**ABSTRACT:**

There are many plants on our planet which need a lot of study yet and one such plant is *Chilhaka* (Toothed leaf Chilla). The plant possess anti diabetic, anti- microbial and diuretic property. It is also used in diabetes, ring worm, ascites, ulcers, wound, snake bite, fever etc. Ethanolic extract showed anti-inflammatory activity in rats. *Chilhaka* suppresses the *vata* and *kapha* doshas, nourishes the *Dhatus* (the 7 *dhatus* described in classical Ayurveda texts), is *Agneya*, and its fruit has properties of *Vish* (Poison) and thus is fatal for fish.

**Keywords:** *Chilhaka*, Anti-inflammatory activity, Diuretic property.
INTRODUCTION:

Our planet is a treasure trove of plants and animals. Some plants and their uses have been identified and studied in thorough detail while many still in the queue to be explored and expand the horizon of medicinal plants. One such plant is *Chilhaka*, underexplored and waiting for its full potential to be discovered by humans. The plant possess anti diabetic, anti-microbial and diuretic property. It is used in diabetes, ring worm, ascites, ulcers, wound, snake bite, fever etc.¹

*Chilhaka* is a small deciduous tree or shrub growing up to 8 meters in length which contains pubescent or tomentose twigs.² The plant is native of India, Nepal, Pakistan, Srilanka. Leaves vary from simple, oblong to lanceolate [Image 1]. Flowers are velvety, greenish yellow, regular and bisexual. Petals are absent while sepals are 5 in number ³ [Image 2].

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To review the medicinal importance of the plant *Chilhaka*.
2. To get in- depth knowledge of the plant and to see various Nighantu’s perspective on it.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Information regarding the plant and its uses was collected from various *Nighantus*, articles published in various peer review journals. Information was also obtained from various websites.
DISCUSSION

Latin Name - *Casearia tomentosa* (Syn. *C. elliptica*)

Family –Salicaceae

**Table No.1 Vernacular Names**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanskrit</th>
<th>Chilhaka&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td><em>chilla, chillar, chilhak, chilata</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujrati</td>
<td><em>Munjhaad, munjaal&lt;sup&gt;3&lt;/sup&gt;</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marathi</td>
<td><em>Modgi&lt;sup&gt;6&lt;/sup&gt;, massi, cury lenj</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nepalese</td>
<td><em>Sano bethe&lt;sup&gt;7&lt;/sup&gt;</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamil</td>
<td><em>Katiccai&lt;sup&gt;8&lt;/sup&gt;</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telugu</td>
<td><em>Chilaka-dududi&lt;sup&gt;9&lt;/sup&gt;</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scientific Classification of Chilhaka<sup>10</sup>**

**Table No.2 Scientific Classification**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kingdom</th>
<th>Plantae</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Order</td>
<td>Malpighiales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Salicaceae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tribe</td>
<td>Samydeae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genus</td>
<td>Casearia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Species</td>
<td>Tomentosa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Traditional Uses

1. Root-paste (with kusum oil): in leucoderma
2. Root-powder: as hallucinogen
3. Stem-bark (powder): to smoke in dropsy
4. Fresh leaf-paste (with lime): in ringworm
5. Root-bark decoction (with paste of long peppers) in diabetes, root bark is used in anemia.
6. Tribes of Bastar (Chattisgarh): Root-bark: as tonic in anemia.
7. Used for the treatment of Jaundice.

Modern medicinal Uses

1. Aerial parts (50% EtOH extract): antiviral, hypotensive and spasmylytic
2. Antimicrobial activity and antioxidant potential.
3. Ethanolic (80%) extract of leaves showed anti-inflammatory activity in rats.
4. Seed oil is rubbed in sprains.
5. Various plant parts are used in Neuralgia.
6. Urinary problem: Nillisoti (Delbergia volubilis), Beli (Aegle marmelos), Ilangi (Casearia tomentosa) leaves (about 10-15) are warmed and the extract is removed. Drink half a cup twice a day, early morning on empty stomach and in evening after the meals.
7. Fruit Pulp – diuretic, purgative
9. Casearia tomentosa is used to cure dropsy. Its fruit pulp should be given to the patient to eat and its ground bark should be coated on the patient. Its decoction should be used to take bath. Coating the ground bark of Casearia tomentosa is useful to cure ringworm, psoriasis and eczema.

Toxicity

The genotoxic potentiality of the crude leaf extract of Casearia tomentosa, a medicinal preparation, has been evaluated in Swiss albino mice. The extract significantly induced the division – disruptive chromosomal changes in bone marrow cells as well as in primary spermatocytes; the latter also exhibited marked increase in synaptic disruptions.
Phytoconstituents

1. Alkaloids
2. Flavonoids
3. Tannins
4. Carbohydrate
5. Glycosides
6. Terpenoids
7. Steroids
8. Fat and oil
9. Saponin
10. Protein and amino acid
11. Phytosterol
12. Gums and mucilage

Guna and Karma (properties and action) according to Ayurveda texts

Chilhako vata nirhara shleshmaghno dhatupushtikrit.
Agneyovishvadhyasya falam matisyanisudanam.
(Bhavaprakash Nighantu Guduchyadi varga 133)\(^{18}\)

Chilhaka suppresses the vata and kapha doshas, nourishes the Dhatus (the 7 dhatus described in classical Ayurveda texts), Agneya, and its fruit has properties of Vish (Poison) and thus is fatal for fish.

Chilhako matsyanasi vishakteh faleschousverya katu shleshmvatapranut.
Pittakopi bhaved dahakari bhrisham shothroge bhishagbhi sada yujyate.
(Priya Nighantu Sharadi varga 32)\(^{19}\)
CONCLUSION

Studies suggest that *Casearia tomentosa* leaves are an excellent source of active principles that can prevent oxidative stress, development of diabetes mellitus and bacterial infections. However, these active principles need to be isolated, identified and characterized. A lot of study is still required to realize its full potential as medicinal plant to serve the healthcare need.

Images Courtesy: Flowers of India

Acknowledgment

With deep sense of gratitude and respect, I express my sincere thanks to my Guide Dr. Rajesh Chandra Mishra M.D. Ayurveda, Associate Professor Department of Dravyaguna Vigyan for directing and helping me whenever and wherever I got stuck during this study.

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Conflict of interest: Nil
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