

A Brief Review of Synonyms and Properties of *Gudūcī* (*Tinospora cordifolia* (Thunb.) Miers) from Selected *Nighantus* (Ayurvedic Drug Lexicons)

Sujithra Ram Manohar*, Vimala, Priyalatha, Raiby Paul, Priya S*

Sujithra Ram Manohar¹,
Vimala, Priyalatha, Raiby
Paul, Priya S*

Department of Dravya Guna (Ayurvedic
Pharmacology), Amrita School of
Ayurveda, Amritapuri, Amrita Vishwa
Vidyapeetham, Kerala, INDIA.

Correspondence

Dr. Sujithra RM and Dr. Priya S

PG Scholar. Department of Dravya, Guna
Amrita School of Ayurveda Clappana PO,
Vallikavu, Kollam, Kerala, INDIA.

Phone no : +91-89283519349

E-mail: sujithra.rm@gmail.com;
priyasreeekumar@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The use of Herbal medicines are continuously on the rise as they are known to be very efficient without causing much undesired effects. Herbs are the main source for Traditional Chinese Medicine and Persian and extensive literature and scientific research is being done in this aspect. Ethnobotanical studies are being conducted in specific areas to understand and analyse the relative priority, agreement percentage and the use value. Phytochemical and Pharmacological Tests are also carried out to substantiate the use.¹ Plant toxins and plant poisoning have been reported in children.² Unfortunately, though herbs are generally considered to be safe, it does contain chemical constituents that can be helpful or harmful when consumed individually or in combination with other herbs or drugs. For more and more scientific studies to come up, the basic literature review has to be done. *Ayurveda* is an Ancient System of Medicine practiced in India since centuries. The practice is based on Classical Ayurvedic Texts and the *Nighantus* that came in the later period. In this article, *Guduci- Tinospora cordifolia* (Tco) - a commonly used plant in Ayurveda that holds a great medicinal value.³ has been chosen and the review of the Synonyms and Properties of this plant mentioned in selected *Nighantus* has been done. The different properties of the plant like anti hyperglycemic action, antioxidant, hepato-protective activity, etc have already been researched and proven.⁴ Retrospectively, here a comparative analysis of synonyms and properties of Tco as mentioned in the *Nighantu's* from the Ayurvedic Point of view has been done.

Key words: *Guduci, Tinospora cordifolia, Nighantus, Ayurveda, Synonyms, Properties.*

INTRODUCTION

A medicine can be of plant, animal or mineral origin. If it is of plant origin, the medicine is prepared by using specific parts or whole of the plant. There are several chemical constituents that are responsible for producing the specific action of the drug. In contrary to Modern Science where extracts and isolated chemical compounds are considered responsible for specific properties, Ayurveda propagates the use of the plant as a whole or specific parts of the plant. The therapeutic effect produced will be different depending upon the method of preparation, vehicle and time of administration, dosage form, and the other drugs that are mixed along with it. The properties and action of individual plant, animal and mineral products have been documented in detail in the *Nighantus*. The exact logistics of why the specific herbs have been selected for the formulation is still not very clear. The effect of a drug can be minimal or maximum depending upon the combination, disjunction, time, processing and logical application.⁷ Herbal medicines are inclined more towards cost effectiveness and treatment options

in contrary to Modern medicine that depends on Ethno pharmacological data to a great extent.⁸

It was during the period of *Nighantus* that the Morphology and Botanical Source of the plants were being documented. It was *Nighantukara* (author of *Nighantu*) who actually established a link between the plant and modern taxonomy. These aspects can be taken into consideration only for modern understanding of the plant. As far as *Ayurveda* practice is concerned, the understanding of properties and actions is as mentioned in the *Samhitā's* and reference is taken from the *Nighantū's*.

