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Review article

Shigru - The wonderful plant

Arjun P. Sawant 1*, Charusheela Giri ²
P.G. Scholar ¹, Professor &H.O.D ²
Department of Dravyaguna Vigyana ^{1, 2}

School of Ayurveda D.Y.Patil deemed to be University, Nerul, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. 400 706.

ABSTRACT:

Shigru is nativeof the north western India, in southern foothills of the Himalayas, botanically identified as Moringa oleifera Lam.a tree growing all over the tropical area of world. It is fast-growing and most widely cultivated species. It belongs to Moringacae family and Moringa genus. Shigruis one of those those few species which are used as Aushadi(medicine) and Ahara (food). According to Ayurveda Aushadidravyas are mainly Viryapradhan and Ahariyadravys are Rasapradhan, Shigru possesses both of them make it unique from other plants. It has an impressive range of medicinal uses with high nutritional value. All parts of the tree have been used in traditional &Ayurvedic medicine practices. In the indigenous system of medicine different parts of Shigru are being employed for the treatment of different ailments. The different parts of this plant are useful in treatment of vidradhi (internal abscess), Pleeha (spleen disorders), Netraroga (eye diseases) Medoroga (obesity), Kustha (skin diseases), Shula (pain), Shiroroga (ENT disorders). In the recentpast, a lot of studies, articles and other publications have included Shigru. The various medicinal uses explained in Ayurvedic classics and studies carried out for scientific research have been reviewed and discussed in this article.

KEY WORDS: Shigru, Moringa oleifera, Ayurveda, Pterygosperma.

INTRODUCTION:

In India, drugs of herbal origin have been used since ancient times in traditional systems of medicine such as Ayurveda. Shigru(Moringa oleifera) is a perennial angiosperm plant member of the Moringacae family, it is native to sub-Himalayan tract and, commonly found in the Indian Subcontinent, Shigru is one of the among those few plants where its various parts have been utilized throughout history as food and medicine.It is sun and heat loving plant, grown mainly in semiarid, tropical, and subtropical areas, including coastal areas. It is a drought-resistant tree and prefers sandy dry soil,¹ Not only in Indian subcontinent but in Asia, Africa, and Cambodia and in Philippines leaves and pods are used as a food. As per Ayurveda Shigru known as synonymMochaka (can use in many diseases)2. In Ayurveda itextensively used in diseaselike Krimi(warms/bacteria), Shotha(swelling), Shula (pain), Vidradhi(internal abscess) and also used as Chakshushya (eye tonic). The most amazing thing

about *Shigru* is that all parts of this plant including its bark, roots, leaves, flowers, seeds, sap and pods are a storehouse the all essential nutrients, antioxidants, vitamins ,minerals and amino acids needed by the body. Thus this plant possesses innumerable health benefits and has the capacity of curing several diseases. The Different parts of *Shigru* plant has Anti-Bacterial, Antioxidant, Analgesic, Hepato protective, Diuretic, Antihypertensive, Hypoglycemic, Antispasmodic, Antitumor, Anticancer, Antiulcer and Lipid lowering effect which is proven by scientific research. *Shigru* is a plant for future hope.

Literary review

Description of *Shigru*is available from *Vedic kala, Rigveda* documented *Shigru*as a domestic plant. it is applied externally (mixwith butter) in *KrimiRogas (Kousika Sutra 29/26), Dharma Sutras* prohibit its

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utility as a Tooth Brush as well as in Rituals.

In Charaksamhita Shigruis described in Krimighna Mahakashay, Swedopaga Mahakashay , KatuSkand and ShakaVarga and its uses in Krimiroga, Sotha, Kustha and various Kaphaj and Vataj disorders3. Acharya Sushruta has included Shigru in Varunadi Gana, Sirovirechaka Gana & KatuVarga & ShakaVarga. Its Shaka possess properties like Ruchi Vardhak and Vata Kaphahara action4. AshtangaHridaya, Vagbhatacharya cited Shigruin ShiroVirechanaGana & MustadiGana. Shigru is also prescribed as PathyaAhar for GulmaRogi⁵. In Sharangadhara Samhita. Shigru is described for the treatment of Anta-Vidradhi (Internal Abscess), Sukraroga (a type of eye disease), Kapha Pradhana Shotha (Swelling), Tandra⁶. HaritaSamhitaSwarasa, Kalkaand Kwatha of Shigru is recommended for Shodhana Upakarma and diseases like, Kasa(cough) and Krimi7. Acharya Chakradatta explained specific use of Shigru BeejaKalka for Krimij Shiroroga, Pralepa for Granthi and Gandamala(Small Tumours)8.

