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Review

Herbs Used in the Treatment of Varicose Veins

Kathirvel. B ^{1*}, Dr. L .V. Vigneshwaran², Abinayah³, Nandhini.S⁴, Lokeshwari .P⁵, Ganesh .S⁶, Gunal B⁷

RKP College of Pharmacy, Krishnagiri, Tamil Nadu -635001.

*Corresponding author: Kathirvel. B

Email: kathirvel19443@gmail.com

	Abstract
Published on: 12.03.2026	The lower limbs are typically affected by varicose veins, a common chronic venous condition marked by dilated, convoluted, and swollen veins. They greatly impair quality of life and are linked to symptoms like pain, heaviness, edema, itching, skin discoloration, and ulceration. The primary focus of conventional therapy choices is either surgical operations or symptomatic alleviation, which may not always be cost-effective or free of side effects. This article discusses the role of traditional systems of medicine under AYUSH, including Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy, in the care of varicose veins. There is discussion of traditional Ayurvedic ideas like Vata prakopa, Rakta dushti, and parasurgical techniques like Siravedha and Jalaukavacharana. Horse chestnut, garlic, gotu kola, brahmi, onion, ginger, apple cider vinegar, butcher's broom, and many Siddha and Unani formulations are among the medicinal plants whose therapeutic potential is emphasized. In order to improve venous circulation and slow the progression of disease, yoga therapies and lifestyle changes are also highlighted. According to the review, an integrative strategy that makes use of AYUSH therapies may provide a holistic, safe, and economical option for managing and preventing varicose veins. Varicose veins are superficial veins that are dilated, elongated, and twisted; they typically affect the lower limbs. They arise as a result of venous valve incompetence, which typically stops blood from flowing backward. Failure of these valves causes blood to reflux and accumulate in the veins, increasing venous pressure, dilating the veins, and gradually weakening the vein wall. Age, female sex, pregnancy, genetic predisposition, obesity, prolonged standing, and a history of deep vein thrombosis are risk factors. Varicose veins are widespread throughout the world and become more common as people age.
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	Keywords: Varicose veins, Chronic venous disease, AYUSH, Herbal medicine, Ayurveda, Siddha, Homeopathy, Integrative therapy.

1. INTRODUCTION

The condition known as varicose veins occurs when the veins in the legs become visible from the outside and seem enlarged and bulging. The majority of varicose veins are seen on the thigh and back of the calf muscles, they are less common on the inside of the legs. People who work long hours, such as police officers and conductors, frequently have varicose veins. Heaviness in the legs, cramping in the muscles, itching around the enlarged vein, and pain in the entire leg or just the lower leg are typical symptoms. Varicose veins, commonly referred to as spider veins, varicose, or varicosities, are swollen or twisted Veins that mostly affect the legs[1]. Certain dietary inadequacies may result in the veins losing their flexible Varicose veins can either stay the same color or turn black. They hurt all the time. In some afflicted areas of the legs, skin peeling and skin ulcers may occur in cases with persistent varicose veins. Blood from the legs pushes upward to reach the heart when the muscles contract, opening the valves. The valves seal to stop blood from flowing backward into the legs when these muscles relax[2]. When these valves malfunction, blood flows in the opposite direction and stagnates in the leg Patients with varicose veins had greater levels of prothrombotic and inflammatory markers[3]. In a population-based study carried out in Finland, 888 people with varicose veins had a significantly increased chance of acquiring artery disease than 2006 control patients. People who have varicose veins may also be more vulnerable to heart attacks, cerebrovascular disorders, angina pectoris.[4]

AYUSH is an acronym for Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy and are the six Indian systems of medicine prevalent and practiced in India and some of the neighboring Asian countries with very few exceptions in some of the developed countries. A department called the department of Indian system of medicine was created in March 1995 and renamed to AYUSH in November 2003 with a focus to provide increased attention for the development of these systems. This was felt in order to give increased attention to these systems in the presence of a strong counterpart in the form of allopathic system of medicine which lead to a “architectural correction” in the health service envisaged by National Rural Health Mission (NRHM)[5].

