyaani or Sadabahar. The plant parts such as leaves, stems, flowers and roots show extensive health benefits and its alkaloids have been widely used in the pharmaceutical industry to treat a variety of

ailments, including diabetes, sore throat, lung congestion, skin infections, eye irritation, and even cancer prevention. India is a major producer and exporter of crude pharmaceuticals. The rivals are Mozambique, Malaysia, and Madagascar. The United States is a major consumer of this plant's raw material.

Periwinkle is coming from the Apocynacea family and the botanical name was *Catharanthus roseus*. Although the plant is native to Madagascar, it is found to be growing throughout the world. It is of evergreen perennial tropical herb and grows to a height of 100 to 125 cm. The leaves of this plant are oval to oblong in shape and range in length from 2.5 cm to 9 cm, and the flowers

are typically available in two colours: dark pinkish-purple and milky white.



Chemical Components of Periwinkle

The bioactive constituents present in periwinkle include reserpine, ajmalicine, catharanthine, lochnerin, serpentine, lochnericin, vinorelbine, vincamine, vindesine, vincristine and vinblastine.

Ayurvedic Properties of Periwinkle

Periwinkle represents Tikta Rasa (bitter taste), Rukshna Guna (dry qualities), and UshnaVirya (hot potency) in the holistic science of Ayurveda. Periwinkle relieves the Vata (air) and Kapha (earth and water) Doshas due to its inherent properties. Kshayapaha

(strengthens exhausted body tissues and treats chronic respiratory diseases like tuberculosis), Kshataksheenahara (aids wound healing), Kapha-hara (expectorant), Madakari (hypnotic), Varnya, and Agni-VridhikarPrabhava (effects on the body) are among the ayurvedic properties of the herb.

Health Benefits of Periwinkle

Regulate Diabetes:

Diabetes, also known as Madhumeha in Ayurveda, is an aggravation of the Kaphadoshas caused by a decrease in Agni (digestive fire) activity, resulting in an increase in blood sugar levels within the body. Periwinkle's excellent hypoglycaemic property helps to lower blood sugar levels significantly.

Ways to use periwinkle for diabetes

- Dried and powdered fresh Periwinkle leaves and store it in a glass container. To keep diabetes under control, take 1 teaspoon of dried leaf powder infused with water or fresh fruit juice every morning on an empty stomach.
- Regular chewing 3-4 leaves of the Periwinkle plant can put blood sugar under control.
- Boil Periwinkle flowers in water that has been freshly plucked. Allow it to steep for a few minutes before straining. To treat diabetes, drink this bitter liquid first thing in the morning on an empty stomach.

Remedies Respiratory Anomalies:

Periwinkle is a potent ayurvedic treatment for a variety of Kapha aggravating conditions. The majority of involved constituents in this flower make it an excellent treatment for respiratory ailments such as asthma, bronchitis, COPD, cough, and cold symptoms. It also relieves sore throats, coughs,

and congestion by eliminating mucus particles from the respiratory tract.

Manages High Blood Pressure/Hypertension:

Periwinkle is a natural antihypertensive that lowers blood pressure and maintains it in a healthy range. It improves cardiovascular endurance by enhancing cardiac functions, which brings blood pressure to a steady level and preserves balanced readings. Extracts of this beautiful flower and leaves are very useful in treating mild to moderate hypertensive conditions and preventing pre-hypertensive behavior.

Improves Cognitive Functioning:

Periwinkle is a powerful conventional treatment for improving brain function. It contains strong antioxidants and flavonoids that help people enhance their memory, attention, calmness, concentrate, and alertness. The plant's neuroprotective elements not only prevent memory loss by slowing early ageing of brain cells, but they also improve blood supply in the brain tissues and relieve stress.

Augments Skin Health:

Periwinkle, which is high in alkaloids and skin-enhancing constituents, plays an important role in treating oxidative free radical damage caused by the sun's rays, and thereby treats wrinkles, fine lines, spots, dark circles, and other symptoms of ageing. It is also highly effective in the treatment of skin infections such as eczema and rosacea, and effectively aids in the reduction of acne and pimples, leaving the skin smooth and glowing.

