



RESEARCH ARTICLE

योगादपि विषं तीक्ष्णमुत्तमं भेषजं भवेत् WSR TO KUPILU (STRYCHNOSNUX-VOMICA LINN.)

¹Dr. Bishnupriya Mohanty, ²AlakshaSandesh Audi and ³Prof. Dr SangramKeshari Das

¹MD, PhD., Professor and HOD, Department of Sanskrit Samhita and Siddhanta, Gomantak Aurveda Mahavidyalaya and Research Centre, Shiroda, Goa; ²Final B.A.M.S., Gomantak Aurveda Mahavidyalaya and Research Centre, Shiroda, Goa; ³Professor & Head, Dept. of DravyagunaVijnana, Gomantak Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya & Research Centre, At/Po- Shiroda, Dist- North Goa, Goa, India-403103

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 27th March, 2026
Received in revised form
24th April, 2026
Accepted 25th May, 2026
Published online 30th June, 2026

Keywords:

Kuchala, Kuchila, Kupeelu,
Nux Vomica.

*Corresponding author:

Dr. Bishnupriya Mohanty

Copyright©2026, Bishnupriya Mohanty et al. 2026. This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Citation: Dr. Bishnupriya Mohanty, AlakshaSandesh Audi and Prof. Dr SangramKeshari Das, 2026. “योगादपि विषं तीक्ष्णमुत्तमं भेषजं भवेत् WSR TO KUPILU (Strychnosnux-vomica Linn.)”. *International Journal of Current Research*, 18, (06), 37634-37636.

ABSTRACT

Kupilu (Strychnosnux-vomica Linn.) is an important Upavisha (semi-poisonous) drug described in Ayurvedic classics. Despite its inherent toxicity, it is widely used therapeutically after proper Shodhana (purification). The present literary review aims to compile and analyse classical references, pharmacological properties, therapeutic indications, and purification methods of Kupilu. The study highlights its role in managing neurological, musculoskeletal, and digestive disorders, emphasizing the Ayurvedic principle of transforming toxic substances into safe and effective medicines through Samskara.

INTRODUCTION

In classical Ayurvedic texts, numerous plants are recognized for their potent pharmacological actions, including a category known as UpavisaVarga (semi-poisonous group). Among these, Kupilu also commonly known as Vishatinduk (Strychnosnux-vomica Linn.) holds a prominent place due to its therapeutic versatility. The seeds of Kupilu, although inherently toxic, have been widely employed in the management of various disease like neurological, musculoskeletal, and digestive disorders like arthritis, paralysis, and constipation after proper Shodhana (purification/detoxification), reflecting the Ayurvedic principle that the Visha (poison) of a substance can be transformed into Amrita (nectar) when processed and administered correctly. Classical treatises such as the Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Sharangadhara Samhita describe detailed procedures for the preparation and administration of Kupilu, highlighting its role in managing conditions ranging from digestive disorders to neurological and febrile illnesses. Its inclusion in multiple formulations, both single-drug and compound, underscores its medicinal significance in traditional practice. Literary research on Kupilu provides an opportunity to trace its historical mentions, understand the rationale behind its detoxification methods, and analyse the breadth of its

therapeutic applications as recorded in classical Ayurvedic literature. Thus, a thorough literary study of Kupilu not only emphasizes the wisdom of ancient pharmacology (Dravyaguna) but also lays the groundwork for further research into its rational use in contemporary practice, bridging textual knowledge with evidence-based understanding.

AIM: To compile and analyse classical references of Kupilu.

OBJECTIVES

To collect references from Ayurvedic classical texts.
To study Rasa, Guna, Virya, Vipaka.
To analyse Karma and therapeutic uses.
To understand Shodhana (purification process).

MATERIALS

Bruhatrayee (Charaka, Sushruta, AshtangaHridaya)
Laghutrayee
Nighantus (Bhavaprakasha, DhanvantariNighantu)

METHODS

Literary review method.
Compilation of references.
Comparative analysis.

Data collected from classical Ayurvedic texts and compiled systematically.

Common synonyms: Kupilu-Its fruit is similar to that of Pilu (*Salvadoraoleoide* /*Salvadorapersica*), but it is inferior to that herb, because of its poisonous nature. Vishatinduka-Its fruit is similar to Tinduka (*Diospyrostomentos*), but is poisonous. Kakatinduk-It is usually found in forest areas and has fruit resembling Tinduka. usually found in forest areas and has fruit resembling Tinduka. KakaPiluka - Similar to Pilu. Garadruma - Tree bears fruits which are poisonous.