Tinospora cordifolia is an Angiosperm belonging to Menispermaceae family and Ranunculaceae Order. It is a deciduous, twiner that branches extensively. It is known by the common name Heart Leaved Moonseed. It is indigenous to the tropical areas of India, Malaysia, and China.⁹

For the study of *Ayurveda*, the knowledge of *Nighantus* is mandatory, not only for *Dravyaguna Vijnāna* (Ayurvedic Pharmacology) but all branches of *Ayurveda* as treatment can be successful only if

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the drugs are used appropriately. And this is possible only if the basic knowledge of the drugs and their properties are known. But unfortunately, there is not much importance given to studying *Nighaṅṭus* now. *Nighaṅṭus* are just used like a reference book for drugs that chalk out the complete details pertaining to the specific plant.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The term *Guduci* itself means ‘*gudati rakshati rakshebhyah iti*’ – that which gives protection against diseases. It also is called as ‘*sarvaushadha vyaptidosha*’ – universal application can be implied to the meaning. Moreover, it is an ingredient of innumerable formulations mentioned in *Samhitās* (Classical *Ayurvedic* Texts). The Pharmacognosy aspect of the plant has been considerably worked upon.⁵ It is easily available and the therapeutic effect of the plant in different pathological conditions has been researched already.⁶ Five prominent *Nighaṅṭus*- one each from a specific time period was chosen, the synonyms and properties mentioned were tabulated and compared to understand the similarity and difference. The basonym holds no confusion as the name is specifically meant for Tco. At present, there are several documented species of *Guduci*, but ideally *Guduci* is considered as *Tinospora cordifolia*.

Dhanvantari Nighantu¹⁰ (DN) (10th - 13th Cent. A.D.)

The *Nighaṅṭu* begins by offering salutations to Lord *Dhanvantari* (Presiding deity of *Ayurveda*). In this *Nighaṅṭu*, *Guduci* has been described under *Guducyadi Varga*. The synonyms mentioned are *amrtavalli*, *chinna chinna ruha*, *chinnodbhava*, *amrtalata*, *dhara*, *vatsadani*, *somavalli*, *kundali*, *cakralaksana*, *nagakumari*, *chinnangi*, *jvaranasini*, *jivanti*, *madhuparni*, *tantrika*, *devanirmita*, *vayahstha*, *mandali*, *saumya visalya*, *amrtasambhava*, *pindamrta*, *bahucchinna*, *kandarohini*, *rasayani*, *mrttika*, *candrasaha*, *bhisagjita*, *kanya*, *kandodbhava kanda*, *amrtakandaguducika*. The *svarasa* (essence) is said to be *tikta* (bitter) and *kasaya* (astringent), is *guru* (heavy), and is very effective in alleviating the three *dosa*'s (factors controlling the health of the mind and body) and gives relief from diseases like *jantu* (worm manifestation), *raktarsa* (bleeding piles), *kustha* (skin diseases), and *jvara* (fever). The *kanda* (bulbous root) is said to be *katu*, *usna* (hot in potency), and *sannipataha* (collectively alleviates three *dosas*). It mitigates *visa* (poison), *bhuta* (infliction by spirits), *vali* (wrinkles) and *palita* (premature greying). The plant as such is said to be *ayusya* (bestows life), *medhya* (promotes intellect), *sangrahini* and *balya* (is strengthening). It is effective in diseases like *jvara*, *trt* (thirst), *pandu* (anemia), *vatasrk* (Inflammatory Diseases), *kandu* (itching), *visarpa* (skin diseases), *chardi* (vomiting) and *meha* (diabetes). It is *tridosahara*, and *pittamedovisosi* (alleviates pitta and *medas*). Specific *anupanas* (after drinks) are mentioned for attaining specific targets. For managing *vata - ghrta* (ghee), for *pitta- guda* (Jaggery), for *kapha- sita* (sugar), is the best vehicle. For *vatarakta- rubutaila* (castor oil), and for *amavata* (Inflammatory Diseases)- *sunthi* (ginger) is considered to be the best vehicle.

Madanapala Nighantu¹¹ (MP) (14th Cent. A.D.)

