Sri Satya Sai Murlidhar Ayurvedic College & Hospital
Moga (Punjab) -142001

PHALGU

Botanical Name - *Ficus carica*

Family –Moraceae

Vernacular Names -

English Name Common fig
Hindi Name – Anjeer
Bengali Name – Anjir
Malayalam Name - Shimi atti
Telugu Name - Anjura, Manjimedi, Shimi atti
Arab Name – Tin
Sanskrit Name - Phalgu phalam
Marathi Name - Anjra
Kannada Name - Anjura
Tamil Name - Simayiattitenatti
Punjabi Name - Fagari
Persian Name - Anjir

Introduction

Anjeer (Ficus carica) is a very well-known nutritive fruit with many medicinal virtues. It helps in quick recovery from fatigue and endows the body with good physical and mental strength. Classical term of Anjeer fruit is Phalgu. It is described under Phala varga in Priya Nighantu. Leaves and roots of this plant are used in cardiovascular diseases, sore throat, cough, indigestion, colic, loss of appetite, diarrhoea and other respiratory and gastrointestinal diseases. Also used as anti-inflammatory agents. Fresh and dried figs possess laxative properties. Dry fruit is used as good nutritional support for diabetes.

Distribution -

Ficus carica is native to Carica in Asia minor. It is distributed in Southwest Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean region, from Turkey in the East to Spain and Portugal in the West. It is also grown commercially in parts of the U.S.A., Chile, Arabia, Persia, India, China and Japan.

Botanical Description -

Ficus carica is a moderate sized deciduous tree growing up to 15-20 ft in height. Leaves are broad, ovate, nearly 3-5 lobed, leathery dark green above and hairy below.

Fruits are axillary, usually pear shaped, variable in size and color, when ripe it is sweet and juicy. It is gummy with latex before ripening. Although fig is considered as a fruit is actually a flower inverted intoit. Seeds are many and vary greatly in size. Seeds are real fruits in figs.

Plant latex is milky white and it contains a protein digesting enzyme called Ficin.

Controversy -

In Charaka and Sushruta Samhita, Phalgu is mentioned as Vishtambhi (constipating). Priya Nighantu mentions properties of Anulomana and Vibandahanti that helps in relieving constipation.
Other Nighantukaaras and commentators such as Dalhana and Chakrapaani mentions Phalgu as synonym of Kaakodumbara (Ficus hispida).

Classical Categorization

Charaka Samhitha -ShramaharaniDashemaani, Phala Varga
Sushrutha Samhitha - Phala Varga
Priya Nighantu - Phala varga

Properties -

Rasa – Madhura Guna – Guru, Snigdha
Virya – Shita Vipaka–Madhura
Effect on Doshas - Vatapittahara Balances aggravated vata and pitta dosha.

Action (Karma) -

Tarpana (Nutritive), Balya (promotes physical strength), Anulomana(helps easy evacuation of bowels), Vibandam Hanti (cures constipation), Shramahara (relieves fatigue) Brahmana (Nourishing), Vishtambhiconstipating (excess use), Yakkrituthejjaka, Vrshya(Aphrodisiac) Mutrala(diuretic), Dahaprashamana, Raktashodhaka (Purifies blood), Kaphanisaraka (Expectorant)

Pharmacological Activities -

Ficus carica possess Anticancer, Antioxidant, Antidiabetic, Antifungal, Antibacterial, Hepatoprotective, Anti-inflammatory, Gastroprotective, Antidiarrheal, Antitumor, Antispasmodic, Immune Balancing, Antipyretic and Antimutagenic activities.

Leaves of Anjeer possess Diuretic, Demulcent, Emollient and Anthelmintic properties.

Nutritive value of Figs

Figs (Ficus carica) contains Protein 1,3 g, Fat (total Lipids) 0.2 g. Carbohydrates 7.6 g. Calories (energy) 80 k Cal, Moisture 88.1 g. Fibre 2.2 g. Minerals 0.6 g. Thiamine 0.1 mg. Calcium 35 mg. Phosphorus 22 mg, Iron 0.6 mg. Vitamin A-80 IU and Vitamin C-2 mg

Part Used -Fruit, Leaves, Root

Dose -

Juice 10-20 ml Paste-5-10 ml Dried fruit-2-3

Indications -

Constipation, Liver and Spleen diseases, General debility, Jaundice, Sandhivata Osteoarthritis

Vataraktha(gout), Rakta vikara(diseases related to blood), Raktapitta, Sore throat, Cough, Asthma, Ashmari(urinary calculi), Vrikkashula, Mutrakricchra– dysuria, Shukra dourbalya(Oligospermia), Burning sensation, Vrana (wound), Visphota(Boils), Masurika(measles), Fever

Fruits are used in – Leprosy, Nose bleeding, Antipyretic, Aphrodisiac, Lithontriptic, Hair nutritive, Emollient, Demulcent, Laxative, Inflammation, Paralysis, Liver diseases, Chest pain, Piles

Roots are used in – Leucoderma, Ringworm infection

Latex is used as - Expectorant, Diuretic, Anthelmintic and in the treatment of anemia.

Leaves are used as – Antidiabetic, Vermifuge, in contact dermatitis

Seeds are used as edible oil, lubricant etc

Systemic Action (Sthanika Karma)

External - Warm paste is used to apply on inflammatory wounds.

Digestive System - Liver stimulant, indicated in Splenomegaly, hemorrhoids, Jaundice etc. Facilitate normal movement of doshas.

Circulatory System -Indicated in joint inflammation, blood borne diseases, bleeding diseases etc.

Respiratory system - Expels out vitiated kapha dosha, indicated in cough, breathing diseases etc. by improving the mucosal health of respiratory passage.

Excretory system - Improve urine output, indicated in Urinary calculi and associated pain, Dysuria etc.

Reproductive system - Aphrodisiac. It can be used with other herbal medicines to increase sperm count.

Skin Improve complexion, cure burning sensation associated with skin irruptions.

Satmikarana Indicated in general debility, promote strength.

Tapakrama-jvaraghna (fever and associated weakness)

Therapeutic Uses

1. Latex of Fig is applied externally on warts, skin ulcers and sores. It is also used as a purgative and anthelmintic.
2. Fruit paste is applied externally on swellings, tumour and inflammations. It acts as the best pain relieving agent.
3. In Hemorrhage, fruit juice with honey is given internally. (Vrindamaadhava)

Formulations

1. Gojihwadi Kashaya
2. Nila ghritha - Used in asaadhyakushta (Su.Chi 9/29)

Research activity -

1. Anticancer Activity
2. Anti-inflammatory Activity