VERNACULAR NAMES

Hindi - Kuchala, Kuchila, Kupeelu.
English - Nux Vomica.
Telugu - MushiniGinjal, MushtiVittulu.
Bengali -Kunchila.
Marathi- Kajara.
Gujarati - Jherkuchala, Zerkochala.
Tamil -Yettikottai.
Malayalam -Kaajjeel.
Arabian -Ajaraki, HabbulGurav.
Parsi - Kuchula, Phuloosemaahi.

BOTANICAL DETAILS

Latin Name: *Strychnosnux-vomica*
Family: Loganiaceae
Part Used: Seeds

Morphology: Habit- Perennial deciduous tree grows up to 100 ft. in height. Tree has sharp and strong axillary spines. Bark- Thin, gray smooth or rough with lenticels. Leaves- Opposite, broadly elliptic, acute tip, glabrous and shining, 5 nerves. the base is usually rounded, and the petiole is 0.5 to 1 cm long. Inflorescence- Terminal pedunculate pubescent compound cymes. Flowers- Greenish white, numerous, short pedicel, pubescent, corolla is 5-lobed, glabrous. Fruits- Globose, 2.5-7.5 cm in diameter, slightly rough and shining surface, orange-red on ripening with many seeds.

DISTRIBUTION AND HABITAT

Throughout tropical India, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Odissa and West Bengal, ascending upto an altitude of 1500 m.

RASAPANCHAKA

Rasa: Tikta, Kashaya.
Guna: Laghu, Ruksha, Tikshna.
Virya: Ushna.
Vipaka: Katu.
Prabhava: Vishaghna (after Shodhana), Balya.
Karma :Kapha-vatahara, Vataghna, Grahi.
Dhatu :Rakta.
Part Used— Seeds, root bark.

Category

Bh. P. Ni - AmradiVarga.

CHEMICAL CONSTITUENTS

Reference: Illustrated DravyagunaVijnana, Vol. II, by Dr JLN Shastry)

Major chemical constituents available in this plant are Strychinine, Vomisine, Brucine, Novacine, Isostrychnine, Cuchiloside and Loganicacid, hemidesmin-2.

KARMA (PHARMACOLOGICAL ACTIONS)

Vatahara, Vedanasthapana (analgesic), Deepana, Pachana, Stambhaka, Balya (after purification), anti-inflammatory, anti-oxidant,gulmahara, Mushikavishahara, Grahi ,and hepatoprotective&Madakrut.

INDICATIONS (VYADHI)

VataVyadhi such as Gridhrasi (sciatica), Pakshaghata, Sandhigatavata, Agnimandya bloating, gastritis, heartburn and nausea , stress or mental strain , headaches especially migraine, vertigo and dizziness. HantiMeda - helps lower cholesterol,useful in obesity Pramehajit-Correct pathology of Prameha.

External Application: Topical application of its paste helps alleviate pain, reduce swelling, and control pus and inflammation. The seed paste is particularly beneficial in inflammatory joint disorders such as Amavata and Sandhivata (osteoarthritis).

SYSTEM-WISE ACTION

•**Nervous System:** Due to its Tikshna properties, it acts as a nervous system tonic, enhancing neural strength and wide range of neurological disorders etc However, excessive doses may trigger convulsions. It is therapeutically indicated in insomnia, facial palsy, hemiplegia, trigeminal neuralgia ,sciatica and other nerve-related pain, and is also used internally for managing spinal cord injuries and neuropathic discomfort.

•**Digestive System:** It possesses carminative, digestive, and absorptive qualities (Rochaka). Its dry and astringent taste helps control excessive salivation and alleviates abdominal cramps. Clinically, it is recommended for conditions like low digestive fire (Agnikrut), gastritis, indigestion, hemorrhoids (Arshohara), helminthiasis (Krumihara), and Grahani (IBS).

Respiratory System (Kanthamayahara). With its bitter and pungent taste, it functions as a Kapha-reducing agent, easing cough and respiratory congestion. It is indicated in pulmonary edema and persistent cough (Shwasa Hara).

Circulatory System: Its hot and penetrating nature stimulates cardiovascular activity, increasing blood pressure and enhancing heart function. Therapeutically, it is used in HridayaSaidilya (cardiomyopathy), HridayaDravata (palpitation), and valvular heart conditions.

•**Excretory System:** (Grahi, Vishtambhi). It exerts a stimulatory effect on urinary function, making it valuable in renal weakness and associated urinary issues. It is particularly helpful in pediatric enuresis and urinary incontinence due to bladder weakness.

