

Historical and Scientific use of Shatavari

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Asparagus racemosus aka: Shatavari, an herb native to India, has been used in Ayurvedic medicine for thousands of years. The first written accounts of its medicinal use were written between 4500 and 1600 BC. It's known as the "Queen of Herbs" and translates to "who possesses a hundred husbands or acceptable to many", due to its ability to act on the female reproductive system. Scientific research confirms its safety for use in all phases of life, including pregnancy and breastfeeding. (Prasad n.d.)

A. racemosus has been used historically to treat disorders of the female reproductive tract, to prevent threatened miscarriage, as a galactagogue and even as a restorative for the male reproductive system. In Thailand, traditionally the decorticated roots of the plant have been used as a remedy for diseases of spleen, liver and other internal organs, including the prevention of miscarriage. In India, conventionally the roots have been utilized during internal pain, tumors, fever and as a tonic. (Singla and Jaitak 2013).

Aside from Shatavari's affinity for both female and male reproductive systems and its reputation as an herbal adaptogen, *a. racemosus* is a soothing demulcent with emollient properties useful in treating dyspepsia, gastric and duodenal ulceration, intestinal colic, diarrhea, hepatitis and hepatomegaly, hemorrhoids, pharyngitis, cough, bronchitis, asthma, tuberculosis, stranguary (painful urination), urethritis, cystitis, nephropathy, leucorrhea, amenorrhea,

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dysmenorrhea, agalactia, female and male infertility, threatened miscarriage, menopause, epilepsy, fatigue, asthenia, cardiopathies, tumors and surgical adhesions. (Caldecott, T. 2014)

In a 2103 scientific review of *a. racemosus*, Alok et al.'s research confirms shatavari's wide array of medicinal applications, including its use as a immunomodulator, molluscicidal, analgesic, antidepressant, anti-inflammatory, diuretic, antihepatotoxic with potential to prevent hepatocarcinogenesis; immunoadjuvant potential against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis; exhibitor of antioxidant effects during gama radiation effecting lipid peroxidation and protein oxidation; antilithiatic activity against lithiasis (stone formation); enhances memory and protects against amnesia; beneficial in the management of stress, reduces blood glucose and has a positive effect on central nervous system. Gastrointestinal effects include promotion of gastric emptying, protection of gastric mucosa, antidiarrheal and treats duodenal ulcers and protects against intra-abdominal sepsis.

Shatavari is best known as a "versatile female tonic for female infertility, as it increases libido, cures inflammation of sexual organs and even moistens dry tissues of the sexual organs, enhances folliculogenesis and ovulation, prepares womb for conception, prevents miscarriages." Additionally its uterine sedative properties have been found responsible for the competitive block of oxytocin induced contraction while acting as post partum tonic by increasing lactation, normalizing uterus and changing hormones.

This all round amazing herb can be a woman's best friend and certainly belongs in ever herbal apothecary. I have used it quite successfully with many clients over the years and highly recommend it.

RESOURCES:

- 1) Alok, S., Jain, S., Verma, A., Mahor, A. & Sabharwal, M. (2013) Plant profile, phytochemistry and pharmacology of *Asparagus racemosus* (Shatavari): A review. *Asian Pac J Trop Dis.* Jun 2013; 3(3): 242–251. doi: 10.1016/S2222-1808(13)60049-3
- 2) Caldecott, T. (2014). Shatavari. Retrieved from <http://toddcaldcott.com/herbs/shatavari/>
- 3) Prasad, K. (n.d.) ASPARAGUS (Shatavari) as Multi target Drug in Women. Retrieved from <http://technoayurveda.com/Shatavari.html>
- 4) Singla R and Jaitak V (2013). Shatavari (*Asparagus racemosus* Wild): A review on its cultivation, morphology, phytochemistry and pharmacological importance. *Int J Pharm Sci Res* 2014; 5(3): 742-57. doi: 15.13040/IJPSR.0975-8232.5(3).742-57

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