2. HISTORY

Varicose veins have been recognized since ancient times and were recorded in early Egyptian, Greek, and Roman medical books. Compression bandaging was advised by Hippocrates, and Galen helped to clarify venous anatomy. Bandaging and cauterization were used as therapies during the Middle Ages. Vein stripping and surgical ligation were first used in the 19th century. Sclerotherapy was introduced in the 20th century, and for safer and more efficient treatment, contemporary management today concentrates on minimally invasive methods such as laser and radiofrequency ablation.

2.1. TYPES

- Truncal varicose veins
- Varicosities of extremities
- Reticular varicose veins
- Side branch varicose vein
- Telangiectasia varicose vein
- Spider vein

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

According to published research, venous valve incompetence and venous hypertension are the main causes of chronic venous illness, which frequently manifests as varicose veins. According to epidemiological research, the frequency is higher in women, the elderly, and those who work long hours standing up. According to research, symptoms that impair quality of life include discomfort, edema, skin abnormalities, and venous ulcers. The gold standard in diagnostics is Doppler ultrasonography. According to recent research, minimally invasive procedures including radiofrequency ablation, sclerotherapy, and endovenous laser therapy are replacing traditional surgery because they provide better results, fewer complications, and quicker recovery[6].

3.1. MECHANISM

Mechanisms underlying the development of varicose veins. Increased hydrostatic pressure and wall strain in individuals with predisposed risk factors promotes matrix metalloproteinases (MMPs) activation and alterations in the endothelium and vascular smooth muscle. Furthermore, MMPs are activated by leukocyte wall infiltration and inflammation, which results in extracellular matrix degradation, venous wall weakness, and wall/valve fibrosis. Primary valve insufficiency in both the axial and tributary veins could be a potential cause, however this is probably a subsequent occurrence

after primary venous wall alterations and dilation. Hydrostatic pressure rises as a result of valve dysfunction and persistent venous wall dilatation. MMP-mediated vein wall dilatation with subsequent valve dysfunction leads to chronic venous disease (CVD) and varicose vein development[7].

3.2. CURRENT STATUS

The state of varicose veins nowadays Chronic venous disorders are extremely widespread worldwide. Rising frequency as a result of obesity and a sedentary lifestyle more prevalent in adults, particularly in women and the elderly Doppler ultrasonography is typically used for early diagnosis. Shift toward minimally invasive therapies (EVL, RFA, sclerotherapy) Nowadays, surgical stripping is less common. High success rate using contemporary techniques Prioritize quality of life, cosmetic enhancement, and symptom relief.

3.3. AYURVEDA

Ayurveda is the traditional Indian system of medicine which is meant not only for curing the diseases but also for prevention of the occurrence of illnesses. Ayurveda provides a plethora of information on ethnic folklore practices and traditional aspects of therapeutically important medicines. Ayurveda is getting global acceptance primarily due to its holistic therapeutic practice, extensive profound conceptual basis and survival of its medicines since prehistoric times[8].

4. Beneficial Herbs for Varicose Veins

4.1. BRAHMI

Perhaps the most effective Ayurvedic remedy for varicose veins is the native Indian plant brahmi. It makes veins less tortuous helps in the proper assimilation and distribution of protein in the human body. It gives Inner strength. Chomping on one onion everyday can help to solve the problem of varicose Veins permanently.

4.2. GINGER

Ginger breaks down and distributes protein in the body similarly to garlic.

4.3. GARLIC

Garlic has a number of beneficial qualities, including the ability to alleviate varicose veins. Garlic has the ability to break down and uniformly distribute the body's protein. As a result, the lower

limb region receives more protein. As a result, varicose veins are prevented.

4.4. ONION

Onions aid in the body's appropriate distribution and absorption of protein. It provides inner fortitude. Varicose veins can be permanently resolved by chomping on one onion each day.

4.5. HORSE CHESTNUT

In Europe and Germany, horse chestnut seed extract was used to treat chronic venous insufficiencies. Unprocessed or crude seeds are avoided since they could be harmful to one's health. Aescin is the most active component of horse chestnut seeds, making up 16–20% of the extract. Other components include tannins, flavanoids, quinines, sterols, certain fatty acids, coumarins, and scopolin.

