



Review Article on Contraceptive Activity of *Palash* (*Butea Monosperma* Lamk. Taub)

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ABSTRACT

The search for safe and effective natural contraceptives has gained importance in recent years. *Palash* (*Butea monosperma*), a medicinal plant extensively documented in *Ayurvedic* literature, having various useful parts (seed, fruit, leaf, root) traditionally used for various therapeutic purposes like *krumi* (worm infestation), *Atisara* (Diarrhoea), *Pradara* (leucorrhoea), *Kushta* (Skin diseases), *Asti bhanga* (Fracture), *Vatarakta* (gout), *Apasmara* (epilepsy), *Prameha* (Diabetic), etc, including its potential as a contraceptive (*grabh nirodhaka*). Despite its historical use, scientific validation of its contraceptive efficacy remains limited. This study aims to evaluate the contraceptive activity of *Palash*.

Keywords- *Palash*, *garbhnirodhaka*, *palash* seeds.



INTRODUCTION

Palash (*Butea monosperma* Lamk. Taub)¹, is medium-sized deciduous tree that grows upto 50 ft. height, having crooked trunk and irregular branches, belonging to the family Fabaceae, is found through out India. It is the most important plants for the *Yagnya* (ritual) according to vedic literature. Its gum (red coloured) is also described in vedic texts (Jai. Bra. 1/3/53). *Palash* is considered as the best among the herbs and is quoted as *Medhajanana* in *Koushika sutra*. *Palash* paste is applied externally in case of *Jalodara* (ascites). It is also used in *Krumi roga* while *Keshava Paddhati* described it as panacea (Ke. Pa. 4/25/20). Though *Bruhat Trayi* quoted it extensively, Charaka did not include it under any of the *vargas*. *Sushruta* and *Vagbhata* described it under four *ganas*. *Charaka* mentioned it in the management of *Arsha*, *Atisara*, *Raktapitta*, *Kushta*, *Raktaja Gulma* etc.²

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Botanical Name- *Butea monosperma* (Lam.) Kuntz. (B-frondodsa Koen ex. Roxb.)

Family- Fabaceae

Vernacular names of *Palash*³

Sanskrit	Kimshuk, Vakrapushpa, Bhramavruksha, Raktapushpa, Palash
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Hindi	Dhak, Palas
English	Flame of forest, Bastard teak
Marathi	Palas,
Gujarati	Khakara, Khakda, Khakhado, Khakhar, Khakar, Kesuda
Kannada	Muttagamara, Muttug, Muttulu
Konkani	Palash
Malayalam	Plasu, Pilacham, Palashin, Palash
Bengali	Palas, Palash Gaccha
Oriya	Porasur
Punjabi	Chichara, Dhak, Palas
Assamese	Palash
Kashmiri	Dhak
Urdu	Dhak, Tesu

Synonyms⁴

<i>Palash</i>	Leaves are beautiful
<i>Kimshuk</i>	Flowers looks like beak of parrot
<i>Triparna</i>	Three foliate leaves
<i>Raktapushpa</i>	Flowers are of red colour
<i>Yadnyik</i>	Used in <i>yajna</i> since vedic period
<i>Beejsneha</i>	Seeds are oily
<i>Samidvara</i>	Describing its usefulness in rituals as <i>samidha</i>
<i>Krumighna</i>	Pacifies <i>krumi</i>

Classical categorization⁵

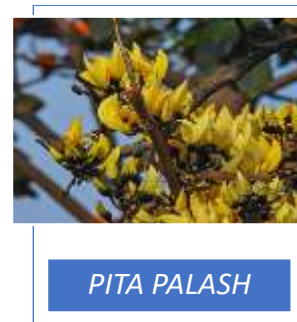
<i>Caraka</i>	Not mentioned in <i>Varga</i>
<i>Sushruta</i>	<i>Muškakadi gana, Ambasthadi gana, Nyagrodhadi gana, Rodhradi gaṇa</i>
<i>Vagbhaṭa</i>	<i>Muškakadi gana, Ambasthadi gana, Nyagrodhadi gana, Rodhradi gaṇa</i>
<i>Raj nighnatu</i>	in <i>Karvirya divarga</i> for <i>Kushtha</i> and <i>Pama</i> (skin diseases) <i>palash</i> flowers and <i>beeja</i> are mentioned
<i>Bhavaprakash nighnatu</i>	in <i>Vatadi varga</i> as <i>Krumighna</i> and <i>Kushtha</i> , <i>Palash</i> Flowers and <i>Beeja</i> is mentioned
<i>Dhanvantari nighnatu</i>	in <i>Aamradi varga</i> for <i>Pliha, Gulma, Grahani and Arsha</i> , <i>Navpatra</i> is mentioned and in <i>aamardi varga</i> as <i>krumighna, beeja</i> is mentioned
<i>Shodhal nighnatu</i>	in <i>Amradi varga Kanda</i> as <i>Rasayan</i> and in <i>Amradi Beeja</i> as <i>Krumighna</i> is mentioned
<i>Madanpal nighantu</i>	in <i>Vatadi varga</i> Flowers as <i>Grahi</i> and in <i>Vatadi varga Beeja</i> as <i>Krumighna</i> is mentioned

Different varieties⁶-

Another variety '*Latapalasha*' (B. *superba* Roxb) is also available at present.