Reproductive System: It exhibits aphrodisiac properties and is indicated in premature ejaculation.

Satmikarana (Strength Promotion): It enhances overall vitality and is beneficial in geriatric conditions, including insomnia, anorexia, and nervous system weakness. It also helps in menstrual problems.

Skin (Kushtahara): Useful in dermatological disorders, it alleviates itching and excessive sweating.

- **Tapakrama (Fever Therapy):** It is indicated in VishamaJwara (irregular fevers).
- **Eyes:** Demonstrates miotic activity, aiding in pupillary constriction.

SHODHANA (PURIFICATION PROCESS): Initially, the seeds are enclosed within a clean cotton cloth to form a bolus (Pottali). This bundle is then suspended in cow's milk and subjected to boiling using the DolaYantra method for approximately three hours. This process facilitates the transfer of toxic principles from the seeds into the milk medium. Following this, the seeds are removed, slightly softened, and their outer covering (seed coat) is carefully peeled off. The de-coated seeds are again processed in fresh cow's milk. This procedure is repeated daily for a duration of seven days to ensure thorough purification. After completion of the milk processing, the seeds are dried properly. Subsequently, they are fried in Ghrita (ghee), which further helps in detoxification and potentiation of therapeutic qualities. Finally, the seeds are powdered and stored for medicinal use. In certain traditional practices, especially among some regional healers, an alternative method is followed wherein the purified seeds are fried in castor oil instead of ghee before being powdered.

YOGAS

AgnitundiVati / Agnitundi Rasa: Used for loss of appetite (Agni Mandya), indigestion, and intestinal colic. VishtindukaVati: Primarily indicated for neurological disorders such as paralysis, neuralgia, and facial palsy. VishamushtiVati: A formulation prepared by triturating purified Kupilu and Maricha (black pepper) with Indravaruni juice. Krimimudgara Rasa: Targeted at parasitic infections (Krimi). MahavisagarbhaTailam: A medicated oil used externally for rheumatoid arthritis and chronic joint pain. Navajivana Rasa: Indicated for rejuvenation and treating general debility.(As a Rasayana). KupilubeejadiKwatha: A decoction used for various Vata-related disorders.

TOXICITY & PRECAUTIONS

Highly toxic due to strychnine
Causes convulsions and spasms
Should be used only after Shodhana
Antidote
Cow's milk and ghee
Paribhadra

As soon as toxic symptoms appear, give stomach wash and give cow's ghee along with cow's milk. Use antidotes like opium, belladonna, camphor. Ganja and tobacco.(P.V Sharma)

DISCUSSION

Kupilu is a potent Upavisha drug with significant therapeutic value after purification. Its Tikta Rasa, UshnaVirya, and TikshnaGuna make it effective in Vata disorders. Shodhana reduces toxicity and enhances safety. Modern pharmacology correlates its CNS stimulant action with strychnine content. Thus, it exemplifies the Ayurvedic principle of transforming toxic substances into medicine.

CONCLUSION

Kupilu (Strychnosnux-vomica) is a potent Upavisha drug extensively described in Ayurvedic classics for its therapeutic utility, especially in VataVyadhi. Although inherently toxic, proper Shodhana renders it safe and effective. It exhibits significant actions such as Deepana, Pachana, Vedanasthapana, and Balya. This review highlights the importance of classical knowledge in detoxification and rational drug use. Further scientific validation can help integrate Kupilu into modern evidence-based practice.

REFERENCES

1. Chuneekar K.C., BhavaprakashNighantu. Varanasi. ChoukhambaBharati Academy. Reprint 2010. Aamradiphalavarga /19/ 556.
2. Anonymous. The Ayurvedic Formulary of India. 1st edition. New Delhi. Govt. of India., 1978; 172.
3. ShastriAmbikadatta. BhaisajyaRatnavali. 19th edn. Varanasi. ChaukhambaPrakashan. Reprint 2012. Agnimandhadichikitsaprakaran-93/341.
4. NishteswarDr. K. Text book of Dravyaguna, Varanasi ChaukhambaSurbharatiPrakashan, Kupilu, 2007; 76/270.
5. Sharma R.K, Das Bhagwan., Charaka Samhita, Text with English translation & critical exposition based on CakrapaniDutta's Ayurveda Dipika. Varanasi. Chowkhamba Sanskrit Series office. Reprint, 2008; 1: 24.
6. Kirtikar KR, Basu BD. Indian Medicinal Plants. 2nd edn. Dehra Dun. Bishen Singh Mahendra Pal Singh, 2003; 3: 1646.
