



## Review Article

## Momentousness of Upaskar (spices) for maintaining good health- An ancient traditional ayurvedic approach

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## ABSTRACT

Since ages Spices or condiment are perceived to be closely connected to food habit, cultural traditions, preservation and also to the medicinal use by a section of society as per their practice and experience. In so far as our country India is concerned, it is commonly pronounced as the “Spice Bowl of the World” and history of Indian spices is almost as old as the ‘human civilization of Spices. These are used as one of the main ingredient of our routine or regular food. Scattered descriptions about these are available in ancient scriptures as therapeutic / protective activity in addition to their taste enhancing activity. Sour tasting substances like Amlikā (Tamarind), Dāḍima (Pomegranate), Nimbū (Lemon) and others are being described under the Hṛīdyā varga (cardiac stimulant section) of Āyurveda. These substances by stimulating Bodhaka Kapha increase the taste in food. Hiṅgu (Asafoetida), Mirca (Black pepper), Sauṃpha (Fennel) are substances which stimulate hunger and hence are called digestive substances. In the same way Rāī (Brown mustard seeds), Adaraka (Wet ginger root), etc. substances are specifically helpful in digestion and hence are called digestive substances.

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## 1. Introduction

Complexity and subtle use of herbs & spices characterize Indian food and Indian cuisine. These spices play crucial role in Indian cooking. It is a common popular myth that if there are no spices, it's not Indian food. We Indians have a usual practice or habit of spicing up our food to make it more hot and tasty. Some of the spices are required for the aroma, some for flavor and some for complimenting other spices. Spices are defined as “a strongly flavored or aromatic substance of vegetable origin, obtained from tropical plants, commonly used as a condiment”. In Āyurveda it is called ‘Upaskara’<sup>1</sup> and ‘Sambhāra’.<sup>2</sup> Spices were once as precious as gold. India plays a very important role in the spice market

of the world. In ancient times majority of the spices were produced in India and exported worldwide. It was then; the spices of India attracted people across the borders and forced them to come to India for Spice trade.

‘Masāla’ is a word very commonly used in Indian cooking and is simply the Hindi word for “spice.” So, whenever a combination of spices, herbs and other condiments are ground or blended together, it is called ‘masala’. In India from ancient times palatable recipes and spices are prepared with the combination of these tasteful, carminative and digestive ingredients. If we cautiously observe, it could be adequately acknowledged that there are many ayurvedic plants are either used as food as culled out as nutraceutical under schedule IV of FSSAI or used as spices since, these delicious recipes enhance digestive vigor

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and induce easy digestion. An attempt has been to segregate a list of such items ie spices and condiments in treatment of various kinds of diseases, which are detailed as follows:

**Ajavāyana - Botanical name:** *Trachyspermum ammi* (L.) Sprague;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Apiaceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit-** *Yavāni*, **Hindi-** Ajwain, ajwaayan, Javayan, Ajwan; **Common English Name:** The Bishop's weed, Ajova seeds

**Properties and Uses:** *Ajavāyana* is pungent and bitter, penetrating, hot in potency, adds taste, light in attribute, carminative, digestive, cardiotoxic; alleviates *Kapha* and *Vāta*; aggravates *Pitta*; treats analgesia, abdominal disorders, flatulence, *Gulma* and seminal disorders.

In case of addiction to alcohol, boil 1/2 kg of thymol seeds in 4 liters of water until reduced to 2 liters. Strain it and store. Use one cup of this drink before meals regularly. It also protects the liver and reduces the desire for alcohol.<sup>5-18</sup>

**Āmalakī - Botanical name:** *Phyllanthus emblica* L.<sup>3,4</sup>; **Family:** Euphorbiaceae<sup>3,4</sup>; **Sanskrit-** *Āmalkī*, *Dhātrīphalam*, *Śrīphalāh*, *Amrtaphalam*, **Hindi-** Aamla, Aavla, Aavada; **English:** Emblic myrobalan tree

