

## Morphological Characterization of Jeevaka Through Synonyms: A Unique Approach of Ayurveda

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### Abstract

Ayurveda is the science of life and living. The principles of life and living are mentioned in various Ayurvedic texts. For good life and living, the use of various Dravyas has been indicated. These Dravyas are assigned various names. These names are called as paryaya (synonyms). These synonyms do not only represent the names but also represent the morphological features, properties, actions and effects. They also provide with key identification features. Jeevaka is one of the plants mentioned in astavarga with revitalizing and rejuvenative properties. Various synonyms of jeevaka are mentioned in many Nighantu but its exact morphological details, properties and uses using all the synonyms are not mentioned. Hence this work was taken to decode all the synonyms and explain the features, properties and action of jeevaka.

**Keywords:** Ayurveda; Jeevaka; Synonym.

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### Introduction

The main aim of Ayurveda is Svasthasya svasthya raksanam aturasya vikara prashamanam cha. It means protection of health of the healthy and alleviate the disease of the diseased. Just as the warrior in the field requires weapons, similarly the physician requires plants. Hence, the knowledge regarding plants is of utmost importance. Also Acharya Charaka has defined Ayurveda as "the one that gives knowledge about ayusya (healthy) and anayusya (unhealthy) plants, guna (properties) and karmas (actions and effects)" [1].

It is also told in Raja Nighantu that a physician without the knowledge of materica medica becomes a matter of laughter [2]. In ancient times, the system of morphological description of plants, as it is done now, was not present. Hence, the names and synonyms which indicated the salient

features of plants were coined [3]. These names and synonyms were based on rudhi (traditional uses), prabhava (effect), desyokti (habitat), lanchana (morphological characters), upama (simile), veerya (potency), itarhava (local names prevalent in various regions), akriti (form), rasa (taste), kala (time), prasastibodhaka (availability) etc [4,5,6]. The synonyms of jeevaka as per important materica medicas of Ayurveda is as follows.

#### 1. *Astanga Nighantu*

The synonyms of jeevakamentioned in Ashtanga Nighantuare kurchanibha, vrishanee, vrisha and Vrishabha [7].

#### 2. *Paryaya ratnamala*

The synonym of jeevaka mentioned in this text is kurcasheersha [8].



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3. *Madanadi Nighantu*

The synonyms of jeevakamentioned in this text are kurcasheersha, deerghayu, jeevya, mangalyan-amadheya, hrasvanga and priyasaptaka [9].

4. *Shodhala Nighantu*

The synonyms of jeevaka mentioned in this text are shringaka, kshveda, deerghayu, kurchasheershaka, hrasvanga, vardhana, sheeta, brimhana, chirajeevee, mangalya, pranadaand svadu and pittajvara vinashana [10].

5. *Dhanvantari Nighantu*

The synonyms of jeevaka mentioned in this text are sringaka, ksveda, deerghayu, kurcaseersaka, hrasvanga, madhura, svadu, pranada and chirajeevee [11].

6. *Abhidhanaratnamala (Shadrassa Nighantu)*

The synonyms of jeevaka mentioned in this text are kurchaseersa, hrasvanga and chirajeevee has been mentioned [12].

7. *Madanpala Nighantu*

The synonyms of jeevaka mentioned in this text are madhura, shringee, hrasvanga and kurcasheersaka [13].

8. *Kaiyadeva Nighantu*

The synonyms of the plant mentioned in this text

are hrasvanga, kurchaseershaka, kurchaka, jeevada, kshodi, mangalya, madhura, priya, jeevana, shringaka, shreya, deerghayu and chirajeevee [14].

9. *Bhavaprakash Nighantu*

The synonyms of jeevaka are madhura, shringa, hrasvanga and kurchasheersaka [15].

10. *Raja Nighantu*

The synonyms of jeevaka mentioned in this text are jeevana, jeevya, shringahva, pranada, priya, chirajeevee, madhura, mangalya, kurchasheersaka, hrasvanga, vriddhida, ayusman, jeevada, deerghayu and balada [16].

11. *Shaligrama Nighantu*

The synonyms of jeevaka mentioned in this text kshveda, hrasvanga, deerghayu, shringaka and priya [17].

12. *Saushruta Nighantu*

The synonyms of jeevaka mentioned in this text are priyanama, deerghayu, kurchasheersaka and mangalyanamadheya [18].