Guduci has been mentioned in *Abhayadi Varga*. The synonyms mentioned are *kundali*, *chinna*, *vayastha*, *amrtavallari*, *chinnodbhava*, *chinnaruha*, *amrta*, *jvaravinasini*, *vatsadani*, *candrasaha*, *jivanti* and *cakralaksana*. The properties are it is *katu*, *laghu* (light), *kasaya*, *usna*, and *svadupaka* (of sweet taste post digestion). It is *rasayani* (rejuvenative), *sangrahini* and *balya*. It is very effective in diseases like *kamala* (jaundice), *kustha*, *jvara* and *krmi*. The *anupanas* mentioned specifically for different conditions are exactly the same as mentioned in *Dhanvantari Nighaṅṭu*.

Kaiyyadeva Nighantu¹² (KN) (Pathyapathya Vibodhaka) (15th Cent. A.D.)

In this *Nighaṅṭu*, *Guduci* is described under *Osadhi Varga*. The synonyms mentioned are *kundali*, *soma*, *chinna*, *chinnodbhava*, *amrta*, *madhuparna*, *chinnaruha*, *vayahstha*, *cakralaksana*, *candrasaha*, *amrtalata*, *dhara*, *vatsadani*, *vara*, *pindamrta*, *satirupa vicchinna*, and *kandarohini*. The properties mentioned are that it has *kasaya tikta katu rasa*, *svadu paka*, *laghu*, and *usna* in nature. It is *hrdya* (pleasant/good for heart), *balya*, *vahnikrt* (stimulates digestive fire) and *tridoso hara*. It is very effective in *kustha*, *krmi*, *chardi*, *daha* (burning sensation), *vatasrk*, *pandu*, *jvara*, *kamala*, *meha*, *trsna*, and *kasa* (cough). Apart from this it is *vayasah sthapanam* (maintains youth) and *medhyajananam* (imparts intellect).

Bhavaprakasa Nighantu¹³ (BP) (16th Cent. A.D.)

This *Nighaṅṭu* is one of the most referred and studied book in the modern period. The text stands aloof that it has added a lot of new drugs significant to the modern era. *Guduci* is mentioned in *Guducyadi varga* and the synonyms mentioned in this *Nighaṅṭu* are *madhuparni*, *amrta*, *amrtavallari*, *chinna*, *chinnaruha*, *chinnodbhava*, *vatsadani*, *jivanti*, *tantrika*, *soma*, *somavalli*, *kundali*, *cakralaksanika*, *dhira*, *visalya*, *rasayani*, *candrasaha*, *vayastha*, *mandali*, *devanirmita*. *Guduci* is *katu* (*hot*) *tikta kasaya rasa*, *svadu paka*, *usna* and *laghu* in nature. It is *balya*, *rasayani* and *sangrahini* in action. The plant is highly effective in *trd*, *daha*, *meha*, *kasa*, *pandu*, *kamala*, *kustha*, *vatasrk*, *jvara*, *krmi*, *vami*, *prameha* (diabetes), *svasa* (dyspnea), *kasa*, *arsah* (piles), *krchra* (dysuria) and *hrdroga* (cardiac complaints). It pacifies the three *dosa*'s and also *ama* (undigested food residue). *Guduci* has been explained under *Saka varga*.

Raja Nighantu (Abhidhana Cudamani)¹⁴ (RN) (17th Cent. A.D.)

