

A COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT OF THE THERAPEUTIC ADVANTAGES OFFERED BY JOANESIA ASOCA, COMMONLY KNOWN AS ASHOKA

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ABSTRACT

For many years, Joanesia asoca has been utilized by humans in various ways. This Indian plant is commonly found in religious sites and is cultivated for its medicinal benefits and therapeutic applications. It is also employed in homeopathy to address female health issues and respiratory conditions. Some medical professionals suggest that it can aid in the management of arthritis, neurological disorders, skin ailments, and more. This study seeks to examine various materia medica and repertories to enhance the understanding of Joanesia asoca and its clinical applications in homeopathy. **Objective:** To investigate the therapeutic benefits of asoca in relation to Homoeopathy and other medical systems, as well as to assess the study of joanesia asoca using Homoeopathic Materia Medica and Repertory.

KEYWORDS: Ashoka, asoka, joanesia asoka, homeopathy, Saraca indica, asthopalva.

INTRODUCTION

Common name

Saraca indica, commonly known as Asoka or Asthopalva, is an Indian homeopathic remedy derived from the bark of a tree that typically reaches heights of 7 to 10 meters and features leaves measuring 15 to 20 cm in length. This tree holds significant cultural importance in the Indian subcontinent, and its flowers are recognized as the state flower of Odisha.

MYTHOLOGY

The Ashoka tree is associated with yakshi mythology and is commonly seen in Buddhist and Hindu temples, where it is depicted in sculptures of yakshini grasping its branches. In Hinduism, it is revered during the month of Chaitra and is referenced in the Ramayana. The Hindu deity Kama Deva lists the Ashoka among the five flowers symbolizing alluring enchantment.^[1]

CLASSIFICATION

Botanical name: *Saraca Indica* linn^[2]

Natural order: Caesalpiniaceae^[3]

Family: Leguminosae^[2]

Area of distribution: Himalaya, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Bangladesh^[2]

Time of flowering: April^[2]

Conservative status: Critically endangered.^[2]

Description of the plant: Asoka is treated as a sacred plant of Hindus and it is native to India. It is an evergreen plant that has helicoid, uniporous branches.^[3]

Parts of the plants used

1. BARK

The bark has a smooth exterior that ranges from yellowish to greenish and features circular lenticels, while its interior is reddish-brown. It influences the endometrium and ovarian tissue, making it beneficial for addressing infertility, irregular menstrual cycles, and uterine bleeding.^[2]

2. Leaves

The leaves measure between 15 to 20 cm in length, have a smooth rachis, and are utilized for treating skin conditions and gastralgia, while also possessing blood-purifying qualities.^[2]

3. Flowers

Asoka is recognized for its stunning leaves and aromatic blossoms. The flower serves as a uterine tonic and is utilized in treating dysentery, inflammatory disorders, and diabetes.^[2]

4. Seeds

The seeds are ellipsoid-oblong, measuring 4 cm in length, and are utilized in the treatment of rheumatic arthritis as well as in enhancing bone strength. They have demonstrated efficacy in various applications.^[2]

Physiochemical Action

It exhibits anthelmintic properties and serves as an astringent and strengthening agent. The phytochemicals present include ketosteril, 11-deoxyprocyanidin, epicatechin, procyanidin, and saponin. Ketosteril is classified as a glycoside, while saponin is an organic calcium compound found throughout the plant. A phenolic glycoside has demonstrated specific oxytocic effects in the myometrium and Fallopian tubes, and crude glycosides have shown activity on the uterus.^[3,4]

Therapeutic use of the plant in different systems of medicine

In ancient medical practices, it was utilized to address menstrual and uterine issues. It was employed for conditions such as amenorrhea and light menstrual flow, serving as a uterine tonic that could fortify the uterus weakened by long-standing illnesses.^[2]

Ayurveda

Ayurveda is utilized within the Ayurvedic medical framework for addressing female health issues. The bark derived from the stem contains tannins (ranging from 0.57% to 7.85%) and ash (between 2.43% and 6.69%), which function as a uterine sedative and tonic, also demonstrating effects on the endometrium and ovarian tissues. Chakradatta recommended asoca for the management of bloody leucorrhoea and menstrual irregularities. However, the therapeutic benefits of asoca for leucorrhoea were not documented in the texts of Charaka and Sushruta. In the Ayurvedic practice, both the bark and fruit are primarily employed for medicinal purposes.^[5,2]

Allopathy

The substance contains tannin, and Abbott indicated that it includes hematoxylin. No significant effect was observed when the extracts were tested on both isolated and in situ

uteri. It serves as an astringent for conditions such as menorrhagia and is primarily utilized in treating uterine disorders.^[5]

Homoeopathy

Dr. D.N. Ray of Calcutta proved the drug.

