
Herbal Chyawanprash - A Natural Immunity Booster to Fight against Various Diseases

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ABSTRACT

Chyawanprash is an Ayurvedic health supplement which is made up of a super-concentrated blend of nutrient-rich herbs and minerals. It is meant to restore drained reserves of life force (ojas) and to preserve strength, stamina, and vitality, while stalling the course of aging. Chyawanprash is formulated by processing around 50 medicinal herbs and their extracts, including the prime ingredient, Amla (Indian gooseberry), which is the world's richest source of vitamin C. Chyawanprash preparation involves preparing a decoction of herbs, followed by dried extract preparation, subsequent mixture with honey, and addition of aromatic herb powders (namely clove, cardamom, and cinnamon) as standard. The finished product has a fruit jam-like consistency, and a sweet, sour, and spicy flavor. Scientific exploration of Chyawanprash is warranted to understand its therapeutic efficacy. Scattered information exploring the therapeutic potential of Chyawanprash is available, and there is a need to assemble it. Thus, an effort was made to compile the scattered information from ancient Ayurvedic texts and treatises, along with ethnobotanical, ethnopharmacological, and scientifically validated literature, that highlight the role of Chyawanprash in therapeutics. Citations relevant to the topic were screened.

Keywords: *Chyawanprash, ayurveda, Indian gooseberry, medicinal plants, nutraceutical, health supplement, traditional medicine.*

INTRODUCTION

Chyawanprash (CHYAWANPRASH) (also known as Chyavanaprasha,) comprises two lexes, “Chyawan” and “Prasha”. The word *Chyawan* is the name of a sage, and also symbolizes ‘degenerative change’. *Prasha* denotes a drug or foodstuff that is suitable for consumption. Indeed, Chyawanprash is a comprehensive ‘metabolic’ tonic; it contains a variety of herbs and is used to promote health and prevent diseases. Chyawanprash is an

ancient Indian formulation (a polyherbal jam), prepared according to a traditional Ayurvedic recipe, enriched with several herbs, herbal extracts, and processed minerals. Regarded by many experts as an essential health supplement, Chyawanprash has been around for centuries. Chyawanprash possesses multiple health benefits and has been widely used since ancient times as a health supplement and as a medicine for enhancing immunity and longevity. Chyawanprash has been a part of

every Indian's life from the day it was introduced, irrespective of sociocultural, political, and scientific factors. It was one of the most appreciated foods for its antiaging effects long before vitamins, minerals, and antioxidant supplements came into existence [1–3].

Rasayana, a branch of Ayurveda, includes a number of specialized approaches aimed at prolonging life, preventing aging and diseases, eliminating degenerative processes, and promoting excellent health. Of all the *Rasayana* formulations enumerated during the classical and medieval periods, CHYAWANPRASH undoubtedly stands out as the most important. This formulation has made major strides as an over-the-counter product since it entered the consumer market in the 1950s. It is highly appreciated for possessing multiple health benefits and addressing the preventive, promotive, and curative aspects of health [4]. Chyawanprash consists of *Amla/ Amalaki (Phyllanthus emblica/ Indian Gooseberry)* pulp as a base, and this is considered to be the most effective *Rasayana* for sustaining homeostasis. Chyawanprash that contains *Amla* has a mixed taste, combining sweet, sour, bitter, pungent, and astringent qualities. On regular intake, it maintains physiological functions and rejuvenates the whole body system [5].

Traditional Ayurveda practitioners call CHYAWANPRASH an “Ageless Wonder”. The formula of CHYAWANPRASH is time-tested and is still effective to mitigate the present world's health concerns. In the context of CHYAWANPRASH, Charaka Samhita narrates: ‘It is the premier *Rasayana*, beneficial for allaying cough, asthma and other respiratory ailments; it nourishes the weak and degenerating tissues,

promotes vigour, vitality and is anti-ageing’ [6]. As per ancient classics, regular intake of this tonic helps to attain intellect, memory, immunity, freedom from disease, endurance, improved functioning of the senses, great sexual strength and stamina, improved digestive processes, improvised skin-tone and glow, and restores/maintains the normal biofunctions of Vata (bodily humor regulating all movements, circulations and neuroconductive actions) [7]. The herbal and spicy ingredients of Chyawanprash help to recover the circulatory system, thus channelizing the removal of the toxins from distant tissues and visceral organs. Chyawanprash is beneficial for health in several ways. It is an excellent ergogenic (enhancing physical performance), tonic, rejuvenator, anabolic, immunomodulator and promotes strength to the gastrointestinal tract, digestive organs, cardiovascular, respiratory, and cerebrospinal systems, neuronal circuits, and renal and reproductive tissues [9–10].

ORIGIN

The atypical name of CHYAWANPRASH originates from the legend of Chyawan Rishi, who was a forest sage. Various ancient sacred treatises, such as the Mahabharata, the Puranas, *etc.*, describe how the twin Ashwini Kumar brothers (the royal physicians to the Gods during the Vedic era) invented this polyherbal preparation to make the sage Chyawan Rishi younger and improve his vitality and strength. The formulation was prepared at his hermitage at Dhosi Hill near the Narnaul area, in the state of Haryana, India; drawing its name from the ancient sage, the formula was called “Chyawanprash”. He followed strict practices to become enlightened, and this had made him weak, emaciated, and aged. To regain his youthfulness, vitality,

and strength, he used Chyawanprash. The foremost historically recorded recipe for Chyawanprash is reported in the Charaka Samhita, the ancient Ayurvedic classic, where it is appreciated as being superior to all other herbal rejuvenative tonics [11–14].