**Properties and Uses:** *Āmalakī* is well known among rejuvenating drugs. It is an antidiarrheal, diuretic, blood purifier and tastant. It treats diarrhea, *Prameha*, burning sensation, jaundice, hyperacidity, anaemia, dyspepsia, dyspnea. It is ophthalmic and longevity promoter alleviates *Vāta* due to the acidic taste, *Pitta* due to sweet and cold properties and *Kapha* due to dry and astringent properties.<sup>9-11,19-22</sup>

**Āma- Botanical name:** *Mangifera indica* L.<sup>3,4</sup>; **Family:** Anacardiaceae<sup>3,4</sup>; **Sanskrit-** *Āmra*; **Hindi-** Aam; **Common English Name:** Mango tree

**Properties and Uses:** The unripe fruit of mango is astringent-sour in taste, and pacifies *Kapha*. It treats vitiation of *Vātapitta*, is dry, heavy in attribute, and causes common cold and anorexia. Its excessive use may be harmful.<sup>10,12,13,15-17</sup>

**Ārdraka- Botanical name:** *Zingiber officinale* Roscoe;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family-** Zingiberaceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit-** *Ārdrakama*, *Śṛṅgverum*; **Hindi-** Adrakh, Aadi; **English-** Wet ginger root

**Properties and Uses:** It is sharp, hot in potency, carminative, pungent, dry in attribute, post digestive effect is sweet and alleviates *Kaphavāta*. It is used in food preparations due to its digestive and carminative properties. Its dried form is known as *Śunthī*. It bears same properties like *Ārdraka*.

It is used as a stimulant and carminative agent. Take a small quantity of ginger along with 3-4 morsels of food to enhance appetite. Ginger taken just after meals helps in easy digestion of food.<sup>8,11,13-16,20,23</sup>

**Bṛhadailā- Botanical name:** *Amomum subulatum* Roxb.<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Zingiberaceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit:** *Sthūlailā*,

*Bhadrailā*, *Bṛhadelā*; **Hindi-** Badi ilaychi; **Common English Name:** Greater cardamom

**Properties and Uses:** Its aromatic black seeds are used in spices as well as sweets. It is digestive, alleviates *Pitta*; hypnotic, tastant, cardiotoxic, hepatostimulant. Its intake alleviates *Pitta* disorders.<sup>8,9,11-13,15,16,19,23</sup>

**Chuhārā- Botanical name:** *Phoenix sylvestris* (L.) Roxb.<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Arecaceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit-** *Kharjūra*; **Hindi-** *Pindkhajura*, *Chuhaara*, *Chohaara*; **Common English Name:** Date palm

**Properties and Uses:** It is red and yellowish-brown coloured berry. Its endocarp is fleshy and sweet. It is sweet, coolant, heavy, oily, tastant, cardiotoxic, spermatogenic, carminative, strength promoting, nutritive. It treats fever, diarrhea, injury, hyperthirst, cough, dyspnea, syncope, vomiting, tuberculosis, *Raktapitta*, burning sensation, alcoholism; alleviates *Vātapitta*.<sup>11,15,16</sup>

**Citraka- Botanical name:** *Plumbago zeylanica* L.<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Plumbaginaceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit-** *Citrakāh*, *Analanāmā*, *Pāthī*, *Vyāla*, *Ūṣaṇa*; **Hindi:** *Cheeta*, *Chitta*, *Chitrak*, *Chituar*; **Common English Name:** Ceylon leadwort

**Properties and Uses:** It is carminative, dry and light in attribute; pungent and bitter in taste; hot in potency and adds taste. It treats sprue, *Āma* associated disorders, leprosy, inflammation, worm infestation and abdominal pain; alleviates *Tridoṣa*.<sup>8,10,12,13,16,17,19</sup>

**Dāḍima- Botanical name:** *Punica granatum* L.<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Lythraceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit-** *Dāḍima* **Hindi-** *Anaar* **Common English Name:** Pomegranate.

