

# TULSI- The queen herb of Ayurveda

Madhusmita Deka

Research Scholar, Department of Veda, Faculty of Sanskritvidya Dharma Vigyan, Banaras Hindu University

Email: madhusmitadeka16@gmail.com

DOI: 10.47750/pnr.2022.13.S10.113

## Abstract

For thousands of years, Indian culture accords great importance to trees and nature. Ayurveda records their valuable contribution. Tulsi of Indian Basil (*Ocimum Sanctum*) occupies the most respect and important position. tulsi plant can be used for prevention as well as cure of illness. Tulsi contain hundreds of beneficial compounds known as phytochemicals working together, these compounds possess strong antioxidant, antibacterial and immuno-enhancing properties, That promote General Health support the body's natural defence against stress and disease. Tulsi is the sacred plant dearer to Lord Vishnu. Tulsi symbolises purity. It is considered as the holy plant in the Indian subcontinent.

**Keywords:** Phytochemicals, antioxidant, stress.

## INTRODUCTION

Tulsi has been used for thousands of years in Ayurveda for its remarkable healing properties. It is mentioned by Charak in the Charak Samhita and ancient Ayurvedic text. Tulsi is a Sanskrit name. Tulsi means one that does not tolerate because of the solubility of its juice is also termed 'Surasa' being easily available it is called 'Sulabha'. It is also earned the name 'Shoolaghni' because of its ability to alleviate pain. Tulsi is at the forefront of today's herbal medicine remedies. Its list of health benefits is extensive. It is a pillar of traditional Ayurvedic holistic Healing system and known as an adaptogen. and adaptogen is an agent that helps our bodies 'adopt' to different form of stress (environmental, physical, mental and emotional).

Tulsi has been revered in India over five thousand years, as a healing balm for body, mind and spirit and is known to bestow an amazing number of health benefits. Three varieties of Tulsi are-

- Rama or Light Tulsi (*Ocimum Sanctum*)
- Shyama or Dark Tulsi (*Ocimum Sanctum*)
- Vana Tulsi (*Ocimum Gratissimum*)

Plant Anatomy:

<b>Kingdom</b>	:	Plantae
<b>Division</b>	:	Magnoliophyta
<b>Class</b>	:	Magnoliopsida
<b>Order</b>	:	Lamiales
<b>Family</b>	:	Lamiaceae
<b>Genus</b>	:	Ocimum
<b>Species</b>	:	O.tenuiflorum

**Health Benefits of Tulsi:**

- Relives stress/adaptogen
- Boosts immunity
- Enhance stamina
- provide support during cold
- promotes healthy metabolism
- A natural immuno modulator

“Modern scientific research offers impressive evidence that Tulsi reduces stress, enhance stamina, relieve inflammation, prevent gastric ulcer, lower fever, improve digestion and provides supply antioxidants and other nutrients. Tulsi is especially effective in supporting the heart, blood vessels, liver and lungs and also regulates blood pressure and blood sugar”. (Dr. Ralph Miller, former director of research for the Canadian Dept. of Health and welfare).

The unique chemistry of Tulsi highly complex. Tulsi contain hundreds of beneficial compound known as phytochemicals, working together these compounds possess strong antioxidant, antibacterial, antiviral, adaptogenic and immune enhancing properties that promote General Health and support the body's natural defence against stress and disease. The oil in the leaves of Tulsi that contribute to the fragrance and refreshing flavour of Tulsi, are particularly rich source of valuable phytochemicals.

**Tulsi is an antioxidant**

Antioxidants slow down the process of excess oxidation and protect cells from the damage caused by free radicals. When cells are attacked by free radicals, excess oxidants occur which damage and destroy cells. antioxidant stops this process. The cellular damage caused by free radicals can be responsible for causing many diseases. Tulsi is rich in antioxidant and is recommended to guard against free radicals and protect from damage excess oxidation.

**Tulsi is an adaptogen:**

An adaptogen is an agent that help the body adapt more efficiently to stress. adaptogen reduce the intensity and negative impact of stress caused by tension emotional difficulties, poor life style habits, disease and infection, pollution and other factors Tulsi is one of the most effective adaptogen known.