The author of this book is Narhari Pandit and is considered to be an important work as he tried to raise *Dravya Guna Vijnana* as an *Astanga* of *Ayurveda*. New concepts and ideas were incorporated for the first time in *Raja Nighaṅṭu*. *Guduci* is included in *Guducyadi Varga* and the synonyms mentioned are *amrtavalli*, *amrta*, *jvararih*, *syama*, *vara*, *surakrta*, *madhuparnika*, *chinnodbhava*, *amrtalata*, *rasayani*, *chinna*, *somalatika*, *amrtasambhava*, *vatsadani*, *chinnaruha*, *visalya*, *bhisakpriya*, *kundalini*, *vayastha*, *jivantika*, *nagakumarika*, *syacchadmika*, and *candrasaha*. It is *tikta kasaya rasa*, *guru* and *usna* in nature. It is very effective in diseases like *jvara*, *daha*, *arti* (*pain*), *trsna*, *vami*, *raktavata* (Inflammatory Diseases), *prameha*, *pandu*, and *bhrama* (giddiness). Another variety of *Guduci* and its specific properties are also mentioned.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Though contemporary medicine is definitely in high demand, the world wide usage of herbal drugs are very large.⁸ Prescribing the right drug for the specific disease is the key to successful practice of a Clinician. In *Ayurveda*, herbs form a great proportion of the medicinal combinations mentioned in the Classical *Ayurvedic* Texts. And the key to the drugs mentioned in the *Samhitās* lies in the *Nighaṅṭus*. Here the comparison done between the five prominent *Nighaṅṭus* belonging to different time periods, helps us in understanding the variation in the thought process and also the applications. Seven Synonyms like *chinna*, *chinnaruha*, *chinnodbhava*, *candrasaha*, *kundali*, *vatsadani* and *vayastha* are common in all the *Nighaṅṭus*. Synonyms like *amrta*, *jivanti*, *madhuparni*, and *amrtavalli*, are mentioned in all but one *Nighaṅṭu*. *Amrtakanda*, *chinnangi*, *guducika*, *kandodbhava kanda*, *kanya*, *mrttika* and *saumya* are mentioned only in DN. Synonyms mentioned in MP are common in other *Nighaṅṭus*. Synonyms like *satirupa*, and *vicchinna* are specifically mentioned only in KN. BP mentions synonyms common

Table 1: Synonyms of *guduci* across *nighantus* (Number of synonyms and basis of nomenclature is also seen).

Dhanvantari Nighaṅṭu	Madanapāla Nighaṅṭu	Kaiyyadeva Nighaṅṭu	Bhāvaprakāśa Nighaṅṭu	Rāja Nighaṅṭu
33	12	18	20	23
amṛtakanda (Mo)	amṛtā (Mi)	amṛtā (Mi)	amṛtā (Mi)	amṛtā (Mi)
amṛtālatā (Mo)		amṛtālatā (Mo)		amṛtālatā (Mo)
amṛtasambhavā (Mi)				amṛtasambhavā (Mi)
amṛtavalli (Mo)	amṛtavallārī (Mo)		amṛtavallārī (Mo)	amṛtavalli (Mo)
bahucchinnā (Mo)				
bhiṣagjitā (Mi)				bhiṣakpriyā (Mi) chadmikā
cakralakṣaṇā (Mo)	cakralakṣaṇā (Mo)	cakralakṣaṇī (Mo)	cakralakṣaṇikā (Mo)	
candrahāsā (Mo)	candrahāsā (Mo)	candrahāsā (Mo)	candrahāsā (Mo)	candrahāsā (Mo)
cchinnāṅgī (Mo)				
chinnā (Mo)	chinnā (Mo)	chinnā (Mo)	chinnā (Mo)	chinnā (Mo)
chinnaruhā (Mo)	chinnaruhā (Mo)	chinnaruhā (Mo)	chinnaruhā (Mo)	chinnaruhā (Mo)
chinnodbhavā (Mo)	chinnodbhavā (Mo)	chinnodbhavā (Mo)	chinnodbhavā (Mo)	chinnodbhavā (Mo)
devanirmitā (Mi)			devanirmitā (Mi)	
dhārā (A)		dhārā (A)	dhārā (A)	
guḍūcīkā (A)				
jīvantī (A)	jīvantī (A)		jīvantī (A)	jīvantīkā (A)
jvaranāśinī (A)	jvaravināśinī (A)			jvarārīḥ (A)
kandarohiṇī (Mo)		kandarohiṇī (Mo)		
kandodbhavā kandā (Mo)				
kanyā (Mi)				
kuṇḍalī (Mo)	kuṇḍalī (Mo)	kuṇḍalī (Mo)	kuṇḍalī (Mo)	kuṇḍalīnī (Mo)
madhuparṇī (Mo)		madhuparṇā (Mo)	madhuparṇī (Mo)	madhuparṇīkā (Mo)
maṇḍalī (Mo)			maṇḍalī (Mo)	
mṛttikā				
nāgakumārī				nāgakumārīkā
piṇḍāmṛtā		piṇḍāmṛtā		
rasāyanī (A)			rasāyanī (A)	rasāyanī (A)
saumyā (P)		saṭīrūpā		
somavallī (P)			somavallī (P)	somalatikā
		somā (P)	somā (P)	
				surakṛtā śyāmā
tantrikā (Mo)			tantrikā (Mo)	
vatsādānī (Mi)	vatsādānī (Mi)	vatsādānī (Mi)	vatsādānī (Mi)	vatsādānī (Mi)
vayaṣṭhā (P)	vayasthā (P)	vayaṣṭhā (P)	vayasthā (P)	vayasthā (P)
viśalyā (P)			viśalyā (P)	viśalyā (P)
		varā		varā

