

## IMPORTANCE OF PANCHABHAUTIKA COMPOSITION IN LOCALLY AVAILABLE HERBS

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### ABSTRACT

The concept of **Panchabhautik composition** in Ayurveda emphasizes that all substances, including medicinal herbs, are composed of the five great elements—Prithvi (Earth), Ap (Water), Teja (Fire), Vayu (Air), and Akasha (Ether). This study explores the Panchabhautik composition of **locally available kitchen herbs** and their therapeutic significance. Common herbs like **turmeric, ginger, black pepper, cumin, coriander, fenugreek, tulsi, clove, cardamom, and mustard seeds** possess unique elemental balances that influence their medicinal properties. These herbs aid digestion, boost immunity, reduce inflammation, and support respiratory and metabolic health. By understanding their elemental composition, Ayurveda provides a holistic approach to maintaining health through diet and natural remedies. This study highlights how these easily accessible herbs can be used effectively for disease prevention and well-being.

**KEYWORDS:** Panchabhautik composition, Ayurvedic herbs, Kitchen spices, Medicinal properties, Traditional medicine.

### INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda, all substances in the universe, including herbs, are composed of the five great elements (Panchamahabhutas)—Prithvi (Earth), Ap (Water), Teja (Fire), Vayu (Air), and

Akasha (Ether). These fundamental elements contribute to the physical and therapeutic properties of medicinal plants. Locally available herbs in India, especially those found in kitchens, play a crucial role in maintaining health and treating ailments due to their Panchabhautik composition.

The concept of Panmahabhutas is essential in Ayurveda, as it determines the Rasa (taste), Guna (quality), Veerya (potency), and Vipaka (post-digestive effect) of herbs. Each herb possesses a unique combination of these elements, influencing its medicinal effects. Traditional Indian spices and herbs like turmeric, ginger, black pepper, and cumin have been used for centuries for their therapeutic benefits.

The Charaka Samhita states

"यः पञ्चभौतिकं सर्वं स्थावरं जङ्गमं च यत्।

तद्भूतविज्ञानादेव ज्ञेयं स्वस्थातुरयोः॥"

(Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 26/10).

Everything in the universe, whether living or non-living, is composed of the five great elements. Understanding their composition is essential for maintaining health and treating diseases.

## AIM OF STUDY

This study aims to highlight the Panchabhautik composition of commonly available kitchen herbs and their therapeutic significance in daily life. To analyze the Panchabhautik composition of locally available herbs and their medicinal benefits in maintaining health and treating common ailments.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study involves a literature review of Ayurvedic texts such as Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Bhavaprakasha, along with modern research on kitchen herbs. The Panchabhautik composition of selected herbs is assessed based on classical references and their known pharmacological properties.

## Importance of Panchabhautik Composition

Each herb possesses a unique balance of the five elements, influencing its taste, potency, and action in the body. The presence of:

- **Prithvi (Earth element):** Provides stability, nourishment, and tissue-building properties.
- **Ap (Water element):** Contributes to liquidity, digestion, and cooling effects.
- **Teja (Fire element):** Responsible for metabolism, digestion, and transformation.
- **Vayu (Air element):** Governs movement, circulation, and neurological functions.
- **Akasha (Ether element):** Affects expansion, lightness, and cellular communication.

Understanding these elements in herbs allows for their optimal use in diet and medicine.

### List of Locally Available Herbs in Indian Kitchens

1. Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*)
2. Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*)
3. Black Pepper (*Piper nigrum*)
4. Cumin (*Cuminum cyminum*)
5. Coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*)
6. Fenugreek (*Trigonella foenum-graecum*)
7. Tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*)
8. Clove (*Syzygium aromaticum*)
9. Cardamom (*Elettaria cardamomum*)
10. Mustard Seeds (*Brassica nigra*).

### Importance of Panchabhautik Composition and Benefits of Each Herb.



#### 1. Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*).

- **Panchabhautik Composition:** *Teja (Fire) dominant, with Prithvi (Earth) and Ap (Water) elements.*

- **Explanation:** Turmeric is known for its heating and drying properties, attributed to the dominance of the Fire element (Teja). The presence of Earth (Prithvi) contributes to its nourishing and wound-healing properties, while the Water element (Ap) aids in balancing moisture levels in the body.
- **Benefits**
  - **Anti-inflammatory:** Curcumin, the active compound in turmeric, reduces inflammation and helps in managing arthritis and joint pain.
  - **Antiseptic:** Traditionally used in wound healing and infections due to its antimicrobial properties.
  - **Enhances digestion:** Stimulates bile production and improves liver function.
  - **Boosts immunity:** Acts as an antioxidant and supports the body's defense system.