In Raj Nighantu, NilaShigru the type of Shigru their properties described in MulakadiVarga9. Kaiydeva Nighant mentioned Shigru in AusadhiVarga, it is said that all part of Shigru are beneficial for Netra10. Shigru mentioned in KaraviradiVarga with Krumighna, Vidradhi Nashak (useful in Internal Abscess), Amaharproperties in Dhanwantarinighantu11. In Bhavaprakash Nighantu it is included in Guduchyadi-Varga. Also ShwetaMaricha term is used for seed of Shigru and explained its benefit in eye disease12.

From this we can see that *Shigru* is mentioned in both *Ahariya* and *Aushadi varga*.

Synonyms of Shigru:-

synonyms are key words, from one word which gives a vast meaning of one single drug this is an old style of identification and databasing of the any Medicinal Plant.

Shobhanjan:- A beautiful tree or that which gives attractive look; Akshiv:- Specifies Mada(Used as antinarcotic); Shweta Marich:-They are like Marich (ushna,katu) but white in color; Tikshna Ganda:-It has strong smell; Tikshna moola:-With pungent smell and taste.; Bahu moola:-Having multiple roots; Mochak:-Useful in many diseases; Vidradhighna:-Useful in vidradhi; Moolparni:- With pungent smell; Harithshak:-Leafs and fruits used as vegetables; Ghanachchhada:-Having dense and luxuriant foliage.

Types of Shigru as per Ayurveda:-13

Shweta/KatuShigru and Rakta /MadhuShigru are the two types of *Shigru* mentioned in Ayurveda classics on the basis of flower color and taste. Shweta Shigru posseses white colour flowers and bitter in taste whereas Rakta Shigru has a Red colour flowers and sweet in taste. KatuShigru botanicaly identified as Moringa oleifera Lam., is available commonly almost throughout country, whereas Madhushigru, botanically identified as Moringa concanensis Nimmo., is comparatively scarce in occurrence with restricted distribution, for the instance, in Bengal, Rajputana, Sindha and certain other areas including dry hills of Konkan, AndhraPradesh and Coimbatore. Thid type of Shigruis NilaShigru(blue variety) mentioned by Raj nighantu. The medicinal properties of these kinds of Shigruare also specified in textual sources of medicine.

Chemical Constitution:14

Phytochemical constituents isolated from Moringa oliefera.

Roots: 4-(alpha L-rhamnopyranosyloxy)benzylglucosinolate and benzylglucosinolate. Stem: -4-hydroxymellein, Vanillin, beta-sitosterone, octacosanic acid and beta-sitosterol 11. Bark: - 4(alpha-L-Rhamnosyloxy) -benzylglucosinolate. Whole gum: exudates L-arabinose-galactose, D-glucuronic acid, Lrhamnose, D- mannose-Xylose and leucoanthocyanin.Leaves: - Glycoside niazirine, niazirine and three mustard oil glycosides,4-(4'-0-acetyl-alpha-Lrhamnosyloxy benzyl), isothiocyanate, niaziminin A and B. Mature flowers: -D-mannose-glucose, protein, ascorbic acid, polysaccharide. Wholepods:-Nitrile, isothiocyanate, thiocarbanates, 0-2(2'hydroxy-3'-(2"heptenyloxy) -propylundecanoate, 0-ethyl-4-(alpha-1 -rhamnosyloxy)-benzyl. Carbamate, hydroxybenzoate and beta-sitosterol. Mature seeds:-Crude protein, crude fat, carbohydrate, Flavonoids, Phenols, Saponins and Tannins. Methionine, cysteine, 4-(alpha-L-rhamnopyranosyloxy)-benzyl glucosibenzylglucosinolate, moringyne, mono-palmitic and di-oleic Triglyceride. Seed Oil: -Vitamin A, beta carotene, precursor of Vitamin A.

Phytonutrients present in Shigru:-14

Shigru is popular worldwide for its nutrition values, leaves, pods and seeds are rich in phytonutrient. *Shigru* contain 2 times more protein than the yogurt, 3 times more potassium than bananas, 4 times more calcium than milk, 4 times more vitamin A than

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carrots, 7 times more vitamin C than oranges.