Table 2: Properties, Action, Application of guduci across nighantus.

Classifications	Dhanvantari Nighantu	Madanapāla Nighantu	Kaiyyadeva Nighantu	Bhāvaprakāśa Nighantu	Rāja Nighantu
Varga	Guḍūcyādi	Abhayādi	Oṣadhi	Guḍūcyādi	Guḍūcyādi
Rasa	Tikta Kaṣāya	Kaṭu-kaṣāya	Kaṣāya- tikta- kaṭu	Kaṭu- tikta- kaṣāya	Tikta- kaṣāya
Guṇa	Guru	Laghu	Laghu	Laghu	Guru
Vīrya		Usṇa	Usṇa	Usṇa	Usṇa
Vipāka		Svādupāka	Madhura	Svādupāka	
Doṣa haratva	Tridoṣa		Tridoṣa	Tridoṣa	
Roga haratva	jvara, tr̥ṣ, pāṇḍu, vātāsṛk, kaṇḍu, visarpa, chardi and meha	kāmala, kuṣṭha, jvara and kṛmi	kuṣṭha, kṛmi, chardi, dāha, vātāsra, pāṇḍu, jvara, kāmala, meha, tr̥ṣṇā, and kāsa	tr̥ṣ, dāha, meha, kāsā, pāṇḍu, kāmālā, kuṣṭha, vātāsra, jvara, kṛmi, vami, prameha, śvāsa, kāsā, arśaḥ, kṛcchra and hṛdroga	jvara, dāha, arti, tr̥ṣṇā, vami, raktavāta, prameha, pāṇḍu, and bhrama
Karma	āyusya, medhya, saigrāhiṇi and balya	rasāyani, saigrāhiṇi and balya	hṛḍya, balya, vayasah sthāpanam, medhyajananam and vahnikṛt	balya, rasāyani and saigrāhiṇi	
Additional Points	Anupāna specific to the vitiated Doṣa. Properties of specific parts of the plant	Anupāna specific to the vitiated Doṣa			A variety of Guḍūci and its properties are discussed in detail.

to other *Nighaṅṭus*. *Syama* and *sukrarta* are names peculiar to RN (Ref Table 1). The names were allotted to the Plants primarily based on the (Mo) Morphology of the plant owing to the lack of scientific parameters available today for identifying the plant. The synonyms helped in chalking out the morphology to some extent. For example- the name *cakralaksanika* means when the stem is cut, it appears like the spikes of a wheel. Name like *saumya* (Property p) indicated the mild attribute of the plant and *jvaranāśini* (Action A) denotes the effect of the plant in mitigating fever. *Mi*-refers to miscellaneous that can be attributed to other factors. For ex. *vatsadani* indicates that the calf is very fond of this plant. However, the nomenclature itself is very vast and in-depth literature research is required to decipher the reason for each name attributed to the plant (Ref Picture 1).