## 2. Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*)



- **Panchabhautik Composition:** *Teja (Fire) and Vayu (Air) dominant.*
- **Explanation:** The Fire element (Teja) in ginger makes it hot and stimulating, enhancing digestion and metabolism. The Air element (Vayu) contributes to its light and drying effects, helping in reducing bloating and Kapha-related disorders.
- **Benefits**
  - **Aids digestion:** Stimulates digestive enzymes and alleviates indigestion.
  - **Relieves nausea:** Effective for motion sickness and pregnancy-related nausea.
  - **Anti-inflammatory:** Reduces pain in arthritis and muscle soreness.
  - **Improves circulation:** Helps in dilating blood vessels and maintaining blood pressure.

### 3. Black Pepper (*Piper nigrum*)



- **Panchabhautik Composition:** *Teja (Fire) and Vayu (Air) dominant.*
- **Explanation:** The Fire element (*Teja*) gives black pepper its pungency, aiding digestion and metabolism. The Air element (*Vayu*) enhances its lightness and drying nature, making it effective in clearing mucus and improving respiration.
- **Benefits**
  - **Enhances bioavailability:** Increases the absorption of nutrients, especially curcumin from turmeric.
  - **Improves digestion:** Stimulates digestive enzymes and prevents bloating.
  - **Respiratory health:** Helps in clearing congestion and reducing cough.

### 4. Cumin (*Cuminum cyminum*)

- **Panchabhautik Composition:** *Prithvi (Earth) and Teja (Fire) dominant.*
- **Explanation:** The Earth element (*Prithvi*) provides nourishment and grounding properties, while Fire (*Teja*) contributes to its ability to enhance digestion and metabolism.





- **Benefits**

- **Aids digestion:** Prevents bloating and indigestion.
- **Anti-flatulent:** Reduces gas formation in the intestines.
- **Improves metabolism:** Stimulates appetite and enhances absorption of nutrients.

#### 5. Coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*)



- **Panchabhautik Composition:** *Ap (Water) and Vayu (Air) dominant.*
- **Explanation:** The Water element (*Ap*) gives coriander its cooling and hydrating properties, while the Air element (*Vayu*) makes it light and effective in digestion.
- **Benefits**
  - **Cools the body:** Helps in reducing heat and acidity.
  - **Improves digestion:** Soothes the stomach and prevents bloating.
  - **Detoxifying:** Supports liver function and helps in flushing out toxins.

#### 6. Fenugreek (*Trigonella foenum-graecum*)



- **Panchabhautik Composition:** *Prithvi (Earth) and Ap (Water) dominant.*
- **Explanation:** The Earth element (*Prithvi*) contributes to its nourishing and strengthening properties, while the Water element (*Ap*) provides lubrication and moisture retention.

- **Benefits**

- **Controls diabetes:** Helps regulate blood sugar levels.
- **Enhances lactation:** Promotes milk production in nursing mothers.
- **Relieves inflammation:** Reduces joint pain and swelling.

## 7. Tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*)

- **Panchabhautik Composition:** *Vayu (Air) and Teja (Fire) dominant.*
- **Explanation:** The Air element (Vayu) in Tulsi makes it light and effective in respiratory health, while the Fire element (Teja) gives it its antibacterial and immune-boosting properties.



- **Benefits**

- **Immunity booster:** Strengthens the body's defense system.
- **Anti-stress:** Acts as an adaptogen, reducing mental stress.
- **Respiratory health:** Effective in treating cough, colds, and asthma.

## 8. Clove (*Syzygium aromaticum*)



- **Panchabhautik Composition:** *Teja (Fire) and Akasha (Ether) dominant.*
- **Explanation:** The Fire element (*Teja*) contributes to its strong heating and analgesic properties, while the Ether element (*Akasha*) enhances its ability to penetrate tissues and provide relief from pain.
- **Benefits**
  - **Analgesic:** Acts as a natural painkiller, especially for toothaches.
  - **Antiseptic:** Prevents infections and promotes oral health.
  - **Improves digestion:** Stimulates digestive enzymes and prevents bloating.

