

## REVIEW ARTICLE

# Triphala and Its Types: An Analytical Overview

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### ABSTRACT

*Triphala* is a traditional *Ayurvedic* herbal formulation that has been used for centuries in India. It is composed of three fruits: *Amalaki* (*Emblca officinalis*), *Bibhitaki* (*Terminalia bellirica*), and *Haritaki* (*Terminalia chebula*). *Triphala* is renowned for its numerous health benefits and is considered a cornerstone of *Ayurvedic* medicine. It is considered as good as *rasayana*, for cosmetics purpose to improve skin and hair quality, and for diabetic wound management. It is used as a general health promoter which facilitates nourishment to all *dhatu*. This paper aims to provide an analytical overview of *Triphala*, exploring its composition, therapeutic properties, and its types.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

*Triphala*, a traditional *Ayurvedic* remedy, has gained immense popularity for its numerous health benefits. Derived from the *Sanskrit* words “*Tri*” meaning three and “*Phala*” meaning fruit, *Triphala* is a combination of three fruits: *Amalaki* (*Emblca officinalis*), *Bibhitaki* (*Terminalia bellirica*), and *Haritaki* (*Terminalia chebula*). This potent herbal formulation has been used for centuries in *Ayurvedic* medicine to promote overall well-being and restore balance in the body. The three fruits that makeup *Triphala* each possess unique properties that contribute to the overall efficacy of the formulation. It is considered as good as *rasayana*, for cosmetics purpose to improve skin and hair quality, and for diabetic wound management. It is used as a general health promoter which facilitates nourishment to all *dhatu*.<sup>[1]</sup> *Amalaki*, also known as Indian gooseberry, is rich in Vitamin C and antioxidants.<sup>[2]</sup> It supports digestion, boosts the immune system, and promotes healthy skin. *Vibhitaki* is known for its astringent properties and is often used to treat respiratory conditions, such as asthma and bronchitis. *Haritaki* is a potent laxative and is commonly used to alleviate constipation and promote bowel movements.<sup>[3]</sup>

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## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

*Ayurvedic* literature’s related to *Triphala* previous articles and research works modern medical literatures.

- *Triphala* – Although *Triphala* (three ultimate fruits) is known to *Charaka*’s time, it is *Sushruta* who quoted it as a separate group (*gana*). *Haritaki* (*Terminalia chebula*), *Amalaki* (*Phyllanthus emblica*), and *Vibhitaki* (*Terminalia bellerica*) are the *Triphala* (three myrobalans).
- Synonyms – “*Phalatraya*” or “*Vara*”. *Phalottama*, *Phalshresta*, *Phaltrik*, *Triphali*, *Vara*, *Sreshta*
- *Rasa Panchaka* are given in Table 1
  - *Rasa* – *Kasaya*
  - *Guna* – *Ruksha*, *Sara*
  - *Virya* – *Anusna*
  - *Vipaka* – *Madhura*
  - *Doshaghata* – *Tridoshasamaka*
  - *Karma* – *Chaksusys*, *Dipana*, *Vrishya*, *Prameha*, *Kustha*, *Vishamajwarnashaka*, *Medohara*
- *Triphala* ratio – It is also necessary to understand the ratio of *Triphala* since various texts have mentioned various proportions, which is given below in Table 2.

### 2.1. Pharmacological Properties<sup>[4]</sup>

The Pharmacological properties of *Triphala* is mentioned below

## 2.2. Types of *Triphala*<sup>[5]</sup>

1. *Swalpa Triphala*
2. *Madhura Triphala*
3. *Sugandhi Triphala*

### 2.2.1. *Swalpa Triphala*

*Draksha, kharjura, and parushaka*; these three fruits together are called *Swalpa Triphala*. ”.

### 2.2.2. *Madhura Triphala*

*Draksha, kharjura, and kasmarya*; these three fruits together are called *swadu Triphala*. It is beneficial to vision, and appetizer, promotes the desire for food, and useful in alleviating irregular fever.

### 2.2.1. *Sugandhi Triphala*

*Jatiphalam, Puga, and lavangam*; these three constitutes are called *Sugandhi Triphala*. It is astringent, sweet in vipaka, and useful in breaking constipation due to *kapha* and *vata doshas*.