Leaves: The leaves of *Shigru* are rich in carotene and ascorbic acid. Analysis gave the following values: energy 64 Kcal moisture 75.0%, protein 6.7%, fat (ether ext.) 1.7%, carbohydrates 13.4%, fiber 0.9%; vitamin A 47%, Thimine(B1) 22%, riboflavin (B2) 55%,niacin(B3) 15%, pantothenic acid(B5) 3%, vit B6 92% & vit C 62% .Mineral matter 2.3%, calcium 185, phosphorous 16 and iron 4.0mg./100g.; copper (1.1ug./g.) and iodine 51ug./kg.).; Pods:- The pods of Shigrucontains moisture 86.9, protein 2.10, fat 4.8 and mineral matter 2.0%, calcium 30, phosphorous 1.10, and iron 5.3mg/100g., copper (3.1ug/g.) iodine (18ug./kg.) and oxalic acid (0.01). Pods also contain carotene (as vitamin) 184 I.U., nicotinic acid 0.2mg. And ascorbic acid 120mg. /100g. Pressed juice of the Pods contains ascorbic acid oxidase. Pods contain a globulin (N 15.6 and sulphur 1.58%) and a prolamin (N 14.02, sulphur 1.43%). The Pods are remarkably rich in free leucine. The vitamins presents in pods arevitamin A 1%, Thimine(B1) 5%, riboflavin (B2) 6%,niacin(B3) 4%, pantothenic acid(B5) 16%, vit B6 9% ,Folate (B9) 11% & vit C 170% ; Seeds:-contain dietary minerals ,high level of vit C, moderate level of Vit. A &B complex vitamins Seed Oil:-mature seeds contain 38-40 % edible oil called ben oil from its high concentration of behenic acid, ben shown to contain nutritionally significant quantities of vitamins A, C and E.

Ayurvedic pharmacology:

- Raspanchak:- Shigru is Katu(pungent) Tikta (bitter) in Rasa ,Katu in Vipaka, Ushan in Virya and possess Laghu (Light), Ruksha(dry), Tikshna (penetrating) properties which alleviate Kapha and Vata and aggravate the Pitta
- Action on Dhatu: Rasa-Rakta:- Kushthaghna (cures skin diseases), Kandughna(cures Ithing), Pleehaghna(useful in spleen disorders); Meda: -Medoroghna (useful in obesity), Apachihara; Asthi: - Vidradhihara (useful in internal abscess).
- Action on mala:-Mutra- Ashmarighna(useful in urinary calculi), Shothaghna(useful in swelling); Purish- Sara (laxative).
- Action on Strotasa:- Medavaha Medorogaghna; Mansavaha – Granthi (useful in small tumors), Apachi; Annavaha – Rochana, Agnivivardhana (carminative action), Aamhara (increase digestive capacity); Mutravaha-Ashmarighna, Shothaghna.

Action of *Shigru* on different diseases as *per Ayurveda*

The karma (Medicinal Properties) of Shigru are mentioned by Ayurveda classics (Samhitas and Nighantus) given in Table no.1

Karma	Ch.	Su.	A. H	B. N	D. N	K. N	R. N	M. N	P. N	S. N	So. N
Krumighna	V			$\sqrt{}$	V	V	$\sqrt{}$		V		
Vishaghna				$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$					$\sqrt{}$
Medoghna				$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$	√.				$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$
Shophaghna				$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$		$\sqrt{}$		
Vidradhighna				$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$		$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$	
Gulmahar			$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$			$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$	
Shukral				$\sqrt{}$							$\sqrt{}$
Shiroro-virechak		$\sqrt{}$		$\sqrt{}$							$\sqrt{}$
Kushtaghna											$\sqrt{}$
Vranaghna				$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$		$\sqrt{}$			
Chakchushya				$\sqrt{}$		$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$		
Dipan/ Amapachak				V	V	V	$\sqrt{}$	V	V		V
Shulaghna					V	V			V		

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Table no.1: The karma (Medicinal Properties) of Shigru mentioned in Ayurveda classics

Plihaghna

Sangrahi

Hrudya

The *Rogaghnata* (action on specific disease) of *Shigru* are mentioned by *Ayurveda* classics (*Samhitas and Nighantus*) given in Table no.2

Table no.2 : The *Rogaghnata* of *Shigru* mentioned by *Ayurveda* classics

Vyãdhi	Ch.	Su	A.H	Sha	Y.R.	V.	C.	B.N	D.	K.	R.N	M.	P.	S.N	So.
				r		M	D.		N	N		N	N		N
Agnimandya															
Apachi		$\sqrt{}$						$\sqrt{}$							
Granthi				$\sqrt{}$	V										
Aruchi															
Medoroga															
Krimi			$\sqrt{}$					$\sqrt{}$	$\sqrt{}$				$\sqrt{}$		
Kustha															
Pliha															
Gulma															
Shotha															
Shoola															
Vrana															
Netraroga															
Visha															
Vidradhi															