**Properties and Uses:** Not only *Dāḍima* fruit but the whole plant part has medicinal properties. It alleviates *Tridoṣa* and hyperthirst; digestive, light, mucilaginous, brain tonic, tonic and carminative. It treats burning sensation, cardiac disorders, halitosis and throat disorders.<sup>9,10,15-17,19</sup>

**Dhānyaka- Botanical name** *Coriandrum sativum* L.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Apiaceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit:** *Dhānyakam*, *Dhānakam*, *Dhānyam*, *Dhānā*, *Dhāneyakam*, *Kunaṭī*, *Chatrā*, *Vitunnakam*; **Hindi :** *Dhaniya*; **Common English Name:** Coriander, Coriander Fruit.

**Properties and Uses:** Astringent, bitter, sweet and pungent in taste; post digestive effect is sweet; hot in potency; light and mucilaginous in attribute; tastant, carminative, digestive and antidiarrheal. It is used in food preparations due to its specific properties. Adds taste due to its aromatic property and alleviates *Pitta* due to cold potency.<sup>12,13,15-17</sup>

Store dry coriander powder mixed with 4 parts of crystal sugar in a bottle. Take one teaspoon twice daily along with water in acidity. It also acts as a diuretic.<sup>5,6</sup>

**Elā- Botanical name:** *Elettaria cardamomum* (L.) Maton;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Zingiberaceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit-** *Elā*, *Sūkṣmā*, *Truṭi*, *Sūkṣmaila*; **Hindi-** *Choṭī ilaychi*, *Safed ilaychi*; **Common English Name:** Lesser cardamom

**Properties and Uses:** Green cardamom (Elā) is light and dry in attribute; pungent and sweet in taste. Post digestive effect is sweet; cold in potency and alleviates Tridoṣa. It alleviates Kapha. It is bitter, pungent in taste, hot in potency and light in attribute. It pacifies Vāta, Kapha, treats dyspnea, bodyache, nausea, dysuria and toxicity. It pacifies loss of taste; is aphrodisiac, cardiac and considered harmful during pregnancy. It is carminative, digestive, memory enhancer; treats wound, hemorrhoids, pruritus and cough.<sup>10,12–17</sup> Application of cardamom powder along with honey inside the oral cavity cures stomatitis (mouth ulcers).<sup>5,6</sup>

**Haridrā- Botanical name:** Curcuma longa L.<sup>3,4</sup>  
**Family:** Zingiberaceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit-** Haridrā, Kācanī, Pītā, Niādhyā; **Hindi-**Haladi, Haldi, Hardi, Hardee; **Common English Name:** Turmeric

**Properties and Uses:** Bitter and pungent in taste; dry and light in attribute; post digestive effect is pungent; hot in potency; alleviates Kaphavāta due to hot potency and alleviates Pitta due to bitter taste. Tasant and carminative; useful in anorexia, constipation, jaundice and ascites.<sup>10–17</sup> In pyorrhoea, halitosis (foul breath) and tooth diseases, massage the gums regularly with a mixture of turmeric, salt and a small quantity of mustard oil.<sup>5,6</sup>

**Hiṅgu- Botanical name:** Ferula narthex Boiss.<sup>3,4</sup>  
**Family:** Apiaceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit-** Hiṅgu, Rāmatham, Vāhlikam, Jatukam, Sahasavedhi; **Hindi-**Heenga; **Common English Name:** Asafoetida

**Properties and Uses:** It is pungent in taste; hot in potency; light, sharp and mucilaginous in attribute. Acts as a digestive and carminative due to its pungent and hot properties. Acts as an analgesic and vermucidal due to mucilaginous and sharp properties. Useful in dyspepsia, flatulence, Gulma, abdominal pain and constipation due to carminative property. It enhance the taste due to aromatic and tasant properties.<sup>12–14,17</sup> It is used as a carminative agent (The drug which is used in treatment of gastritis).<sup>5,6</sup>

**Jātiphala- Botanical name:** Myristica fragrans Houtt.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Myristicaceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit-** Jātiphalam, Jātkoam, Mālatīphalam; **Hindi-** Jayaphal, Jayaphar; **Common English Name:** Nutmeg.

