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AN ETHNOMEDICAL REVIEW ON KARKIDAKA KANJI AND DASHAPUSHPA CHURNA

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Abstract
The Malayalam month of Karkidaka, also known as the Varsha ritu, falls during the monsoon season (July-August). Karkidaka kanji' is one of the special therapeutic Ayurvedic diets that is prescribed during the Karkidakam season to overcome many diseases caused during the monsoon and to improve the immunity of body. Kanji is a favorite food with Keralites, prepared by boiling rice in water. It helps to overcome fatigue and enables easy digestion. Kanji also help to maintain water content in the body. This porridge is made of njavara rice which are boiled with ingredients like cumin seed, malli, vizalari, fenugreek, karkokilari, aniseed, mustard seed, ayamodakom, aashali, dry ginger, putharichundaveru, nutmeg varattumanjal, grambu etc. Karkidakachikitsa are well known tradition of Kerala, which focuses on detoxification of the body and prevention of monsoon related diseases. Karkidaka kanji' (the medicinal porridge) is an ayurvedic preparation taken during the month of 'Karkidaka' month in the Malayalam calendar. A soup made of Dashapushpam is also consumed during this time. This article is an attempt to scientifically analyze the special monsoon dietetics of Kerala mainly Karkitaka kanji and Dashapushpachurna.

Keywords:
Ayurveda,Dashapushpachurna, Karkidaka kanji, medicinal porridge

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Karkidaka kanji

Karkidakam is a Malayalam month that falls during monsoon season between Mid-July and Mid-August(1). Kanji is a favorite food with Keralites, prepared by boiling rice in water. It helps to overcome fatigue and enables easy digestion. Kanji also help to maintain water content in the body. Generally, kanji is taken during conditions like fever and diarrhea.Karkidaka kanji' (the medicinal porridge) is an ayurvedic preparation taken during the month of 'Karkidaka' month in the Malayalam calendar. A soup made of Dashapushpam is also consumed during this time.Karkidaka kanji' is also known as oushada kanji that rejuvenates the body and the mind.

Karkidakam is a month of monsoons, a season that was in the past considered tough due to the combination of heavy rains and shortage of fresh produce. According to Ayurveda, the body is most susceptible to illnesses at this time. Karkidaka kanji' is one of the special therapeutic Ayurvedic diets that isprescribed during the Karkidakam season to overcome many diseases caused during the monsoonand to improve the immunity of body(2). The gruel not only cleans the body from the inside but also aids in good digestion, keep away conditions such as diabetes, hypertension, joint pain and rheumatism. It is also very effective for improving immunity if taken in a proper manner.

According to Ayurveda, Karkidaka treatment is a treatment coupled with dietary and lifestyle modifications to maintain the balance of the aggravated 'tridoshas' and restore health during the downpour. The KarkidakaChikitsa attempts to mobilize the toxins in your body and eliminate them through channels of cleansing. KarkidakaChikitsa aims for detoxification, rejuvenation as well as beautification of the mind and body. It is also known as RithuCharya treatment. This porridge is made of njavara rice which are boiled with ingredients like cumin seed, malli, vizalari, fenugreek, karkokilari, aniseed, mustard seed, ayamodakom, aashali, dry ginger, putharichundaveru, nutmeg varattumanjal, grambu etc. After cooking coconut milk is added to it and it is also sauted with ghee and onions. This medicated porridge helps in revitalizing the body.

Table1: Herbs and spices used in karkidaka kanji

Name	Botanical Name	Part used	Chemical constituents	Pharmacological uses
Navara rice	Oryza sativa	Grain	73% carbohydrates, 9.5% protein, 2.5% fat, 32%thiamine, 25% riboflavin 36% niacinrich in flavonoids and oryzanol(3)	Improving lactation(4) Antioxidant and antiproliferative activity(5)
Fenugreek seeds	Trigonella foenum-graecum(6)	Seeds	Diosgenin 28% mucilage alkaloids such as trigo-nelline and Choline, Vitamin A, folic acid, ascorbic acid,thiamin, riboflavin, biotin, nicotinic acid(7)	Diminish reactive hyperglycemia in diabetic patients. Fenugreek leaves and seeds help in blood formation(8).
Dried ginger powder	Zingiber officinale(9)	Rhizomes	Shogaols, quercetin, zingerone, gingerenone-	Gastroprotective(11) Antidiabetic(12)

