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KALMEGHA

Botanical Name: *Andrographis paniculata*

Family: Acanthaceae

Introduction:

In south India *Andrographis paniculata* is used as 'kiratatikta' and in North India *Swertia chirata* is used.

Latin name *Andrographis* = denoting male, andro = male; *paniculata* = having an inflorescence the axis of which is divided into branches bearing two or more flowers: *panícula* = tuft, a loose cluster of flowers

Names in different Indian languages:

English: Creat, greenchiretta, kalmegh

Hindi : Kalmegh, kalpaath

Kannada : Nelaberu

Malayalam : Nilavepu, kiriyatta

Sanskrit : Bhunimbah, kiriyatta

Tamil : Nilavempu

Telugu : Nelavemu

Synonyms:

Kaalmegha, Bhuunimba, Bhuuminimbaka, Vishwambharaa, Yavtikta, Kalpanaatha, Kiraatatikta

Morphology:

It is a small herb about 40 cm. to 60 cm. high. Stem quadrangular lower part is slimy while upper part is hairy.

Leaves – 5 to 7 cm. long.

Flowers – small, white or blue (rare) , look like mosquitoes from distance.

Fruits – bitter.

Seeds- numerous quadrangular.

Whole plant is very much bitter. The plant bears flowers and fruits from autumn to winter.

Properties:

Guna :laghu, ruksha, tikshna;

Rasa :tikta

Vipak :katu;

Veerya: ushna;

Karma : Jwaraghna, vranahara, kushtaghna

Hepatoprotective, cholinergic, antispasmodic, stomachic, anthelmintic, alterative, blood purifier, febrifuge:

Indications:

Sanipathajwara, kandu, meham, sula, vrana, svasa, kasa, sopham, daham

Fever, jaundice , Liver disorder , flatulence , diarrhoea , colic, splenomegaly

Part Used:- Whole plant

Dosage:- Leaf juice 10-15 ml, Powder 2-4 g, Decoction 50-100 ml

External uses:

Being an appetizer, liver stimulant, laxative and vermifuge, it is used in loss of appetite, liver and spleen enlargement, constipation, jaundice and worms. in fever with rigors, mixture of black pepper and kalamegh is useful. It is also effective in chronic fever and general debility.

Important research work going on:

- (1) chronic liver diseases
- (2) antipsychotic activity
- (3) arthritis
- (4) hypoglycaemic effect
- (5) blood sugar level

Therapeutic uses:

- (1) sotha— Kalka of Kirtatiktā and Sunthi are to be taken with Punarnav decoction (V.M.)
- (2) Jvara— Hot infusion of Kiratatikta4sgjen with Dhanyaka leaves (S.B.M.)
- (3) Rakta pitta— Kirata tikta is given along with Chandana (C.S.Ci. 4).