**Properties and Uses:** It is bitter, pungent, sharp, hot in potency, tasant, cardiogenic, voice enhancer; alleviates Kaphavāta, vomiting, dyspnea, inflammation and rhinitis.<sup>16,17</sup>

**Jāvitrī- Botanical name:** Myristica fragrans Houtt.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Myristicaceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit:** Jātipatrī; **Hindi:** Jaavitri, Jayatri; **Common English Name:** Mace, Nutmeg aril.

**Properties and Uses:** Scarlet and pale yellow aril part of Jāyaphala is known as Jāvitrī. It is well known by the name of Mālatīpatrikā, Sumanpatrikā and Jātipatrī. Pungent and bitter in taste; light in attribute; hot in potency; tasant, complexion enhancer; aggravates Kapha. Treats emesis, dyspnea, excessive thirst, worm infestation and

poisoning.<sup>16,17</sup>

**Jiraka (Kṛṣṇa)- Botanical name:** Cuminum cyminum L.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Apiaceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit-** Kṛṣṇajīraḥ, Udgāraodhanah, Kālājājī, Suṣavī, Sugandhaḥ; **Hindi-** Kaala jeera, Syaha jeera; **Common English Name:** Common caraway, Black caraway seeds.

**Properties and Uses:** It is pungent in taste, hot in potency; alleviates Kapha and inflammation. Tasant, febrifuge, ophthalmic, antidiarrheal. It is used in different food preparations due to its specific properties<sup>13, 15,16, 17</sup>. In urinary diseases and leucorrhoea, boil 3–4 gm of cumin seeds in water, strain the solution and take it with crystal sugar<sup>5,6</sup>.

**Jiraka (Śweta)- Botanical name:** Carum carvi L.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Apiaceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit-** Śukaljīraḥ, Jīraḥ, Jarṇah, Ajājī; **Hindi-** Jeera, Saada jeera, Sadharan Jeera, Safed jeera; **Common English Name:** Cumin

**Properties and Uses:** It is described as coolant and tasant in Rajanighaṅṭu. It is pungent and sweet in taste, carminative, vermucidal, ophthalmic; useful in poisoning and flatulence.<sup>12,15–17</sup> Intake of 4–6 gm powdered roasted cumin seeds along with yogurt or diluted yogurt (lassī) gives immediate relief in diarrhoea.<sup>5,6</sup>

**Kaidarya (Karīpattā)- Botanical name:** Murraya koenigii (L.) Spreng.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Rutaceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit-** Kaidarya, Kaṭarya, Surabhinimba; **Hindi-** Karipatta, Katneem, Meetha neem; **Common English Name:** Curry leaf tree.

**Properties and Uses:** From ancient times the curry leaf has been used in India. Its wet or dried leaves fried in Ghṛta (Clarified butter) or oil enhance the taste and flavor of Kaḍhi and Sāga. It is pungent, bitter, astringent, coolant, light; alleviates Pitta, inflammation, pruritus and poison.<sup>8,14,17,20</sup>

**Keara- Botanical name:** Crocus sativus L.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Iridaceae; **Sanskrit-** Kear; **Hindi-** Kesar; **Family:** Iridaceae **Common Name:** Saffron.

**Medicinal use:** Keara used for their emmenagogue (promoting the menstrual flow) and aphrodisiac activities. Pungent and bitter in taste; hot in potency; alleviates VĒtakapha. Acts as complexion enhancer, tasant, aromatic, wound purifier and tonic. Useful in cephalic disorders, wound, Sidhma, worm infestation, pruritus, emesis, hiccups, skin pigmentation, poisoning, throat pain, skin disorders.<sup>14–17</sup>

Intake of its infusion along with salt is useful in retention of urine. Intake of Kumkuma Madhūdaka yoga prepared from saffron paste, honey and water is useful in dysuria.<sup>24</sup>

**Kharbujā- Botanical name** Cucumis melo L.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Cucurbitaceae;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit:** Dañḅgulam, Kharbūjam, Madhuyākam, Madhuphalam; **Hindi:** Kharbuj, Kharbuj, Chibud; **Common English Name:** Melon

**Properties and Uses:** Muskmelon seeds shows wound healing activity. It treats in burning sensation, delirium, and mania; alleviates Vātipitta. It is useful in throat

disorders, oral disorders, cardiac disorders and abdominal disorders.<sup>13,14,16</sup>

**Lavaṅga- Botanical name:** Syzygium aromaticum (L.) Merr. & L.M. Perry.;<sup>3,4</sup>**Family:** Myrtaceae;<sup>3,4</sup>**Sanskrit:** Lavaṅgam; **Hindi :** Laung. Longa, Lavanga; **Common English Name:** Clove.