4.6. GOTU KOLA

The medication gotu kola is well-known for treating skin conditions and supporting healthy veins. According to the 19th-century Indian Pharmacopoeia, it can treat a number of skin conditions, including psoriasis, eczema, leprosy, and varicose ulcers. The plant's active ingredient, asiaticoside, is made up of an aglycone moiety called asiatic acid and a triglyceride moiety. It has anti-inflammatory, anti-ulcer, and antioxidant properties. Madecassol is a plant-derived triterpenoid. Triterpenoids with vascular actions, such as saponins and sapogenins, exhibit woundhealing qualities[9].

4.7. APPLE

Applying apple cider vinegar helped relieve pain, oedema, irritation, pigmentation, ulceration, exhaustion, and other symptoms of varicose veins, according to an experiment done on a particular set of patients[10]. In addition to receiving therapy from the doctor, the patients were instructed to apply apple cider vinegar to the afflicted area and cover it with a cloth for approximately half an hour twice a day for a month. After the test was finished, the statistical data revealed a reduction in discomfort, exhaustion, oedema, and itching, pigmentation, and cramps as compared to the patients who were not asked to apply the vinegar. Acetic acid is the most important component of the apple cider vinegar[11].

5. BUTCHER'S BROOM [RUSCUS

ACULEATUS]

Ruscogenin, neoruscogenin, and steroidal saponins are the active components of the plant. Steroidal saponins, sapogenins, sterols, triterpenes, coumarins, flavanoids, glycolic acid, sparteine, tyramine, etc. are examples of additional chemical substances. The plant's roots have historically been used medicinally because they have a higher concentration of ruscogenins[12].

5.1. GARLIC

Because of its many therapeutic uses and health benefits, garlic has long been used as a traditional medication to treat a variety of illnesses. Allicin, allin, ajoene, dially polysulfides, S-allylcysteine, saponins, glycosides, amino acids, vitamins, and minerals are among the chemical components of garlic. It lowers blood pressure in addition to possesses antioxidant properties. Apart from this, it is also said to have protein breakdown ability which distributes the protein substance evenly in the body and hence results in increased supply of protein to the lower limbs [13].

5.2. YOGA

Yoga therapy may be effective in treating varicose vein complications. It includes stretches for the neck, shoulders, elbows, wrists, fingers, hips, knees, and hamstring muscles in addition to yogic cleansing techniques, gentle joint mobilisation, asanas (yogic postures), pranayama (voluntarily controlled breathing exercises), deep relaxation techniques (DRT), and meditation. Enemas, mud applications, and full body massages are all part of naturopathy treatments.

5.3. YOGIC INTERVENTION

Interventions with Yoga In accordance with the individuals' conditions, yogic treatments

were taught progressively and provided slowly. Swastikasana, Vajrasana, Supta-Vajrasana, Simhasana, Tadasana-1-2, Trikonasana, Parsvakonasana, Pachimotasana, Purvottanasana, Janushirsasana, Pavanamuktasana, Bhujangasana, Shalabasana, Dhanurasana, Makarasana, Paryankasana, Baddakosnasan, Upavistkonasa, Jatharaparivartasana, Viparitrakrani-Mudra, and Utanapadasana. Pranayams such as Bhramari, Ujjayi, Nadishuddi, and Bhastrika. methods of relaxation such as Shavasana-1 and 2. Yogic interventions and preliminary yoga practice preparation kick off the sessions. advantages of an optimal lifestyle and a healthy diet. Asana took forty minutes. The following fifteen minutes were spent in pranayama. Lastly, spend five minutes using the relaxation technique. Yoga intervention sessions lasted a total of sixty minutes. The control group went about their daily lifestyle[14].

5.4. UNANI

Varicose veins are referred to as Dawali in the Unani System of Medicine (Greek-Arab medicine). The phrase describes a disorder in which the veins, usually in the legs, expand, thicken, and become tortuous (twisted), frequently showing up under the skin as dark purple or greenish. The Unani Medical System The seven Umoor-e-Tabiya components that make up the human body are regarded as a single unit. Arkan (elements), Mizaj (temperament), Akhlaat (humors), Arwaah (life force), Aaza (organs), and Quwa (faculties)Afa'al (Functions)are the several elements. Unani philosophy holds that the body is composed of the four fundamental elements Earth, Air, Water, and Fire—each of which has a distinct temperament—Cold, Hot, Wet, and Dry.

