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REVIEW OF RUSHYAGANDHA

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ABSTRACT

There are many medicinal plants mentioned in Ayurvedic texts, particularly in Nighantus. One of them is *Rushyagandha* which has been used for the management of various diseases. *Rushyagandha* is mentioned in *Charaka Samhita* in *Bruhaniya Mahakashaya* and *Madhura skandha dravya*. In northern India, its fruits are used in the treatment of *Prameha* (Diabetes). This plant has the property of coagulating milk, and has been used for preparing vegetable rennet ferment for making cheese. *Rushyagandha* fruits powder is an effective therapeutic regimen for a long term in the management of uncomplicated cases without any side effects. But the basic problem is that, there are some controversies related to its identification of exact species. That's why to revel its identity and to compare it with current biological flora; we selected the topic to review of Rushyagandha.

Key words: *Rushyagandha, Withania, Coagulans, Bruhaniya Madhura,*

INTRODUCTION

Rushyagandha is mentioned by *Acharya Charaka* in *Bruhaniya Mahakashaya*[1] and in *Madhura Skanda*.[2] In *Bruhaniya Mahakashaya*, *Chakrapani* – the one of the commentator of *Charaka Samhita* commented on *Rushyagandha* as *Rushya jangalakaha* i.e. the wild variety.

In *Madhura Skanda* of *Charaka* both *Rushyagandha* and *Ashwagandha* came with *Yugmakrama (in pair)*. In Ayurvedic text the drugs which come in *Yugmakramas* are mostly of same *Guna* (properties) and Karmas (actions). Here *Rushyagandha* and Ashwagandha both are mentioned in *Bruhaniya Mahakashaya* and *Madhura Skanda* so they may be of having similar properties. The term *Rushyagandha* commented as *Rushya jangulika* denotes the wild variety of *Ashwagandha* or likewise drug.

The drug *Ashwagandha* comes from the *Withania* species. In India, two species of the the genus *Withania* are found.[3] *Withania somnifera* which is known by the name *Ashwagandha* and *Withania coagulans* known as *Paneer dodi* in Hindi and as Indian rennet in English. Both species closely resemble each other. Though Withanolides are the principle compound found in both species, there are some Withanolides specific to each of them.

Wit haferin-A is a major compound found in *Withania somnifera* where coagulin L has been found in major amounts in *Withania coagulans*. Antihyperglycemic leads from *Withania coagulans* have been identified.[4]

Withania somnifera has been used as an antioxidant, adaptogen, aphrodisiac, liver tonic, anti-inflammatory agent and most recently as an antibacterial, antihyperglycemic, hypolipidaemic and antitumoural as well as to treat ulcers and senile dementia.[5]

Hepatoprotective[6] anti-inflammatory [7], antihyperglycemic[8] hypolipidaemic[9] free radical scavenging activ-