**Properties and Uses:** Bitter and pungent in taste; dry in attribute; cardiogenic, ophthalmic and digestive. Alleviates Kaphapitta; treats analgesia, cough and dyspnea. It is used in the form of spice due to its properties.<sup>13,14,16,17</sup>

Application of 4-5gm clove powder mixed with water over the forehead or temples relieves headache including migraine.<sup>5,6</sup>

**Marica (Kṛṣṇa)- Botanical name** Piper nigrum L.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:**<sup>3,4</sup> Piperaceae; **Sanskrit:**Maricam, Vellajam, Kṛṣṇam, Ūṣaṇam; **Hindi:**Maricha, Miracha, Gol marich; **Common English Name:** Black pepper

**Properties and Uses:** Pungent in taste; light and sharp in attribute; hot in potency. Alleviates Vāta due to its hot property; alleviates Kapha due to pungent, sharp and dry properties. It acts as a carminative, digestive, stomachic and sialogogue due to sharp and hot properties. Treats dyspepsia, anorexia, hepatic disorders, flatulence and abdominal disorders.<sup>9,10,13,14,16,17</sup>

Chewing 1-2 black peppercorns relieves cough and also helps in sleep, especially if coughing. Intake of 4-5 pounded black peppercorns mixed with one teaspoon of warm ghee and sugar is beneficial in urticarial.<sup>5,6</sup>

**Methikā- Botanical name:** Trigonella foenum-graecum L.;<sup>3,4</sup>**Family:** Fabaceae;<sup>3,4</sup>**Sanskrit:** Methikā, Methinī, Dīpanī, Bahupatrikā, Bodhinī, Bahubījā, Jyoti, Gandhaphalā, Vallarī, Candrikā-manthā, Mirapuṣpa, Keravī, Bahuparṇī; **Hindi:** Methi; **Common English Name:** Fenugreek, Greek hay, Greek clover

**Properties and Uses:** Pungent in taste; hot in potency; aggravates Raktapitta; alleviates Vāta; is tastant and carminative.<sup>10,16,20</sup>

Soak one teaspoon of fenugreek seeds in a cup of water overnight, next morning drink the water and chew the seeds. This is useful in diabetes and debility due to diabetes, Vāta diseases and cardiac diseases.<sup>5,6</sup>

**Mireyā- Botanical name:** Foeniculum vulgare Mill.;<sup>3,4</sup>**Family:** Apiaceae;<sup>3,4</sup>**Sanskrit:** Śatapušpā, Meryā; **Hindi :** Saunf, Badi saunf; **Common English Name:** Fennel fruit.

**Properties and Uses:** It is used as a mouth freshner and folk medicine from ancient times. In Madhurasandha section of Caraka Saṁhitā it is described by the name Chatrā and in Suruta Saṁhitā described by the name of Mii. Pungent, bitter and sweet in taste; hot in potency; mucilaginous in attribute; alleviates Vātapitta; carminative, digestive, aphrodisiac, cardiogenic, tonic and useful in burning sensation, abdominal disorders. It is used as a spice due to its specific properties<sup>11,12,14-16</sup>.