Make a paste of the fresh leaves of Periwinkle, Neem and mix it with turmeric powder and rose water to get a smooth paste. Apply this pack evenly onto the face and allow it to dry. Later wash off with cool water. When done on alternate days, this face pack is

extremely effective against acne and other skin infections.

Effective in Alzheimer's Disease:

The alkaloid vincamine contained in periwinkle has been shown to help people with Alzheimer's disease.

Beneficial for Canker Sores:

Periwinkle is an antiseptic herb that can be used as a mouth rinse and to alleviate the inflammation of canker sores. Tannins in the herb can aid in the binding of fluids and the reduction of inflammation.

Control Diarrhea:

Periwinkle has historically been used to treat symptoms including diarrhoea, bleeding gums, and menorrhagia that are characterised by a watery or bloody discharge.

Effective in Hearing Loss:

Hearing loss due to ageing (presbycusis), tinnitus, and other conditions have been associated to Periwinkle's active constituent vinpocetine and ringing in the ears can be reduced by ethyl-apovincaminat (a vinca alkaloid) (tinnitus).

Useful in Kidney Dialysis:

One unregulated study showed that taking vinpocetine, the active ingredient in periwinkle, for 3 to 12 months helps dialysis patients avoid calcium accumulation.

Control Menorrhagia:

Strong menstruation has traditionally been treated with astringent herbs like periwinkle.

Tinnitus:

Periwinkle contains a compound that has been shown to benefit people with tinnitus caused by poor blood flow by reducing the severity of their symptoms.

Vascular Dementia:

Ethyl-apovincamate, also known as vinpocetine, is a semisynthetic analogue of vincamine (the active constituent of periwinkle) that is widely used in medicine.

Side effects of Periwinkle

No herb or medicine in the world is without any single side effect. The only way to avert the chances of these negative effects is to consume the medicine in a proper way, it is strongly advised that you seek the advice of an ayurvedic doctor or practitioner before using it. On intake of excessive quantities of periwinkle extracts, it can cause certain side effects including diminished blood pressure levels, constipation, etc. Here are some of the cases where Periwinkle may not do its job completely:

- If you are pregnant or breast-feeding
- Since Periwinkle has a drying effect on the issues so if you are constipated, do not use it.
- If you take the herb along with blood pressure medications, the numbers can drop too low, so don't take it if you have low blood pressure.
- Do not take the herb after surgery because of the effects on blood pressure. Furthermore, you can consider using periwinkle at least two weeks before surgery.

CONCLUSION:

This incredible flower has been used for its many health benefits since the dawn of time. Apart from its ornamental use, it has gained enormous popularity in modern medicine and ayurvedic applications for its use in controlling diabetes, improving skin health, treating respiratory disorders, managing hypertension, and a variety of other ailments. One can profit from the various uses of this

vibrant flower by consuming it in compliance with a doctor's approval.

REFERENCE:

- Ahmad R, Misra N. Evaluation of Phytoremediation Potential of *Catharanthus roseus* with Respect to Chromium Contamination. *American Journal of Plant Science*. 2014; 5:2378-2388.
- Gajalakshmi S, Vijayalakshmi S, Devi RV. Pharmacological activities of *Catharanthus roseus*: A perspective review. *International Journal of Pharmaceutical Science*. 2013; 4(2):431-439.
- Nayak BS, Lexley MPP. *Catharanthus roseus* flower has wound healing activity in Sprague Dawley rats. *BMC Complimentary Alternative Medicine*. 2006; 6:41.
- Van der Heijden R, Jacobs DI, Snoeijer W, Hallard D, Verpoorte R. The *Catharanthus* alkaloids: Pharmacognosy and biotechnology. *Current Medicinal Chemistry*. 2004; 11:607-628.