**Tulsi is an immuno-modulator**

An immuno modulator is an agent that balance and improve of the body is fighting antigens like disease causing agents such as bacteria, viruses microbes, allergens etc, And maintaining health. Tulsi is one of the effective immuno modulator.

**Tulsi is a flavouring agent:**

Tulsi is commonly used in North India for flavouring tea and other hot drink. because of adding the distinct flavour. It also add as a medicinal element with its Ayurvedic benefits.

**Tulsi in Ayurveda:**

There are many benefits that Tulsi imparts that are mentioned in Ayurveda texts. these are-

1. **Healing power:** The tulsi plant has many medicinal properties. The leaves are a tonic and also sharpen memory. They promote the removal of the catarrhal matter and phlegm from the bronchial tube. The seed of the plant are mucilaginous.
2. **fever and common cold:** The leaves of basil are specific for may fevers. During the rainy season when malaria and dengue fever are widely prevalent tender, leaves, boiled with Tea, act as preventive against these disease in case of acute fevers, a decoction of the leaves boiled with powder cardamom in half a litre of water and mix with sugar and milk bring down the temperature. The juice of tulsi leaves can be used to bring down fever. Extract of Tulsi leaves in freshwater should be given every 2 to 3 hours. In between one can keep giving sips of cold water. In children, it is very effective in bringing down the temperature.
3. **Coughs:** Tulsi is an important constituent of many Ayurvedic cough syrups and expectorants. It help to mobilize mucus in bronchitis and asthma. Chewing Tulsi leaves relief cold and flu.
4. **Sore throat:** Water boiled with basil leaves can be taken as drink in case of sore throat. This water can also be used as a gargle.
5. **Respiratory disorder:** The herb is useful in the treatment of respiratory system disorder. A decoction of the leaves, with honey and ginger is an effective remedy for bronchitis, asthma, influenza, cough and cold. A decoction if the leaves, cloves and common salt also gives immediate relief in case of influenza. They should be boiled in half liter of water till only half the water is left and then taken.
6. **Kidney Stone:** Basil has strengthening effect on the kidney. In case of renal stone the juice of basil leaves and honey, if taken regularly for 6 months it will expel them via the urinary tract.
7. **Heart disorder:** Basil has a beneficial effect in cardiac disease and the weakness resulting from them. It reduces the level of blood cholesterol.
8. **Children's ailments:** Common pediatric problems like cough cold, fever, diarrhea and vomiting respond favorably to the juice of basil leaves. If pustules of chickenpox delay there appearance, basil leaves taken will saffron with hasten them.
9. **Stress:** Basil leaves are regarded as an 'adaptogen' or anti stress agent. Recent studies have shown that the leaves afford significant production against stress. Even healthy persons can chew 12 leaves of the basil, twice a day, to prevent stress. It purifies blood and helps prevent several common elements.
10. **Mouth Infections:** The leaves are quit effective for the ulcer ad infections in the mouth. A few leaves chewed will cure these conditions.
11. **Insect Bites:** The herb is prophylactic or preventive and curative for insect stings or bites. A teaspoonful of the juice of the leaves is taken and is repeated after a few hours. Fresh juice must also be applied to the affected parts. A paste of fresh roots is also effective in case of bites of insects and leeches.
12. **Skin disorders:** Applies locally, basil juice is beneficial in the treatment of ringworm and other skin diseases. It has also been tried successfully by some naturopaths in the treatment of leucoderma.
13. **Teeth disorder:** The herb is useful in teeth disorders. Its leaves, dried in the sun and powdered, can be used for brushing teeth. It can also be mixed with mustered oil to make a paste and used as toothpaste. This is very good for maintaining dental health, counteracting bad breath and for massaging the gums. It is also useful in pyorrhea and other teeth disorders.
14. **Headaches:** Basil makes a good medicine for headache. A decoction of the leaves can be given for this disorder. Pounded leaves mixed with sandalwood paste can also be applied on the forehead for getting relief from heat, headache, and for providing coolness in general.
15. **Eye disorders:** Basil juice is an effectively remedy for sore eyes and night-blindness, which is generally caused by deficiency of Vitamin A. Two drops of black basil juice are put into the eyes daily at bedtime.