## 2.3. Therapeutic Uses

*Triphala* is widely recognized for its diverse therapeutic properties. It is primarily used as a digestive tonic, aiding in the absorption and assimilation of nutrients. *Triphala* also acts as a gentle laxative, promoting regular bowel movements and preventing constipation. Its antioxidant properties help protect the body against oxidative stress and reduce inflammation.<sup>[6]</sup> In addition, *Triphala* has been found to support liver function, enhance immune response, and improve overall well-being.<sup>[7]</sup>

## 2.4. Research on *Triphala*

Numerous scientific studies have been conducted to explore the potential health benefits of *Triphala*. Research has shown that *Triphala* possesses antimicrobial properties, inhibiting the growth of various bacteria and fungi. It has also demonstrated anti-inflammatory effects, reducing markers of inflammation in the body. *Triphala* has been found to have hepatoprotective properties, protecting the liver against damage caused by toxins. Furthermore, studies have indicated that *Triphala* may have anticancer potential, inhibiting the growth of cancer cells *in vitro*. *Triphala* exerted a strong anti-inflammatory effect against gouty arthritis.<sup>[8]</sup> *Triphala* exhibited a protective effect in endotoxin-induced uveitis.<sup>[9]</sup>

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

*Triphala* is undoubtedly one of its most treasured combinations. The three fruits that makeup *Triphala* each possess unique properties that when combined, create a powerful therapeutic effect. *Amalaki*, also known as Indian gooseberry, is a rich source of Vitamin C and antioxidants. It aids in boosting the immune system, improving digestion, and rejuvenating the body. *Vibhitaki*, on the other hand, acts as a natural detoxifier and supports healthy respiratory function. Finally, *Haritaki* is renowned for its ability to promote healthy digestion, relieve constipation, and enhance cognitive function.

One of the key benefits of *Triphala* is its ability to support digestive health. It acts as a gentle laxative, promoting regular bowel movements and preventing constipation. *Triphala* also aids in detoxification by eliminating toxins from the body, which can improve overall digestion and nutrient absorption.<sup>[10]</sup> In addition, *Triphala* has been found to have anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties, which can help reduce inflammation in the gut and protect against oxidative stress.

Another area where *Triphala* excels is in promoting healthy skin and hair. Its high antioxidant content helps fight free radicals, preventing premature aging and maintaining a youthful appearance. *Triphala* can also improve hair growth and prevent hair loss by nourishing the hair follicles and strengthening the roots. Regular consumption of *Triphala* can lead to healthier, glowing skin and lustrous hair. *Triphala* is not only beneficial for physical health but also for mental well-being. It is known to enhance cognitive function, improve memory, and promote mental clarity.<sup>[11]</sup> *Triphala*'s ability to balance the three *doshas*, *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*, is believed to contribute to its positive effects on mental health. By restoring balance in the body, *Triphala* can help reduce stress, anxiety, and promote overall emotional well-being.

## 4. CONCLUSION

*Triphala* is a traditional *Ayurvedic* formulation that offers a wide range of health benefits. Its unique combination of three fruits provides a holistic approach to wellness, addressing various aspects of physical and mental health. *Triphala* has been extensively studied and has shown promising results in various areas, including digestion, immunity, enhancing skin, hair, and liver health. However, it is important to exercise caution and consult a health-care professional before using *Triphala*, especially for individuals with specific medical conditions. Overall, *Triphala* remains a valuable herbal remedy that continues to be widely used and respected in *Ayurvedic* medicine.

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## 6. AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

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## 8. ETHICAL APPROVALS

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## 9. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

## 10. DATA AVAILABILITY

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**Table 1:** *Rasa panchaka* of *Triphala*

<i>Rasa Panchaka</i>	<i>Haritaki</i>	<i>Vibhitaki</i>	<i>Amalaki</i>
<i>Rasa</i>	<i>Pancharasa</i> ( <i>Kashaya</i> predominance, <i>Lava rahita</i> )	<i>Kashaya</i>	<i>Pancharasa</i> ( <i>Amla</i> predominance and <i>Lavanarahita</i> )
<i>Guna</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha</i>	<i>Laghu, Ruksha, Sita</i>
<i>Vipaka</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Madhura</i>
<i>Virya</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Shita</i>
<i>Prabhava</i>	<i>Tridosahara</i>	<i>Tridosahara</i>	<i>Rasayana</i>
<i>Doshaaghnta</i>	<i>Kapha pitta Shamaka.</i>	<i>Kapha Shamaka.</i>	<i>Tridoshhara, Pittasamaka</i> (mainly)
Chemical constituents	30% Tannin and Chebulic acid, Gallic acid, Anthraquinone	17% tannin and gallo-tannic acid	Vitamin C, fixed oil, phosphatides, tannin

**Table 2:** The ratio of *Triphala* by various texts

<i>Acharya</i>	<i>Haritaki</i>	<i>Vibhitaki</i>	<i>Amalaki</i>
<i>Sushruta</i>	1	1	1
<i>Bhavamishra</i>	1	1	1
<i>Chakradutta</i>	1	2	4
<i>Madanpala</i>	1	2	4
<i>Yogaratanakar</i>	3	6	12