Preparation according to HPI: Mother Tincture – Drug Strength 1/10

Joanesia asoca in dried moderately coarse powder 100gm to be mixed with 900 ml of strong alcohol and 125ml of purified water.

Sphere of action

The scope of action According to the homeopathic system of medicine, it primarily influences the female reproductive system, musculoskeletal system, respiratory system, and gastrointestinal tract. Indications for Joanesia Asoka are documented in various materia medicas. Dr. D. N. Ray effectively utilized Asoka for addressing uterine issues.

Mind: Weeping tendency, restless and hysterical.^[9]

Head: Congestive headache and periodic headache which is ameliorated by bathing². Unilateral headache.^[6] Headache after eating.^[7]

Eye: Photophobia, pain in the supraorbital region, and eyeballs.^[6] Blurred vision, swelling over upper eyelids. Burning and itching of eyes with redness.^[2] Inflammation of eyes with tears.^[3]

Ear: Pain in the ear.^[3] The hardness of hearing after cold exposure.^[2]

Nose: Bleeding from the nose and loss of smell, nose obstructed^[2], Running nose with sneezing.^[3]

Tongue: Excessive thirst with white or brown coated tongue^[2] Dry tongue.^[3]

Aversion: milk. Desires sour food, and sweets. Bilious vomiting^[3], Constipation. Colicky type of pain in the stomach.^[6]

Femle: Suppression of menses causes headache. Blackish, foul-smelling, scanty, and pale menstrual discharge, better by flow.^[2] Menses irregular and delayed, Painful ovaries before flow.^[6] Lochia is long-lasting and black with a fetid smell.^[8] It is found that it is great

medicine when the menstrual flow has stopped for any cause and for which colicky abdominal pains supervene.^[10]

Sleep: Disturbed sleep.^[6]

Back: Pain in the back which is radiating to Abdomen, especially at night.^[2]

Clinical Conditions

Delayed and irregular menses, Metrorrhagia, Congestive headache.^[2]

Dysmenorrhea, Bloody leucorrhoea, infantile leucorrhoea, reflex headaches due to uterine pathology Constipation.^[7]

Emaciation

Hysteria, Dreams of traveling.

Fibroids and haemorrhoid.^[10]

Thickened and irritable bladder

Pain along the spine radiating to the abdomen and thighs is associated with uterine pathology.

Gastric complaints such as the desire for sweets, also acid things. Thirsty, excessive nausea.

Photophobia - supraorbital and orbital pains with nasal catarrh and watery discharge.

References were found regarding the successful use of this medicine by R. Gupta in cases of one-sided headache due to uterine troubles with backache in tincture form - 5-10 drops 6-hourly.

He also cured a case with complaints of leucorrhoea, amenorrhoea, and painful menses and pain in ovaries with asoca in tincture form - 5 drops three times a day.^[12]

Remedy relationships

It is used as an intercurrent remedy. It is used as a complementary to *Abroma Augusta*, *Viburnum opulus*, *Pulsatilla*, and *Sepia*.^[8]

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the course of the literature review, various materia medica and repertories were examined, revealing that only a limited number of materia medica, such as Boericke's MM and Lotus materia medica, provide information regarding this particular medicine. Notably, no repertory has categorized this medicine under any rubric. Therefore, it is essential to enhance our

materia medica and repertories by incorporating remedies with significant therapeutic potential. Increased proving and reproving are crucial for the advancement of our system. Joanesia asoca possesses extensive therapeutic benefits in both homeopathy and other medical disciplines. This medicine has the potential to be effectively utilized in addressing feminine health issues and promoting optimal reproductive health, provided it is adequately proven.

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