16. Jaundice: Basil is the best medicine for jaundice. Take ten basil leaves with 10gm of radish juice and consume 10gm with jaggery regularly for one month thrice daily to cure jaundice.
17. Piles: Eat three to five basil leaves everyday. Put five basil leaves in drinking water before half an hour. This cures piles. Grind the basil leaves and apply the paste on the hemorrhoids and half a piece of camphor in this paste and avoid hot and spicy food items. Restrict sour food items totally for complete relief.
18. Stomachache: Basil leaves cure the stomachache. Consuming one spoon each of basil and ginger juice cures cramps and stomachache.
19. Stomach Worm: Heat the basil and ginger juice and take one spoon for two days at an interval of three hours to cure stomach worms, they are evacuated with stools.
20. Acidity: Make a powder out of flower of basil, skin of neem, small pipal and black pepper and take three gm of this powder on empty stomach to cure acidity. This cures the disease within 4-5 days.
21. Thickening the sperm: Basil cures seminal problems; take 50gm each of basil seeds and sugar candy and take 2.5gm of this powder with milk every morning. If the basil seeds are not available then basil roots can be taken with sugar candy. The basil roots are also beneficial for strengthening and thickening and bring back the masculinity.
22. Ayurvedic Tulsi preparations have significantly reduced the symptoms of viral hepatitis.
23. In diabetics it helps in lowering the blood sugar level.
24. It raises the human body immunity by increasing the antibody.

#### Medical Uses of Tulsi (Holy basil) Leaves and Powder:

Tulsi is hot, bitter, increases the digestive fibre, beneficial for the heart, increases the bile and cures leprosy, burning sensation in the urine, blood impurities, pain due to stones, kapha and vata.

Holy Basil is mainly used for curing cold and kapha. Black Basil also known as Shyama Tulsi is used along with black pepper to remove kapha from the lungs. It is effective in curing fever. The dry basil leaves powder is used for curing kapha. The oil cooked with basil paste is useful in ear pain and nose problem along with lemon it is used for curing eczema and ringworm. The seeds are useful for increasing the potency in men. The leaves, seeds, flower, skin, stem and roots are useful for curing all diseases of the body. The atmosphere is absolutely clean and pure where Basil plant is grown and the lightning does not strike that place. It protects from smallpox and malaria as well. Tulsi has proved to be an infallible remedy for poor digestion, lack of appetite, constipation, flatulence, acidity and other disorders of the digestive tract.

#### Disease in Women:

- Excessive bleeding can be gradually reduced with two gms of each dry ginger, gum of neem tree, ajwan seeds, tamal patra, and equal amount of five parts of the Tulsi plant ground into powder. The powder is boiled in 100gms of water till one-fourth of the water remains. The extract is cooled and strained.
- If half a glass of water boiled with Tulsi leaves is taken for each of the three days starting from the day of menstruation, the probability of conception is greatly reduced.
- Itching of the skin over the abdomen and the breasts of a pregnant woman is relieved by the application of paste of Van Tulsi.
- Application of medicated oil prepared with 15 gms of Van Tulsi leaves in 500 gms of sesame oil previously subjected to the process of 'moorchhana' relieves the pains associated with confinement.

- Regular use of powdered roots of Tulsi enfolded in betel leaves stop the bleeding of the internal of the stomach.
- Tulsi will make the uterus healthy and strong.

#### Disease in Men

- In case of difficulty in stopping urination, drink Tulsi juice added to double quantity of grape juice, sugarcane juice or coconut milk.
- Tulsi seeds yield a very sticky paste, which is useful in disorders of the urinary tract.
- Tulsi seeds ground with cumin seeds and sugar, taken with milk, are efficacious in the treatment of pains caused by stones in the bladder, burning sensation while passing urine and inflammation in the perianal region.
- Crushed Tulsi seeds taken with honey will cure all abnormalities of the genita system.
- Regular use of Tulsi seeds eliminates pain accompanying urination.
- Powdered Shyam Tulsi mixed with lemon juice, if taken regularly, cures all abnormalities of the urinary system.