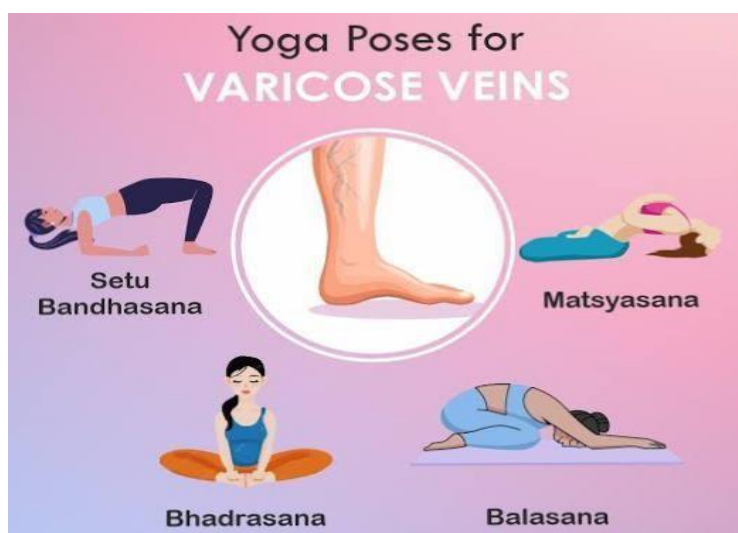


Fig . 1
TABLE NO. 1

PLANT NAME	CONSTITUENTS	USES
Vitis vinifera Linn	Minerals, sugars, sterols, amino acids, polyphenols, anthocyanins, and proanthocyanidins.	Capillary bleeding, edema, inflammation, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, and cardioprotective effects[15,16]
Aesculus hippocastanum L. (Hippocastanaceae)	Vitamins C and K, Vitamin B - B1, B2, fats, Starches, saponosides, triterpenes, bitter Principles, tannins, fats, albumin, and Flavonoid compounds	Tonic, anti-inflammatory, phlebotonic, vasodilating properties. Improve vascular resistance, reduce pathologically induced capillary wall permeability, astringent[17,18,19].
Capsicum frutescens L. (Solanaceae)	Carotenoids, phenolic acids, vitamins, tannins, and terpenoids. Quercetin, luteolin, kaempferol, catechin, epicatechin, rutin, apigenin, and myricetin	Fibrinolytic action which is helpful in varicose veins treatment.[20]
Solanum tuberosum L. (Solanaceae)	Chlorogenic, ferulic, gallic and caffeic acid. Anthocyanins, anthocyanidins, malvidin, petunidin, delphinidin, and peonidin	Paste is used on varicose veins of the legs[21].
Helianthus annulus L. (Asteraceae)	Heliannone, kaempferol, quercetin, apigenin, and luteolin. Alkaloids, phenols, saponins, tannins, dietary fiber, phenolic acids, and triterpene glycosides	Used in varicose veins[22].

SIDDHA:

INTERNAL MEDICINE ELATHYCHOORANAM

ELAM



FIGURE NO.02

Botanical name : Elettaria cardamomum
English name : Cardamom seed
Family : Zingiberacea

Organoleptic character

Taste : Acrid
Potency : Hot
Division : Acrid

Action:

- Stimulant
- Carminative
- Stomachic
- Antispasmodic
- Tonic

Chemical constituents:

Alpha terminal acetate, Lineally acetate, Limonene, Linalool, Cineole, Citronella, Nero, Transnerolidol .

