

PART- I

VOLUME – I



GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
DEPARTMENT OF AYUSH

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10. Asvagandha (Rt.)

AŚVAGANDHĀ

Aśvagandhā consists of dried mature roots of *Withania somnifera* Dunal. (Fam. Solanaceae), a perennial shrub, found in waste land, cultivated field and open grounds throughout India, widely cultivated in certain areas of Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan , roots collected in winter, washed and cut into short pieces.

SYNONYMS

Sanskrit	:	Hayagandhā, Vājigandhā
Assamese	:	Ashvagandha
Bengali	:	Ashvagandha
English	:	--
Gujrati	:	Asgandha
Hindi	:	Asgandh
Kannada	:	Angarberu, Hiremaddina-gida
Kashmiri	:	Asagandh
Malayalam	:	Amukkuram
Marathi	:	Asagandha, Askagandha
Oriya	:	Aswagandha
Punjabi	:	Asgandh
Tamil	:	Amukkaramkizangu
Telugu	:	Pennerugadda
Urdu	:	Asgand

DESCRIPTION

a) Macroscopic

Roots straight, unbranched, thickness varying with age. roots bear fibre-like secondary roots, outer surface buff to grey-yellow with longitudinal wrinkles, crown consists of 2-6 remains of stem base, stem bases variously thickened, nodes prominent only on the side from where petiole arises, cylindrical, green with longitudinal wrinkles, fracture, short and uneven, odour, characteristic, taste, bitter and acrid.

b) Microscopic

Transverse section of root shows cork exfoliated or crushed, when present isodiametric and non-lignified, cork cambium of 2-4 diffused rows of cells, secondary cortex about twenty layers of compact parenchymatous cells, phloem consists of sieve tubes, companion cells, phloem parenchyma, cambium 4-5 rows of tangentially elongated cells, secondary xylem hard forming a closed vascular ring separated by multiseriate medullary rays, a few xylem parenchyma

IDENTITY, PURITY AND STRENGTH

Foreign matter	Not more than	2	per cent, Appendix	2.2.2.
Total Ash	Not more than	7	per cent, Appendix	2.2.3.
Acid-insoluble ash	Not more than	1	per cent, Appendix	2.2.4.
Alcohol-soluble extractive (25 per cent)	Not less than	15	per cent, Appendix	2.2.6.
Water-soluble extractive	Nil		Appendix	2.2.7.

ASSAY

Aswagandha consists of not less than 0.2 per cent of total alkaloids, when assayed as follows:

Take about 30g accurately weighed of the powdered drug, cover with *Alcohol* (90 per cent) and allow to stand overnight. Extract for 6 hours so wet apparatus and concentrate to a syrup residue. Treat with 25, 20, 15 and 10 ml portions of 5 per cent **Sulphuric Acid** until complete extraction of alkaloid is affected.

To the combined acid extracts add an excess of Dragendorff's reagent. Filter under suction and dissolve the residue in *Acetone*, Shake the acetone solution with freshly prepared suspension of 2ml *Silver Carbonate* in 10 ml of Water. Filter the solution and wash the precipitate with *Acetone*, *Alcohol* and *water* in that order. Pass sufficient *Hydrogen Sulphide* through the filtrate. Boil the solution for 10 minutes, Inter and evaporate under vacuum in a tared flask. Add to the residue 5 ml of *Ethyl Alcohol* - evaporate to dryness, repeat the process once again and weight the residue to constant weight in a vacuum dessicator.

CONSTITUENTS - Alkaloids and withanolides.

PROPERTIES AND ACTION

Rasa	:	Tikta, Kaṣāya
Guna	:	Laghu
Virya	:	Uṣṇa
Vipaka	:	Madhura
Karma	:	Rasāyana, Vātakaphāpaha, Balya, Vājīkaraṇa

IMPORTANT FORMULATIONS - Aśvagandhādyariṣṭa, Aśvagandhādi Leha, Balāśvagandha Lākṣādi Taila

THERAPEUTIC USES - Śoṭha, Kṣaya, Daurbalya, Vātaroga, Klaiḃya

DOSE - 3-6 g of the drug in powder form.