**Palāṇḍu- Botanical name:**Allium cepa L.;<sup>3,4</sup>**Family:** Liliaceae;<sup>3,4</sup>**Sanskrit:** Palāṇḍuḥ, Yavanēṣṭaḥ, Mukhadūṣakaḥ; **Hindi :** Piyaj, Pyaj; **Common English Name:** Bulb Onion

**Properties and Uses:** It has the same properties as garlic. Sweet in taste; post digestive effect is sweet; hot in potency; alleviates Vāta; aggravates Kaphapitta. It is used to enhance the taste. In Hārīta Saṁhitā,<sup>25</sup> it is described as Vātakaphāṁmaka and analgesic; useful in Gulma. According to Bhāvaprakāśa, its post digestive effect is sweet; strength imparting, spermatogenic and alleviates Vāta.<sup>15-17</sup>

External application of lukewarm onion juice as an ear and nasal drop (4 drops) quickly relieves earache and common cold, respectively.<sup>5,6</sup>

**Pippalī- Botanical name:** Piper longum L.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Piperaceae;<sup>3,4</sup>**Sanskrit:** Pippalī, Māgadhī, Kaṇā, Kṛṣṇā, Vaidehī, Capalā; **Hindi:**Peepar, Peepal; **Common English Name:** Long pepper, Dried-catkins.

**Properties and Uses:** Both varieties of Pippalī are used for medicinal purposes. In Caraka<sup>26</sup> and Suruta Saṁhitā,<sup>24</sup> Long pepper is described as a laxative substance. It is pungent in taste; light, sharp and mucilaginous in attribute; hot in potency; a mild laxative; useful in dyspnea, cough, abdominal disorders, fever, leprosy and rheumatoid arthritis. From ancient times, Long pepper is used as a spice.<sup>13-17,21</sup>

**Postadānā- Botanical name:** Papaver somniferum L.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Papaveraceae;<sup>3,4</sup>**Sanskrit:**Khākhasatila; **Hindi:**Postdaana, Daana, Khas-khas ke daane, Khas-beej; **Common English Name:** Popy seeds

**Properties and Uses:** Seeds of Ḍoḍā is known as Postadānā. It is sedative, nutritive, antidiarrheal and useful in oleation. It is used in sweets and pudding. It treats insomnia, general weakness, dry cough and bladder disorders alongwith honey or sugar.<sup>13,16</sup>

**Pūthīhā- Botanical name:** Mentha spicata L.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Lamiaceae;<sup>3,4</sup>**Sanskrit:** Pūthīhā, Poḍīnakaḥ; **Hindi :** Pudina, Pahari pudina; **Common English Name:** Mint.

**Properties and Uses:** Sweet and pungent in taste; light and dry in attribute; alleviates Kaphavāta. Tastant, cardiogenic, aromatic and tonic. It treats dyspepsia, hepatic disorders, anorexia and worm infestation.<sup>17,27,28</sup>

**Rājīkā- Botanical name** Brassica nigra (L.) Koch.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Brassicaceae;<sup>3,4</sup>**Sanskrit:** Rājī, Rājīkā, Tīkṣṇagandhā, Kṣujjanikā, Āsurī; **Hindi :** Rai, Laal rai, Makda rai; **Common English Name:** Indian mustard

**Properties and Uses:** Pungent and bitter in taste; hot in potency; tastant, carminative; treats anorexia, constipation, jaundice and ascites. Alleviates Kaphavāta due to its hot property and alleviates Pitta due to bitter taste.<sup>8,10,14,16</sup>

**Rasona- Botanical name:** Allium sativum L.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** Liliaceae;<sup>3,4</sup>**Sanskrit:** Launaḥ, Rasonaḥ; **Hindi :** Lahsun, Lasun; **Common English Name:** Garlic.

**Properties and Uses:** Sweet and pungent in taste; post digestive effect is pungent; mucilaginous, cardiotoxic, tastant, tonic, union promoter, nutrient, rejuvenator and alleviates Kaphavāta.<sup>13,14,16,17</sup>

**Properties and Uses:** Garlic is a strong bacteriostatic agent. It is recommended in high blood pressure and atherosclerosis. It has been reported to lower blood cholesterol. Soak 1 piece of chopped garlic in water overnight.<sup>5,6</sup>

**Śaileya- Botanical name:** *Parmelia perlata* (Huds.) Ach.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** *Parmeliaceae*;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit:** Śaileyam, Śīlāpuṣpam, Vṛddhim; **Hindi:** Chareela, Bhurichareela, Pattharphool; **Common English Name:** Stone flowers, Yellow Lichen.