Shigru is a drug of choice in many diseases, like Kustha, Krumi, Pliha, Vidradhi, Gulma, Sotha, Netraroga, Medoroga etc. The all above mentioned conditions comes under Kapha-Vataj disorders. Shigru is Kapha-Vata Shamak drug by its Katu Tikta Rasa, Ushna Virya, and Laghu, RukshaTikshna Guna. Italso exhibits Amapachana, Stroto-Shodhak and

Vatanulomana activity which plays important role in *Samprapti-Bhanga* (to break the pathogenesis) of above diseases.

Different parts of Shigru used as medicines in different diseases as per *Ayurveda*.

Table no. 3: Uses of Different parts of Shigru in different diseases as per Ayurveda.

Disease	se Part used						
	Valkal	Patra	Beeja	Kusuma/	Mula	Phala	Niryas
				Pushpa			
Shula							
Shiroroga							
Chakshushya							
Vishahara							
Kustha							
Gulma				$\sqrt{}$			
Gandamala							
Vidhradhi				$\sqrt{}$			
Shotha							
Ashmari							
Karnashula							
Snayuka							
Udar							
Pratishyaya							
Shwasa							
Tandra							
Medoroga							
Granthi							
Jantughna				$\sqrt{}$			
Krumi							

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In *Ayurveda* classiscs the different parts of *Shigru* indicated for specific disordes, *VrundaMadhava* enumerated it in *Varunadi Gana*, theBeejaof *Shigru* indicated in *Krimij Shiroroja* for*Nasya*, *Mula Varti* for eye diseasesand oil in headache and *Kwatha* in urinary calculi and internal abscess. The *Dhupa* of

newtender leaves is indicated for *Sotha*, fruit indicated in *Gulma* and *Krumiroga* and bark for *Sotha*.Likewise all Samhitas, Chikitsa *Grantha* and Nighantu described the uses of different part of Shigruin different disorders¹⁵.

Table no.4: Classical formulations of Shigru

Formulation	Uses	Reference
Chandraprabha Varti	Timir, kach (useful in eye diseases & conjectival blindness)	B.R.64/203-205
Chandrodaya varti	Timir, Netrakandu (useful in clear the vision & itching)	B.R.64/193-194
Mahabhutavara Grutam	Graha, Unmad, Kustha, Jwar (it removes all kinds of celestial effects on children, insanity, skin disease & fever	B.R.71/76
Bruhat Agni Gruta	Agnimandya, Gulma, Pliha (indigestion, Phantom Tumour, Spleen disorders)	B.R.10/289-295
Taptaraja Taila	It cures severeHeadache, useful in ENT diseases, fever, burning sensation, morbid thirst, jaundice	B.R.65/144-151
Rudra Taila	Useful in all <i>Kapha</i> related indispositions of <i>Urdhavajatru</i> (ENT disordes)	B.R.65/126-133
Vyaghri Taiam	useful in <i>Puti Nasa</i> (minor swelling around nasal passage)	B.R.63/30
Manikya Rasa	Vatarakta, Shitpitta, Kustha, Hikka (skin disease, urticaria, hiccups)	B.R.54/124-132
Ratna Giri Rasa	Fever	B.R.5/562-567
Antavidradhi Yoga	treatment of internal abscess	B.R.46/14
Shobhanjan Lepa	Apaci (suppurated gland)	B.R.44/28
Himsradi Lepa	Granthi(Tumors)	B.R.44/35
Bilvadi Churna	Bradhna(growth in inguinal region)	B.R. 43/58
Bruhad Agnimukha Churna	Agnimandya, Gulma, Pliha (indigestion, phantom tumour, spleen disorders)	B.R.10/67-75
Jwarbhairava Churna	Various type of Fever	B.R.5/455-466
Shigrukwatha	Phleeha (enlargement of spleen)	B.R.41/4
Varunadi kwatha	Kaphamedahar (obesity)	B.R.32/39-41

Presently rigorous researches done on this plant and also conforms the medicinal properties mentioned in *Ayurveda*.