Raja nighantu quotes four varieties viz., *Rakta* (red), *Pīta* (yellow), *shveta* (white) & *Neela* (blue). *Shveta Palash* is considered to be the best brain tonic (*vigyanaprada* or *Buddhi vardhaka*).



Botanical Description⁷-

A deciduous tree that grows upto 50 ft height and 1.5-1.8 m in girth, trunk is crooked.

Bark- light brown or bluish-grey, yielding a ruby-red vitreous gum (Butea gum or 'Bengal keno') **Wood**-white or yellow-brown, often becoming grey or greenish-brown.

Leaves- trifoliolate, large, unequal, 10.2-20.4 cm.

Flowers- in racemes, brilliant orange-red, 3.8-5.1 cm. long; lower calyx-teeth deltoid.

Fruits- pods, silvery-white, broad, dehiscent (by one suture).

seeds- flat, elliptic, reddish-grey, 3.2 cm.

Major chemical constituents⁸-

Flowers	butin, isocorcopsin, monospermoside, butein (major glucoside), isomonospermoside, coreopsin, palasitrin.
Roots	Glycine, Jalaric esters I, II, III & IV etc.
Gum	leucocyanidin, procyanidin etc.
Seeds	monaspermin, (-)- palasonin, essential oil with myristic, palmitic acids etc.jln

Properties⁹-

<i>Rasa</i>	<i>Kaṭu, Tikta, Kasaya</i>
<i>Guṇa</i>	<i>Laghu, Snigdha</i>
<i>Vīrya</i>	<i>Ushna</i>
<i>Vipaka</i>	<i>Kaṭu</i>
<i>Karma</i>	<i>Vata-kapha hara, Grahi, Krmighna, Deepan</i>
Indications	<i>Krimi, pliha roga, gulma, grahani, arsha.</i>

Part Used¹⁰- stem bark, flowers, seeds, gum

Dosage¹¹-Bark decoction 50-100 ml, seed powder 3-6 g, flower powder 3-6 g, gum 1-3 g

CONTRACEPTIVE ACTIVITY OF PALASH BEEJ



MODERN VIEW¹²

At the implantation stage, butin extracted from the seeds of *B. monosperma* exerts antifertility and postcoital antiimplantation effects in pregnant rats. A similar example is the seed powder of *B. monosperma*, which when applied topically causes the destruction of the ovaries. Most follicles lack maturity, as seen by their immature nuclei and nucleoli within the ovum. According to research, *B. monosperma* seed extracts can reduce fertility. This is due to the fact that they interfere with spermatogenesis in men and ovulation in women. The reproductive system may be affected by the potential effects of seed extract on hormone levels, such as decreased testosterone in men and increased estrogen in women. As a postcoital contraceptive, seed extracts have demonstrated effects that inhibit the implantation of fertilized eggs in the uterus.

AYURVEDIC VIEW¹³

Beej of Palash has *katu rasa*, *ushna veerya*, and it is *snigdha* in nature. It is *kapha* and *krumi nashaka*. In *Gada nigraha*, *shodhal* has mentioned the use of *palash beej* for *garbhmirodhartam*. *Palash* seeds pounded finely and mixed with ghee and honey should be applied locally in vagina during season. It acts as contraceptive. The *katu rasa* and *ushna veerya* of *palasha* acts on *shukra* which is *Soumya*, *madhur*, *snigdha*, *sheet* and hampers the action of *shukra* which is *garbhodpadan*.

CONCLUSION

In recent times there is increase in demand of ayurvedic medicines in the global market. People are turning towards *ayurved* because, it cures the disease completely and avoid its recurrence. So once people starts following *ayurved* for major disease, they will become dependent on *ayurved* for every aspect of life and we being *ayurved* student must be able to provide them with proper medicine and advices. For that purpose there is a need to do more research in rare topics like contraceptives, etc. In modern science there are many medications for contraceptions, they have got there own side effects and their efficacy is also doubtful. So using *palash beej* which has been mentioned by *shodhal* in *gadanigraha* as contraceptive would be a good option.

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