There are numerous synonyms of jeevaka given in various materia medica of Ayurveda on the basis of svarupa (morphological characters), guna (properties), and karmas (actions and effect) etc. This has been presented on table 1 below.

Table 1:

S.N.	Synonyms	SN	AN	PR	DN	AR	Ma. Ni	So. Ni	Ma. Pa.	R N	KN	BPN	SGN
Based on Svarupa (Morphological characters)													
1.	Hrasvanga	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
2.	Kurchanibha	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
3.	Kurcasheersha	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
4.	Kurchasheershaka	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	+	+	+	+	-
5.	Nisara	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
6.	Shringee	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
7.	Shringa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-
8.	Shringaka	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	+
Based on gunas (properties)													
9.	Madhura	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-
10.	Sheeta	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
11.	Svadu	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Based on Karmas (actions and effects)													
12.	Ayushman	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
13.	Balada	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
14.	Brimhana	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-

15.	Chirajeevee	-	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	+
16.	Deerghayu	+	-	-	+	-	+	+	-	+	+	-	-
17.	Jeevada	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-
18.	Jeevana	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-
19.	Jeevya	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
20.	Kshodi	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
21.	Kshveda	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	+
22.	Maangalya	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	-
23.	Mangalya	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
24.	Mangalya- namadheya	+	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
25.	Pittajvara vinashana	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
26.	Pranada	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-
27.	Vardhana	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
28.	Vridhdhida	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
29.	Vrishanee	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
30.	Vrishabha	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
31.	Vrishha	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
32.	Shreya	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
33.	Shamee	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-
Others													
34.	Priya	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+	-	+
35.	Priyasaptaka	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-
36.	Priyanama	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
37.	Shringahva	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-

\*SN- Saushruta Nighantu, AN- Astanga Nighantu, PR- Paryaya Ratnamala, DN- Dhanvantari Nighantu, AR- Abhidhana Ratnamala, Ma. NiMadanadi Nighantu, So.Ni- Shodhala Nighantu, Ma. Pa.- Madanpala Nighantu, RN- Raja Nighantu, KN- Kaiyadeva Nighantu, BPN- Bhavaprakash Nighantu, SGN- Shaligrama Nighantu

The morphological characterization, properties, action and effect as per the above mentioned table have been presented below [19-23].

#### *Synonyms based on svarupa (morphological features)*

It is a plant with good name [priya, priya Nama, priya]. It is a small plant about 15-30 cm tall which has small parts [hrasvanga]. It bears racemose inflorescence [kurchanibha, kurcasheersha] which seems grouped [kurchaka]. The inflorescence is the prominent part that looks like horn [shringa, shringahva]. Its pseudobulb does not contain much fluid [Nisara]. The pseudo bulb can remain dormant for long period of time [Chirajeevee].

#### *Synonyms based on guna (properties)*

It is madhura (sweet) in taste [madhura, svadu]. It possesses sheeta veerya guna (cold potency).

#### *Synonyms based on karmas (actions and effects)*

It has good effects in the body [mangalya, maangalya, mangalyanamadheya]. It provides bala [Ayushman, balada, vrishanee, vrishha, vrishabha].

It imparts prana (life sustaining energy), longevity [deerghayu] and vitality [jeevaka, jeevana, jeevya, jeevada, pranadayaka, pranada, susthirajivi]. It rejuvenates the body [kaumarya and increases body tissues [vardhana]. It also imparts good health and well-being [shreyasa, mangalya]. It helps to get rid of the disease [ksveda, kshodi]. It imparts good health by destroying diseases [vridhdhida] and helps in nourishment of the body [brimhana]. It pacifies the vitiated doshas [shami]. It pacifies pittaja fever [Pittajvara vinashana].

### **Results, Discussion and Conclusion**

Jeevaka has the properties to vitalize and rejuvenate the body. It is a small plant with small parts. It bears a distinctive inflorescence with laxly arranged flowers. It pacifies vitiated doshas especially pitta and vata because of its sweet taste. It also pacifies pitta due to its cold potency. It imparts good health by pacifying the vitiated dosha. It then nourishes the depleted tissues and finally rejuvenates the body. These all can be simply understood by the synonyms only. Hence, there is a great need to decode these synonyms

and characterize the plants morphologically. These characters also match with the plant *Crepidium acuminatum* (D. Don) Szlach syn. *Malaxis acuminata* D. Don. Hence jeevaka can be considered as *Crepidium acuminatum* (D.Don) Szlach.

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