#### 9. Cardamom (*Elettaria cardamomum*)



- **Panchabhautik Composition:** *Vayu (Air) and Ap (Water) dominant.*
- **Explanation:** The Air element (*Vayu*) in cardamom provides lightness and digestive benefits, while the Water element (*Ap*) keeps it cooling and soothing.
- **Benefits**
  - **Digestive stimulant:** Helps in relieving bloating and gas.
  - **Relieves acidity:** Reduces heartburn and stomach discomfort.
  - **Detoxifies the body:** Supports kidney function and eliminates toxins.

#### 11. Mustard Seeds (*Brassica nigra*)





- **Panchabhautik Composition:** *Teja (Fire) and Prithvi (Earth) dominant.*
- **Explanation:** The Fire element (*Teja*) makes mustard seeds heating and stimulating for digestion, while the Earth element (*Prithvi*) adds to their nourishing and tissue-strengthening properties.
- **Benefits**
  - **Improves circulation:** Enhances blood flow and prevents clotting.
  - **Relieves respiratory congestion:** Helps in clearing mucus and easing breathing.

## STUDY OBSERVATION

The study highlights that herbs used daily in Indian kitchens possess a well-balanced Panchabhautik composition, making them naturally effective for health maintenance and disease prevention. Their properties align with Ayurvedic principles, contributing to digestion, metabolism, immunity, and overall well-being.

## CONCLUSION

Panchabhautik composition plays a crucial role in determining the medicinal properties of locally available herbs. By understanding the elemental composition of kitchen herbs, one can optimize their use for preventive and therapeutic purposes. These herbs not only enhance the flavor of food but also serve as natural remedies for common health issues.

## REFERENCES

### 1. Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*)

**Reference:** Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 25/40 – Describes turmeric's anti-inflammatory and wound-healing properties.

**Reference:** Bhavaprakasha Nighantu, Haritakyadi Varga – Mentions turmeric as an antiseptic and immunity booster.

### 2. Ginger (*Zingiber officinale*)

**Reference:** Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 27/231 – Describes its digestive, carminative, and anti-inflammatory properties.

**Reference:** Bhavaprakasha Nighantu, Haritakyadi Varga – Explains its role in nausea and circulation improvement.

### 3. Black Pepper (*Piper nigrum*)

**Reference:** Sushruta Samhita, Sutrasthana 46/344 – Mentions black pepper as a digestive stimulant and bioavailability enhancer.

**Reference:** Raja Nighantu, Haritakyadi Varga – Describes its use in respiratory health.

#### **4. Cumin (*Cuminum cyminum*)**

**Reference:** Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 27/234 – Highlights cumin's benefits for digestion and metabolism.

**Reference:** Bhavaprakasha Nighantu, Dhanyavarga – Discusses its carminative and anti-flatulent effects.

#### **5. Coriander (*Coriandrum sativum*)**

**Reference:** Ashtanga Hridayam, Sutrasthana 6/50 – Describes coriander's cooling and detoxifying properties.

**Reference:** Bhavaprakasha Nighantu, Haritakyadi Varga – Mentions its role in digestion and liver function.

#### **6. Fenugreek (*Trigonella foenum-graecum*)**

**Reference:** Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 27/232 – Discusses fenugreek's anti-inflammatory and lactation-enhancing effects.

**Reference:** Raja Nighantu, Dhanyavarga – Mentions its role in controlling diabetes.

#### **7. Tulsi (*Ocimum sanctum*)**

**Reference:** Charaka Samhita, Chikitsasthana 1/3/30 – Describes Tulsi as an immunity booster and stress reliever.

**Reference:** Bhavaprakasha Nighantu, Haritakyadi Varga – Discusses its benefits for respiratory health.

#### **8. Clove (*Syzygium aromaticum*)**

**Reference:** Sushruta Samhita, Sutrasthana 46/344 – Mentions clove's antiseptic and analgesic properties.

**Reference:** Bhavaprakasha Nighantu, Karpuradi Varga – Discusses its role in digestion.

#### **9. Cardamom (*Elettaria cardamomum*)**

**Reference:** Ashtanga Hridayam, Sutrasthana 6/51 – Mentions cardamom's digestive and detoxifying effects.

**Reference:** Bhavaprakasha Nighantu, Karpuradi Varga – Describes its effect on acidity and metabolism.

#### **10. Mustard Seeds (*Brassica nigra*)**

**Reference:** Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 27/235 – Highlights mustard seeds' role in circulation and respiratory function.

**Reference:** Bhavaprakasha Nighantu, Dhanyavarga – Discusses its heating properties and mucus-reducing effects.