**Properties and Uses:** It is cold in potency; adds taste, light; alleviates cough and fever. Treats poisoning, burning sensation, blood disorders, pruritus, leprosy, calculus and cardiac disorders. It is mostly used as a spice.<sup>8–10,12,16</sup>

**Śītalacī- Botanical name:** *Piper cubeba* L. f.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** *Piperaceae*;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit:** *Kaṅkolah*; **Hindi:** Shital chini, Kabaab chini, Kankola, Sheetal marich; **Common English Name:** Cubebs.

**Properties and Uses:** Bitter in taste; light and sharp in attribute; hot in potency; cardiotoxic; tastant; alleviates Kaphavāta; treats cardiac disorders, halitosis, worm infestation and dyspepsia.<sup>9–11,15</sup>

**Tālīsapatra- Botanical name:** *Abies webbiana* (Wall. ex D. Don) Lindl.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** *Pinaceae*.<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit:** Tālīsam, Patrāḍhyam, Dhātīpatram; **Hindi:** Taalīsapatra; **Common English Name:** Himalayan silver fir.

**Properties and Uses:** It is mentioned as Śīrovirecaka dravya in *Suruta Saṁhitā*. According to *Caraka Saṁhitā*, it is useful in tuberculosis in the form of Tālīsādi chūrṇa and Vaṭī. It is carminative, cardiotoxic; alleviates Kaphapitta; useful in cough, dyspnea and oral disorders.<sup>16,17</sup>

**Tejpatra- Botanical name:** *Cinnamomum tamala* (Buch.-Ham.) T. Nees & Eberm.;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** *Lauraceae*;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit:** Patram, Tamālapatram, Patrakam; **Hindi:** Tamaalpatra, Patraj, Tejpatra, Tejpatra, Tejpaat; **Common English Name:** Indian bay-leaf.

**Properties and Uses:** It is sweet in taste; sharp and light in attribute; hot in potency; alleviates Kaphavāta; useful in anorexia, flatulence, abdominal pain, diarrhea, Kapha disorders, digestive disorders and uterine disorders. It is useful in paediatric disorders and rheumatoid arthritis due to its Vāta alleviating property.<sup>13,15–17</sup>

**Twaka- Botanical name:** *Cinnamomum verum* J. Presl;<sup>3,4</sup> **Family:** *Lauraceae*;<sup>3,4</sup> **Sanskrit:** Dārusitā, Svādvī; **Hindi:** Dalchini, Darchini; **Common English Name:** Cinnamon bark.

**Properties and Uses:** It is sweet and bitter in taste; hot in potency; alleviates Vātapitta; antidiarrheal, aromatic; useful in excessive thirst and stomatitis. It is useful in abdominal disorders due to its carminative property.<sup>12,13,15,16</sup> It promotes digestion and relieves cold, cough and congestion

when used as a decoction along with cardamom, ginger and clove.<sup>5,6</sup>

## 2. Conclusion

Health is the base of four objectives of human endeavor (*Purushārtha-chatustya*) i.e., Dharma means righteousness (moral value), Artha means prosperity (economic value), Kāma means pleasure or love (psychological value) and Mokṣa means liberation (spiritual value). For living a happy and healthy life it is very important to follow Ayurveda preachings. Use of only salutary diet promotes health of an individual and maleficent diet is the cause of all diseases. Sapidity and palatability is known to be one of the chief characters of salutary diet. While defining the properties of salutary diet in *Caraka Saṁhitā*, it is said that this type of palatable, fresh and mucilaginous food promotes health.

Palatable food prepared from the spices is beneficial only when taken in an appropriate quantity. It is a secret that a self controlled person can enjoy the actual pleasure of various delicious foods prepared from these spices only, when the earlier consumed food is completely digested because hunger enhances the palatability.

## 3. Conflicts of Interest

All contributing authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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