Antihypertensive activity: 1-Active ethanol extract of Moringa leaves led to the isolation of four pure compounds, niazinin A(1),niazinin(1) B, & niazimicin (4) & niazinin A & B which showed blood pressure lowering effect in rats medicated possibly though a calcium antagonist effect. Methyl phydroxybenzoate and alpha-sitosterol (14), found in the pods of Oleifera also revealed positive hypotensive activity. 16

Lipid lowering activities: The Moringa fruit has been found to lower the S. Cholesterol, phospholipids, triglycerides, LDL, VLDL cholesterol to phospholipid ratio, antherogenic index lipid and reduced the lipid profile of liver, heart and aorta in hypercholesteremic

rabbits and increased the excretion of fecal cholesterol. The crude extract of Moringa leaves has shown significant cholesterol lowering activities in high fat diet fed rats.¹⁷

Diuretic activities: -leaves, flowers, gum, roots, & aqueous infusion of seeds have been found to possess diuretic activity.¹⁸

Antibacterial activities: pterygospermin has been isolated from the roots; which has powerful antibacterial effect against gram positive and gram negative bacteria including Mycobacterium tuberculosis var. hominis, pathogenic moulds and fungi. Similar compound is found to be responsible for antibacterial and fungicidal effects of its flower. Juice from the stem bark showed antibacterial effects against staphylococcus aureus. Ethanolic and hydro-

alcoholic extract of steam bark of Shigru reveals significant antimicrobial efficacy against E.coli and P.aeruginosa in vitro.¹⁹, ²⁰

Antitumor and Anticancer activities: - The seed extract have been found to be effective on hepatic carcinogen metabolizing enzymes, antioxidant parameters and skinpapilloma genesis in mice. It has been found that niaziminin, a thiocarbamate from the leaves of Moringa oleifera, exhibits inhibition of tumor promote-induced Epstein-Barr virus activation.²¹

Hepatoprotective activities: -The methanol fraction of Moringa oleifera leaf showed hepatoprotective and anticoagulant effect in rats. Roots have also been reported to have hepatoprotective activities.²²

Antispasmodic activities: -roots of Moringa oleifera had shown antispasmodic activity.Pharmacologically it has been found that ethanol extract and its constituent's exhibit antispasmodic effect possibly through calcium channel blockade.²³

Antiulcer activities: - aqueous leaf extracts a showed antiulcer effect indicating that the antiulcer component is widely distributed in Moringa oleifera.²⁴

Anthelminthic activities: - anthelmintic activity of Moringa oleiferaseed oil was studied on adult Indian earthworm48.Bioactive compounds (Tannin and Saponins) found in aqueous and ethanolic extracts of M. oleifera seed shows anthelmintic activity against H. Contortus eggs and third stage larvae49 with in-vitro study.²⁵

Anti-inflammatory activities: -Extracts from M. oleifera leaves have been shown to modulate humoral and cellular immunity in rats and They have exhibited strong anti-inflammatory properties in rodent models of chemically induced inflammation of the paw. These properties have been more extensively studied with fruit and seed extracts.²⁶

Antidiabetic activities: - The anti-diabetic activity of Moringa Oleifera was evaluated in research. The research was focused on investigating the anti-diabetic and antioxidant actions of the methanol extracts of the pods of this plant in the streptozotocin -induced diabetic rats. The rats were treated with 150 to 300 mg per kg body weight of this extract for 21 days. The anti-diabetic effect was evaluated by measuring the changes in the biochemical parameters of the pancreatic tissue and serum. The study showed

an improvement in the parameters of diabetes in the experimental mice. The progression of diabetes was also significantly reduced after the treatment with the Moringa Oleifera extract.²⁷

Use in Arsenic Toxicity: - The protective effect of the leaves of Moringa Oleifera against the Arsenic toxicity in the experimental mice was investigated during research. The serum indices of the cardiac, renal, and liver functions were analyzed to assess the anti-toxic effect of Moringa Oleifera in the mice. The results of this study revealed that the supplementation with Moringa Oleifera could abrogate the arsenic-induced elevation in the levels of triglyceride, urea, and glucose.²⁸

Effect on Thyroid function: -aqueousleaf extracts regulate thyroid hormone and can be used to treat hyperthyroidism and exhibit an antioxidant effect.²⁹

CONCLUSION:

On comprehensive review, it was found that different parts of *Shigru* are used as a food and medicine from *Vedickaal*. In Ayurveda classics description of Shigru is available in all Samhitas and Nighantus. There are many herbal plants in world even though *Shigru* is having greater medicinal as well as nutritional value. Pharmacological actions attributed to *Shigru* (Moringa oliefera) in Ayurvedic text have evidence suggest that this drug has huge potential in modern pharmaco-therapeutics. *Shigru* is rich in phytonutrient hence the utility of pods and leaves are advisable in diet.

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Email: ayurveddarpan@gmail.com

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