MILAGU



FIGURE NO.3

Botanical name. : Piper nigrum **English name** : Black pepper

Family : Piperaceae

Organoleptic character

Taste : Bitter, Acrid

Potency : Hot **Division** : Acrid

Action:

- Carminative
- Pungent
- Anti periodic
- Analgesic
- Anti inflammatory
- Anti oxidant
- Cyclo oxygenase inhibitory activity

Chemical constituents:

A volatile alkaloid piperine or pipirine 5-9%, piperidine or piperidin 5%, balsamic volatile essential 1-2%, fat 7%. Mesocarp contains chavicin, a balsamic volatile oil, starch, gum, piperettine, pipericide, sarmentine, eugenol.[23]

KIRAMBU



FIGURE NO.4

Botanical name	:	Syzygium aromaticum
English name	:	Cloves, Clove tree
Family	:	Mirabeau
Organoleptic character		
Taste	:	Acrid
Potency	:	Hot
Division	:	Acrid

Action:

- Anti spasmodic
- Carminative
- Stomachic

Chemical constituents:

Essential oils mainly contain eugenol, euginyl acetate, beta – caryophiline.

NAAYURUVI



FIGURE NO.5

Botanical name	:	Achyranthus aspera
English name	:	Prickly chaff
Family	:	Amaranthaceae
Organoleptic character		
Taste	:	Bitter, Astringent, Pungent
Potency	:	Hot
Division	:	Acrid

Action:

- Astringent

- Diuretic
- Alterative
- Anti periodic

Chemical constituents:

Fruits contains a large percentage of alkaline ash containing potash.

VETPALAI



FIGURE NO.6

Botanical name	:	Wrightia tinctoria
English name	:	Sweet indrajoo
Family	:	Apocynaceae
Organoleptic character		
Taste	:	Astringent, sweet, slightly bitter
Potency	:	Hot
Division	:	Acrid
Action:		
➤ Astringent		

Chemical constituents:

The bark contains triterpenes as the major components and B sitosterol as a minor component. The former included B-amyrin, lupeol and another triterpene alcohol.

THUTHUVALAI

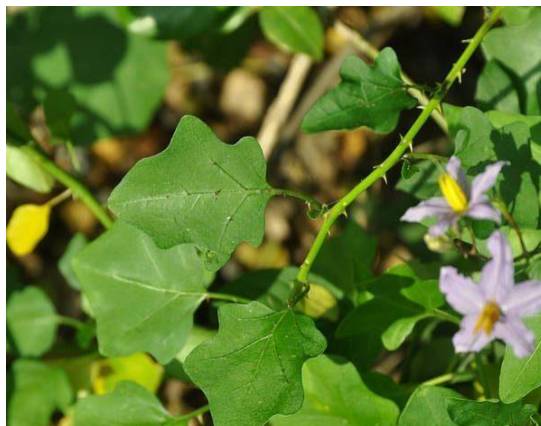


FIGURE NO .7

Botanical name	:	Solanum trilobatum
English name	:	Purple fruited pea egg plant
Family	:	Solanaceae
Organoleptic character		
Taste	:	Slightly bitter, pungent
Potency	:	Hot
Division	:	Acrid

Action:

- Stimulant
- Expectorant
- Tonic

Chemical properties:

The leaf and stem contain sobatum, B-solamarine, seasoning, solaine glycoalkaloid and diosogenin.

Homeopathy:

Treatment of varicose vein problems (VVC) using homeopathy Specifically, homeopathy will offer a customized approach to varicose vein treatment. About 10 different approaches to managing varicose vein problems are available in homeopathy. In clinical practice, a number of homeopathic medications, including Arnica montana, Arsenicum album, Belladonna, Lachesis, Ledum palustr, Rhus toxicodendron, and others, are known to dissolve blood clots and stop the recurrence of specific VTE symptoms. However, Wadhwani reported that Argentinum nitricum, a single medication with LM potencies, completely cured a patient with DVT. Therefore, the selection criteria for a particular homeopathic medication are entirely dependent on a holistic approach and may differ. By activating plasmin proteins by stimulation of activators to eliminate the clots (plasminogens) more quickly than the regular process, it appears likely that homeopathic medications can speed up the natural proces.Five homeopathic medications Belladonna,

Pyrogenium, Apis mel, Vipera trova, and Lachesis were methodically applied in this instance based on the symptoms and changes that were indicated. There are two clear benefits to using homeopathic medications: i) they don't seem to aggravate patients or have any negative effects when used sparingly; and ii) they are less expensive. In many nations, including India and its neighbors, homeopathy is the second most common therapeutic"option.