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			A, and 6-dehydrogingerdione(10)	Hepatoprotective activity(13) Anti-tumour activity
Crushed pepper	Piper nigrum	Fruit	Piperine(14), Piperidine(15), Methylpiperate(16)	Immunomodulatory(17) Antimicrobial(18) Antifungal(19) Anti-inflammatory Anti-inflammatory(20)
Jeera	Cuminum cyminum	ripe fruit	αcarotenoid, vitaminA, cumin aldehyde(21)	Antidiabetic activity Anticancer activity Carminative(22)
Turmeric powder	Curcuma longa	rhizomes	Curcumin, turmerone, β-sesquiphellandrene, curcumenol	Antimicrobial Anti-inflammatory Anticancer
Garlic	Alium sativum	Bulb	Allicin	Antimicrobial Anti-inflammatory Anticancer
Carom seeds	Trachycpermumammi	Fruit	Thymol	Antimicrobial Antiviral carminative
Garden cress seeds	Lepidium sativum	Seeds	Aspertic acid, glutamic acid	Antihypertensive Antidiabetic Kidney disorders
Ghee				
Coconut milk	Cocos nucifera	Nut	Caproic acid, carprolicacidd	Antioxidant Anti-hyperlipidemic activity

DashapushpaChurna

Dashapushpachurna is powder of tenmedicinally important flowers. Dashapushpachurna is normally consumed with karkitaka kanji in the month of karkitakam for improving immunity during coming monsoon season. It is used by ayurvedic physician for treatment of fever, dysentery, constipation etc. These plants are having potential therapeutic activity and been used in traditional system. These ten herbs are widely used in treating different varieties of cancer and other malignant conditions by the VishaVaidyas of the Kerala. Few of them are scientifically studied for their pharmacological activity but most of the plant are yet be explored for their pharmacological activities. Hence this paper will give an insight of the dashapushachurna its composition, botanical name and pharmacological activity of each plant.

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Table 2: Herbs used in DashapushpaChurna

Name	Botanical Name	Chemical constituents	Pharmacological uses
Slender dwarf morning-glory	*Evolvulusalsinoides*	Scopoletin, umbelliferone, scopolin and 2-methyl-1,2,3,4-butanetetrol(24)	Antioxidant(25), antibacterial(26), anthelmentic(27),
Bahama grass	Cynodondactylon	Orthohydroxy phenyl acetic acid, syringic acid, para coumaric acid(28)	Antioxidant, immunomodulatory activities, anti-inflammatory activity(29)
Lilac tasselflower	Emilia sonchifolia	Rhamnetin, isorhamnetin, luteolin, fumaric acid(30)	Antinociceptive effect(31), antioxidant activity(32), anticancer(33), hepatoprotective(34)
Morning glory	Ipomoea sepiaria	Caryophyllene, α – Curcumene, β – Cadinene, ϒ –Elemene, Caryophyllene oxide, Asarone, Germacrone, Methyl isopimarate, Abietic acid, Lupeol, β –Amyrin and α –Amyrin(35) isopimarate, Abietic acid,	Antioxidant(36), antidote to arsenic, uterine tonic, aphrodisiac, and anti-ulcer property(37)
Mountain knotgrass	Aervalanata	Ervine, methylervine, ervoside, aervine, methylaervine, aervoside, ervolanine, and aervolanine(38)	Antidiabeticproperty(39), nephroprotective activity(40)
Golden eye-grass	Curculigoorchioides	α-eudesmol, caryophyllene, -bornyl-acetate, eucalyptol	Antimicrobial property(41)
False daisy	Eclipta alba	Eclalbasaponin II and luteolin	antimytotoxic, analgesic, antibacterial, antihepatotoxic(42), antihaemorrhagic, antihyperglycemic, antioxidant, immunomodulatory properties
Little ironweed	Cyanthillium cinereum	β-amyrin, taraxasterol, lupeol, and betulin. β-amyrin, taraxasterol,	Asthma, cancer, cholera, colic pain, cough, diarrhea, dysentery, impotency and night-blindness(43)

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		lupeol, and betulin(42)	
Biophytumsensitivum	Biophytumsensitivum	luteolin 7-methyl ether, isoorientin, 4-caffeoylquinic acid(44)	Analgesic, anti-pyretic, anti-inflammatory, immunomodulatory, antitumor, antidiabetic, antioxidant, antibacterial, antihypertensive, chemoprotective, radioprotective and antifertility(45)
Balloon plant	Cardiospermum halicacabum	P-coumaric acid, 4-hydroxybenzoic acid, hydroquinone, protocatechuic acid, gallic acid. (Apigenin, kaempferol, luteolin, quercetin (Chemical Constituents and Antimicrobial Activity of Indian Green Leafy Vegetable Cardiospermum halicacabum)(46)	anti-inflammatory, moisturizing, sebum-regulating, anti-pruriginous, soothing skin redness, avoiding flaking activities(47)

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