The *Varga* (group) is *Gudūcyadi* as per DN, BP and RN whereas MP mentions *Abhayadi* and KN mentions it under *Osadhi*. In the case of *Rasa*- only DN and RN have proposed the same but the other three have different opinions within *Katu* (spicy), *Tikta* (bitter) and *Kasaya* (astringent). DN and RN opine it has *guru guṇa* (heavy), in contrary to MP, KN and BP mentioning it as *laghu* (light). Unanimously the *vīrya* (potency) is accepted as *usna* (hot). While DN and RN do not mention the *vipāka* (taste post digestion), the other *Nighaṅṭus* have unanimously accepted it to be *Madhura vipāka* (sweet taste post digestion). Though MP and RN are silent about the *Doṣa Haratva* (mitigation of doṣās), the other three have accepted it to be *tridoṣahara* (mitigates all three doṣās). *Rogaharatva* (mitigation of diseases) is attributed to a wide spectrum of diseases. *Anupāna* (adjuvant) specific to vitiated *doṣas* and properties of specific plant parts is the peculiarity of DN and MN. RN describes about a variety of *Guduci* and its properties. (Ref Table 2 and Picture 2).

CONCLUSION

Guduci is popularly known as *Amṛta*, as the name suggests it is like Ambrosia as it has multi- level targets. Here an attempt is made to analyze the variation across the *Nighaṅṭus* of the same plant in all aspects – *Varga*

(Grouping), *Nama* (Naming), *Guna* (properties) and *Karma* (action). This helps in understanding the multitude of application of the drug and its use in the most appropriate manner, as the physician would desire. Studying a plant includes Literary review in the initial stage that lays a strong foundation for Sub Clinical and Clinical Research. In Modern Pharmacology, a plant is completely studied and mapped for its constituents, but in *Ayurveda*, the properties vary depending on several factors like other drugs added, dosage form, time of administration etc. Hence the reference from all texts books- both classical and lexicons have to be done for better understanding of their applications, so it can be used appropriately. This also gives scope for future studies into unexplored therapeutic applications of the plant *Guduci*. The knowledge from Traditional system of medicine Ayurveda can be used by modern Phyto-pharmaceutical Research for a Novel Drug discovery.¹⁵

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

ABBREVIATIONS

Tco: *Tinospora cordifolia*; **DN:** Dhanvanthari Nighantu; **MP:** Madanapala Nighantu; **KN:** Kaiyyadeva Nighantu; **BP:** Bhavaprakasa Nighantu; **Cent AD:** Century Anno Domini Table 1; **MO:** Morphology; **Mi:** Miscellaneous; **A:** Action, **P:** Property

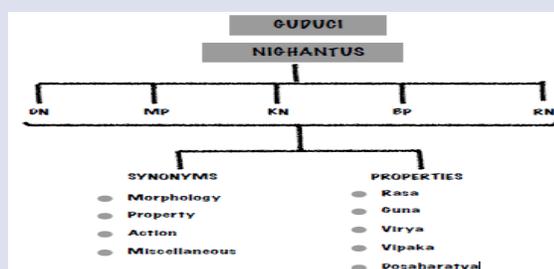
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GRAPHICAL ABSTRACT



SUMMARY

- The *Nighantus* are the Drug Lexicons that serve as a source of reference for the plant, animal or mineral sources of drugs mentioned and used in Ayurveda. Five prominent Nighantus from different time periods were selected and the synonyms and properties mentioned for the plant Guduci - *Tinospora cordifolia* was analysed. The synonyms have been given based on Morphology of the plant to the maximum followed by Property, Action and General factors. The comparative analysis of properties show that there is difference of opinions regarding the different aspects of action of the plant.

ABOUT AUTHORS



Dr Sujithra Ram Manohar BAMS, MSc (Bioinfo) PG Scholar, Dept of Dravya Guna Vijnana, Amrita School of Ayurveda, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Kollam, Kerala.



Dr Vimala MD (Ayu) Professor, Dept of Dravya Guna Vijnana, Amrita School of Ayurveda, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Kollam, Kerala.



Dr Priyalatha MD (Ayu) Asso. Professor, Dept of Dravya Guna Vijnana, Amrita School of Ayurveda, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Kollam, Kerala.



Dr Raiby Paul MD (Ayu) Asso. Professor, Dept of Dravya Guna Vijnana, Amrita School of Ayurveda, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Kollam, Kerala.



Dr Priya S MD (Ayu) HOD & Professor, Dept of Dravya Guna Vijnana, Amrita School of Ayurveda, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Kollam, Kerala.

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