- Arnica, sometimes referred to as "Leopard's Bane," is used to treat varicose veins that are painful and swollen to the touch.
- Aesculum Hippocastanum (Horse Chestnut): This plant is used to cure purple and elongated veins.
- Bellis perenis (Daisy): Pregnant women with varicose veins that impair their ability to walk are treated with bellis perenis.
- Carbo vegetabilis (vegetable charcoal): It is said to be an effective treatment for mottled skin with swollen veins. Hydrofluoric acid, or fluoric acidum: -Fluoric acidum is used to treat ulcers and persistent varicose veins.

- Hamamelis (Witch Hazel): This homoeopathic remedy is used to treat clogged, bloated, painful, and large varicose veins in the legs and thighs.
- Lachesis (Bushmaster snake): This is a common treatment for the bluish-red swelling that varicose veins cause.
- Pulsatilla (Wind Flower): Pulsatilla is used to treat lower limb dilated veins. This herbal medicine may be pale blue in colour and cause stinging pain, which is especially noticeable during pregnancy.
- Sepia, which comes from the inn of the cuttlefish, is used to treat stiff, congested purple veins.
- Lycopodium (Club moss): For leg pain, lycopodium is often the recommended remedy. According to the pilot study's findings, Arnica D12 may be beneficial in lowering haematoma and post-operative discomfort.
- Sepia, which comes from the inn of the cuttlefish, is used to treat stiff, clogged, purple veins.
- Lycopodium (Club moss): For leg pain, lycopodium is often the recommended remedy. According to the pilot study's findings, Arnica D12 may help lessen hematomas and postoperative pain.
- Calcareo Fluorica is the original chemical mixture of fluoric acid and lime is the source of the Calcareo fluorica homeopathic treatment.
- Graphites is among the greatest homeopathic remedies for vein itching. Additionally, it is used to treat leg cramps in people who are typically obese, constipated, and may have other skin issues[24].

6. DISCUSSIONS

6.1. APPLICATION IN THE TREATMENT OF VARICOSE VEINS

It reduces leg edema, soreness, and heaviness. Improves venous blood circulation and avoids problems like thrombophlebitis and ulceration. Conservative techniques: exercise, leg elevation, and compression stockings. Medical therapy: venoactive medications. Minimally invasive procedures include radiofrequency ablation, laser therapy, and sclerotherapy. Surgical techniques: phlebectomy, stripping, and vein ligation enhance one's quality of life and appearance.

6.2. LIMITATION

Varicose Veins cause discomfort in the legs, soreness, and heaviness, causing skin discoloration and edema. May cause bleeding and venous ulcers. Risk of infection and thrombophlebitis impacts daily activities and mobility. Dissatisfaction with appearance may return even after therapy. Often, long-term management is necessary.

6.3. SUMMARY

Varicose veins are a common chronic venous disorder caused by venous valve incompetence and increased venous pressure. They present with pain, swelling, heaviness, skin changes, and sometimes ulcers, affecting quality of life. Diagnosis is mainly done using Doppler ultrasound. Management has shifted from conventional surgery to minimally invasive treatments such as sclerotherapy, laser, and radiofrequency ablation, which offer effective symptom relief and improved cosmetic outcomes, though recurrence remains a concern.

7. Conclusion

If neglected, varicose veins can cause serious physical discomfort and problems. They are a chronic and progressive vascular condition. By treating both the underlying cause and related symptoms, traditional medical systems covered under AYUSH offer a thorough and all-encompassing approach to the treatment of varicose veins. Through treatments like Siravedha, Jalaukavacharana, herbal remedies, and dietary control, Ayurveda places a strong emphasis on correcting doshic imbalance and purifying blood. Important internal and exterior formulations that raise circulation, lower inflammation, and improve vascular tone are provided by the Siddha and Unani systems. While yoga and naturopathy play a significant supportive role through postures, breathing techniques, relaxation, and lifestyle change, homeopathy offers customized therapeutic alternatives with few side effects. The combined use of herbal drugs, parasurgical procedures, yoga practices, and dietary modifications can greatly reduce symptoms, prevent problems, and enhance general quality of life. To improve the evidence foundation and encourage broader acceptance of AYUSH-based therapies in the integrative therapy of varicose veins, additional scientific validation, standardization, and clinical trials are necessary.

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