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ISABGOL (PSYLLIUM HUSK)



Scientific name : *Plantago ovate*

Family : Plantaginaceae

Description

It is a herb growing to a height of 1 feet all over India. It is cultivated in some parts of North West India like Rajasthan and Punjab. The leaves are 4-8 inch long. The flower stalk is oval shaped. The fruits are little oval in shape and are about 7-8 mm long. The seeds inside the fruits are of ear shaped and white in color. The seeds are mucilaginous in nature. Inflorescence of isabgol is long and its length may be 1.5 – 4.0 cm, which is known as awn or bristle. In isabgol, the female flower matures early than the male flower, hence mainly cross pollination takes place. Flowers are petioleless, non-leafy small, bisexual, incomplete and irregular.

Chemical composition : The seed contains amino acids including valine, alanine, glutamic acid, glycine, cystine, lysine, leucine and tyrosine; and a mucilage consisting of a mixture of polysaccharides composed mainly of xylose, arabinose and galacturonic acid; rhamnose and galactose are also present. The seeds also gave aucubin, the antibacterial principle. The seed coat contains fatty acids mainly linoleic, oleic and palmitic acids in decreasing concentrations

Properties :

“ ईषद्गोलं परं वृष्यं मधुरं ग्राहिशीतलम्।

पिच्छिलं तु वरं किञ्चित्वातकृत्कफपित्तहृत्॥

रक्तातिसारास्रपित्तनाशयेदितिकीर्तितम्॥ ” (वैद्यामृतम्)

- Rasa (Taste) – Madhura (Sweet)
- Guna (Qualities) – Snigdha (Has moisture), Guru (Heavy), Picchila (Slimy)
- Vipaka – Madhura (Undergoes sweet taste after digestion)
- Veerya (Potency) – Sheeta (Madhura)
- Karma (Actions) – Vata pitta shamaka (reduces vitiated vata and pitta dosha)
- Some others opine that it balances down Kapha and Pitta Dosha.

Benefits :

1. Constipation:

- Isabgol contributes to the ease of passage of the stools as it adds unfermented gel, which functions as an

emollient and lubricant agent.

- It significantly increased moisture in stools and both dry and wet stool weight in patients with gastrointestinal disease.

2. rhoea:

Isabgol also helps slow down the colon transit and gastrointestinal emptying time; this property is beneficial to people suffering from diarrhoea or faecal incontinence from liquid stools.

3. Dealing with Bowel Diseases:

- Supplementing isabgol may help in the management of inflammatory bowel disease, irritable bowel diseases and ulcerative colitis due to its anti-constipation activity.
- Anaerobic fermentation of isabgol fibre in the intestines results in a large production of metabolites, which have antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties

4. Colorectal Cancer:

It restricts butyric acid's antineoplastic activity. Thus, it's considered beneficial in preventing colorectal cancer.

5. Cholesterol:

Isabgol fibres (soluble and insoluble) have significance in reducing total low-density lipoprotein and serum cholesterol. Thus, it helps reduce the risk of heart diseases.⁵

6. Managing Haemorrhoids:

- Since isabgol helps in dealing with both constipation and loose stools, it would also help in managing haemorrhoids.
- People treated with a placebo of B vitamins had no major difference, and those consuming isabgol had a reduction of bleeding.

7 Type II Diabetes:

Studies on a population with type II diabetes have shown that isabgol husk effectively improved glycaemic and lipid control after meals.



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