

7.1.8. Shankhpushpi (29)

The drug has been named shankhapushpi because its flowers are in the shape of conch or shanka.

Synonyms

English Speedwheel, Dwarf Morning-glory, Sankhahul, Sankhvel, and Sankhavali.

Biological Source

Shankhapushpi is the whole dried herb of *Convolvulus pluricaulis* (syn. *Convolvulus microphyllus*) and *Evolvulus alsinoides* L.

Family

Convolvulaceae

Occurrence and Distribution

Shankhapushpi plant (figure 7.8) is found to be growing wildy in the plains of India.



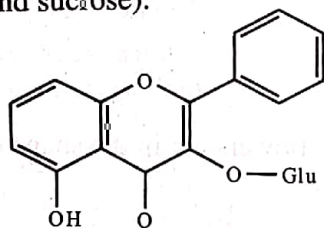
Figure 7.8: *Convolvulus Pluricaulis*

Organoleptic Evaluation

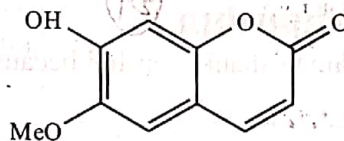
- 1) **Root:** 1-5cm long, 0.1-0.4cm thick; yellowish-brown to light brown in colour.
- 2) **Stem:** Slender, light green, cylindrical in shape; 0.1cm or less in thickness; clear hair nodes and internodes.
- 3) **Leaves:** Shortly petiolate, linear lanceolate, acute apex, hairy on both the surfaces; 0.5-2cm long and 0.1-0.5cm broad; light green in colour.
- 4) **Flowers:** White or pinkish in colour.
- 5) **Fruit:** Oblong globose with caraceous; pale brown pericarp.
- 6) **Seed:** Brown in colour; minutely puberulous.

Chemical Constituents

The major constituent of shankhapushpi is **shankhpushpine** (an alkaloid). Flavonoids (kaempferol and kaempferol-3-glucosides) and coumarin derivatives (6-methoxy-7-hydroxy coumarin) are also present. Some long-chain fatty alcohols (n-hexacosanol, n-octacosanol, n-triacontanol, and dotriacontanol) are also present. Shankhapushpi also contains 3,4-dihydroxycinnamic acid, β - and ϵ -sitosterols, and sugars (glucose, rhamnose, and sucrose).



Kaempferol-3-O-glucoside



6-Methoxy-7-hydroxycoumarin

Therapeutic Efficacy

- 1) It is used for nervous debility, insomnia, fatigue, and low energy level.
- 2) The entire plant is used in the form of decoction with cumin and milk to control fever.
- 3) It is a brain tonic, alterative, and febrifuge.
- 4) It is used in dysentery.
- 5) It is used as an anti-depressant and to put the brain in a stress-free state.
- 6) It is effectively used for diabetes.
- 7) It improves memory.
- 8) Its alcoholic extract is a potent antifungal.
- 9) The methanolic extracts of its stem callus, leaf callus, and the entire plant provides protection against tonic convulsion. It also possesses a potent anticonvulsant activity.
- 10) It possesses antiulcerogenic effect.
- 11) Its root extract decreases serum concentration of T3 and hepatic 5-D activity.
- 12) Its water-soluble fraction causes a prolonged hypotension. It also exerts spasmolytic activity on smooth muscles.
- 13) Ethyl acetate and aqueous fractions of the ethanolic extract of aerial parts exerts anxiolytic effect.
- 14) Its methanolic extract shows antioxidant activity.
- 15) Its ethanolic extract reduces serum cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, triglycerides, and phospholipids.
- 16) Its juice prevents excessive menstruation.
- 17) The paste obtained by grinding the plant is helpful for curing abscesses.