

MINI REVIEW

Review of Shatapushpa Shatavari Kalpa Adhyay: Insights from Kashyap Samhita

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ABSTRACT

The Kashyap Samhita, an ancient and revered Ayurvedic text primarily focusing on pediatrics and gynecology, dedicates an entire chapter, the "Shatapushpa Shatavari Kalpa Adhyaya" to the profound therapeutic potential of two significant herbs: Shatapushpa (Anethum sowa) and Shatavari (Asparagus racemosus). This highlights the ancient wisdom's emphasis on single-drug therapies when applied with thorough understanding and precision. This review delves into the key aspects of this chapter, exploring the properties, actions, and therapeutic applications of these two vital herbs as described by Kashyap.

Keywords: Aartavavaha srotas, Anethum sowa, Rasayana, Rutupravartini, Shatapushpa, Shatavari.

Received 24.06.2025

Revised 01.08.2025

Accepted 30.08.2025

How to cite this article:

Princy Patel and Rita Makim. Review of Shatapushpa Shatavari Kalpa Adhyay: Insights from Kashyap Samhita. Adv. Biores. Vol 16 [5] September 2025. 371-373

INTRODUCTION

Kashyap's explicit focus on *Shatapushpa* and *Shatavari* underscores their importance in addressing women's health concerns. In an era where complex formulations were also prevalent, the emphasis on the distinct and powerful actions of these individual herbs signifies a deep understanding of their unique pharmacodynamics. This chapter provides a foundational understanding of how these readily available natural resources can be effectively utilized for specific therapeutic outcomes.

Shatapushpa: The Blessed Herb for Women's Health

- Shatapushpa, botanically known as *Anethum sowa* and belonging to the Umbelliferae family, is native to Europe. While it has naturalized in North America and Eurasia, it has also been introduced to India where it is cultivated in gardens and can occasionally be found growing wild [1].
- Kashyap meticulously describes Shatapushpa, highlighting its properties (Gunas), taste (Rasa), potency (Virya), and post-digestive effect (Vipaka).
- According to the text, Shatapushpa possesses a sweet taste (Madhura Rasa) and exhibits Brumhana (nourishing), Balya (strengthening), Pushti (nutritive), and Agnivardhini (appetizing) properties. Its Ushna Virya (hot potency) helps in pacifying the Vata Dosha [2].
- Crucially, Kashyap emphasizes Shatapushpa's specific actions on the female reproductive system. It is described as Rutupravartini (stimulates menstruation) and Yoni & Shukra Vishodhini (regulates the functions of the uterus). Its significant Karma (action) is Putrakari (enhancing fertility) and Veeryakari (improves the quality of the ovum).
- Spiritually, Shatapushpa is considered Dhanya (blessed), Mangalya (auspicious), and Paap Nashini (destroyer of negativity) [3].
- Modern research corroborates many of these traditional claims. Shatapushpa (dill) is known to possess essential oils, fatty acids, proteins, and various micronutrients. Its pharmacological actions include emmenagogue, antispasmodic, carminative, and galactagogue properties, aligning with its traditional uses in managing menstrual irregularities, digestive issues, and promoting lactation.

Shatavari: The Rejuvenator for Strength and Vitality

- In Ayurveda, Shatavari has been recognized as one of the essential herbal remedies, usually prescribed to nourish ovary, boost generation of reproductive hormones and sustain libido of women. Six significant Rasayanas reference Shatavari. Rasayanas are herbal remedies that increase immunity and cellular vitality, therefore improving a person's general health [4].
- In contrast to Shatapushpa's heating nature, Kashyap describes Shatavari as having Sheet Veerya (cold potency) and a sweet and astringent taste (Kashaya Madhur Rasa). Its qualities include Snigdha (unctuous), and it is classified as Vrushya (aphrodisiac) and Rasayana (rejuvenative). Shatavari is lauded for enhancing Varna (complexion), Oja (immunity), and Bala (strength). It effectively pacifies both Vata and Pitta Doshas [5].
- Furthermore, Kashyap notes Shatavari's positive impact on cognitive functions, improving Smruti (memory), Medha (intelligence), and Mati (common sense). It is particularly beneficial for the Aartavvaha Srotas (channels related to menstruation), acting as Puspakari (regulates the menstrual process) and Prajakari (enhancing fertility).
- Modern science has extensively studied Shatavari, revealing its rich phytoconstituents like saponins and flavonoids, which contribute to its estrogenic, antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and immunomodulatory properties. These findings support its traditional use in promoting reproductive health, managing menopausal symptoms, boosting immunity, and improving overall vitality [6].

Therapeutic Applications: Ancient Wisdom for Modern Challenges

The "Shatapushpa Shatavari Kalpa Adhyaya" provides specific indications and formulations utilizing these two herbs, primarily focusing on gynecological disorders. Some key applications mentioned include:

- ✓ Amenorrhea and Oligomenorrhea: Both herbs are indicated in regulating menstrual flow. Shatapushpa's Rutupravartini action and Shatavari's influence on Aartavvaha Srotas contribute to normalizing the menstrual cycle.
- ✓ Infertility: The Putrakari and Prajakari properties of Shatapushpa and Shatavari, respectively, highlight their role in enhancing fertility in women.
- ✓ Menopausal Symptoms: Shatavari's Sheet Veerya and rejuvenating properties are beneficial in alleviating symptoms associated with menopause.
- ✓ Clinical trials have shown that Shatavari improves ovarian function and endometrial thickness, while Shatapushpa helps in reducing dysmenorrhea and increasing prolactin levels for lactation.
- **Formulations in Kalpa Adhyaya**
 - ✓ Kashyap also provides specific methods of administration, often recommending the use of Churna (powder) of either Shatapushpa or Shatavari with Ghrita (clarified butter), followed by a diet of milk and cooked rice. The text even suggests a gradual increase in dosage over time to achieve desired outcomes, indicating a sophisticated understanding of drug administration and its impact on the body.

DISCUSSION

Combining *Shatavari* and *Shatapushpa* reflects the Ayurvedic principle of synergism, where one herb supports the action of the other. The *Kalpa Adhyaya* ensures proper dosage, timing, and adjuvants, ensuring maximum efficacy with minimal side effects. The emerging evidence from modern pharmacological studies supports traditional claims, enhancing the relevance of these *Kalpas* in contemporary gynecological practice.

CONCLUSION

The "*Shatapushpa Shatavari Kalpa Adhyaya*" of *Kashyap Samhita* stands as a testament to the profound knowledge of single-herb therapeutics in ancient Ayurveda. The detailed descriptions of *Shatapushpa* and *Shatavari*, their properties, actions, and specific applications in women's health, continue to hold relevance today. Modern scientific investigations are increasingly validating the traditional uses of these herbs, bridging the gap between ancient wisdom and contemporary evidence-based practices. This chapter serves as a valuable resource for understanding the individual and synergistic potential of these two remarkable herbs in promoting women's well-being.

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