#### Disease in children

- To maintain children's health two gm of Tulsi juice three to four times a day will prevent all types of sickness.
- If the abdomen of a baby is distended due to the accumulation of gas, the condition can be relieved by giving it five to ten gm of Tulsi juice, the exact amount given depending on the age of the baby.
- In case of diarrhea accompanying teething, powdered Tulsi leaves should be given to the child with pomegranate syrup.
- Massaging the gums with Tulsi leaf juice mixed with honey will help the baby cut its teeth easily, without the usual troubles associated with teething.
- Five to ten drops of Tulsi leaf juice given with water every day will strengthen the muscles and bones of the infant.
- Powdered bark of Tulsi roots given with honey helps an obese child to shed some of the fat.
- Extract of Tulsi is an effective remedy for liver disorder of children.

#### Cultural Importance

Tulsi is sacred plant dearer to the Lord Vishnu. Tulsi symbolises purity. It is considered as the holy plant in the Indian subcontinent. Tulsi got its name from Tulasi Devi, who was one of the Lord Krishna's eternal consorts. In India people grow Tulsi as the religious plant and worship it. Its leaves are used in temples for the worship purpose and also on the several occasions such as marriage. According to one story, Tulsi was a Gopi who fell in love with Krishna and so had a curse laid on her by his consort Radha. She is very dear to Vishnu. Tulsi is also mentioned in the story of Mira and Radha immortalized in Jayadeva's Geeta Govinda. A Hindu house is considered incomplete without the tulsi plant in the courtyard. Tulsi is believed to promote longevity and life long happiness. Hindus perform special Tulsi Puja in the Kartik month which starts after Sharad Purnima. It is the time of the Tulsi Vivah (marriage). On this day Tulsi is decorated and coloured as a bride. Even today people in India maintain a potted Tulsi plant. The women water the plant, Light up the diya near it and worship it daily. The stems, leaves, seed and even the soil are considered as holy. According to the ancient texts Tulsi is glorified as the one who helps in bringing people closer to the divine.

## Conclusion:

The healthy look is in and fitness has become a religion for present generation, so is the mindless gulping of supplementary pill to sustain and boost their system. In fact, according to medical consultation they could even prove to be fatal for life. Instead if they choose the nature's products, they would not only benefit immensely, but also can cut cost to by those bitter pills to great extent. Such vilatizer is freely available in nature is ubiquitous 'Tulsi' or Holy basil. It contain phytochemicals working together these compounds process antioxidant, antibacterial and immune enhancing properties that maintain good health status. So, it can be concluded that Holy Basil or Tulsi is it traditionally and clinical proverb medicinal herb for both its application and efficacy.

## REFERENCES

1. Ganju L, Karan D, Chada S, Shrivastava KK, Sawhney RC, Selvamurthy W (Sep 2003) "Immunomodulator effect of agents of plant origin" Biomed Pharlna-cother.
2. Charaka samhita C.Ed. Translation by the shree Gulabkun-verba society, Volume 4. Chikitsa sthana, Jamnagar India: 1949.
3. Indian Ministry of health and family planning. The Ayurvedic formulary of India. Part 1.1st ed. Delhi 1978.
4. Warrier PK (1995) Indian Medicinal Plants. Orient Longman. P. 168.
5. Indian J. Exp Biol (1999) Mar; 37(3)248-52.
6. Puri, Harbans Singh (2002). Rasayana: Ayurvedic Herbs for Longevity and Rejuvenation. CRC Press PP. 272-280.
7. Evaluation of Hypoglycarmic and Antioxidants Effect of Ocimum Sanctum. Jyoti Sethi, Sushma Stood, Shashi Seth and Anjana Talwar. Indian Journal of Clinical Biochemistry 2004, 19(2) 152-155.
8. Vishnu Purana, geeta press, 2017.
9. Ramcharitmanas, geeta press, 2015.
10. Tulsimanjari of Acharya Mahapragya, translated by Dr. Sadhvi Akshayprabha
11. [www.indianetozen.com](http://www.indianetozen.com)
12. [www.thecolorsfindia.com](http://www.thecolorsfindia.com)
13. [www.tulsi.com](http://www.tulsi.com)
14. [http/en/wikepedia.org](http://en/wikepedia.org)
15. [http/Hinduism.about.com](http://Hinduism.about.com)