INGREDIENTS OF CHYWANPRASH

Chyawanprash is a potent antioxidant paste, prepared through the synergistic blending of around 50 herbs and spices. Typically, Chyawanprash includes four classes of herbal drugs: The *Dashmula* class (ten roots); the *Chaturjata* class (four aromatic plants); *Ashtavarga* (threatened medicinal

herbs from the Northwest Himalayas, which are not commercially available in the modern era); and a general class. The Chyawanprash formula is described in the ancient Ayurvedic texts, namely, Ashtanga Hridayam, Charaka Samhita, Sangandhara Samhita, which are dedicated to clinical management. The dominant ingredient is *Amla*, a citrus fruit that is a highly renowned and potent botanical in Ayurveda. The main ingredients of Chyawanprash, along with their botanical identities, key active biomolecules and specific therapeutic roles, are detailed in Figure 1 and Table 1 [15].

Table 1. Ingredients used in Preparing Chywanprash

S.No.	Ingredients	Quantity (in gms)
1.	Amla	750 gm
2.	Honey	85 gm
3.	Sugar or Jaggery powder	750 gm
4.	Clarified butter (or) ghee	250 gm
5.	Sesame oil	65 ml
6.	Bay leaves	05 gm
7.	Dry Ginger	10 gm
8.	Cardamom	25 gm
9.	Sandalwood	10 gm
10.	Dashmool	05 gm
11.	Triphala	12 gm
12.	Pepper	05 gm
13.	Cloves	05 gm
14.	Nutmeg	05 gm
15.	Cinnamon	05 gm
16.	Prawal Bhasma	2.5 gm
17.	Nagkesar	2.5 gm

Table 2: Ingredients of CHYAWANPRASH with Their Botanical Identities and Specific Therapeutic Roles.

Medicinal Plants	Health Benefits for Increasing Immunity in Body
Amla	Immunomodulatory, rejuvenative, neuroprotective, hepatoprotective, antioxidant, cardiogenic, enhance general vitality, cognition and promotes longevity

Natural Honey	Anti-infective, immunomodulator, wound healing, antioxidant, antiaging, relieves cough and cold, antiseptic, sore throat, antiulcer
Sugar or Jaggery	Sweetener, provides calories/energy
Sesame Oil	Nutritive, demulcent, aphrodisiac, antioxidant, wound healing, radioprotective, anti-inflammatory
Bay Leaves	Stimulant, antiulcer, antimicrobial, antidepressant, anticancer, digestive, hepatoprotective
Cardamom	Stimulant, stomachic, tonic, appetizer, useful in nausea, heartburn and intestinal spasms
Sandalwood	Tonic, aphrodisiac, antipyretic, anti-hyperglycemic, diaphoretic anticancer, protective and antimicrobial effect on genitourinary and bronchial tract mucosa
Dashmool	Anti-inflammatory, Anti-rheumatic or Anti-arthritic, Analgesic, Antispasmodic, Adaptogenic, Antioxidant, Neuroprotective, Anti-paralytic, Uterine tonic, Uterine Detoxifier
Triphala	Anti-inflammatory, protective against cancer, dental diseases, useful for weight loss, natural laxative.
Pepper	Antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties, cancer prevention, relieves gum problems, helps decrease Vitiligo, useful in weight loss.
Clove	Antiseptic, antimicrobial, aromatic, stimulant and anti-inflammatory
Nutmeg	Antioxidant, disease preventing, and health promoting properties
Cinnamon	Anti-microbial and anti-parasitic activity, lowering of blood glucose, blood pressure and serum cholesterol, anti-oxidant and free-radical scavenging properties, anti-gastric ulcer effects, anti-inflammatory activity, wound healing properties.
Prawal Bhasma	Eye disorders, chronic respiratory diseases, cold, cough, bleeding disorders, painful micturition and leucorrhoea, toxic condition, excessive sweating
Nagkesar	Urinary tract disorders, gout, excessive itching. It is used in relieving swelling, edema and inflammation due to its anti-inflammatory properties. It improves digestion and appetite.

METHODOLOGY

Make the powder of all the above-mentioned ingredients, mix them properly and keep it inside a bowl. Take the Amla to wash them properly and pat dry using a clean cotton cloth. Once Amla is dry, take a fork and prick the Amla from all the sides. This

should be done so that Amla gets cooked properly. Put these Amla in a pressure cooker with water and cook till the two whistles. Once it cools, de-seed the Amla and mash the Amla properly, so that there should be no lump. Take the pan; once the pan is heated add the ghee, sesame oil, and

the powder Jaggery or (sugar). Now, add the mashed Amla and cook it on low flame till you see the moisture of mixer evaporates. Add all the mixed powdered ingredients to this. Switch off the flame and mix this powder with the Amla paste and add honey to this mixture. Mix the honey thoroughly. Once this mixture is cool, transfer this into a clean glass jar. Herbal chawanprash is prepared.

CHYAWANPRASH: A NUTRACEUTICAL AND FUNCTIONAL FOOD

The term ‘nutraceutical’ was coined in 1989 by Stephen De Felice as “a food or part of a food that provides medical or health benefits, including the prevention and/or treatment of disease.” Chyawanprash has been a consistent part of Indian tradition both as a functional food and nutraceutical for the past 5000 years, with constant zeal and vivacity, and has survived owing to its peerless health benefits [16–17]. Chyawanprash is reported to have rich vitamin, protein, dietary fiber, energy contents, carbohydrate, low fat contents (no-trans and zero percent cholesterol), and appreciable levels of major and minor trace

elements (mg/100g), such as Fe, Zn, Co, Cu, Ni, Pb, Mn, vitamin C, tannic acid, other vitamins A, E, B1, B2, and carotenoids that act as micronutrients for health-invigorating purposes. It also provides several essential phytoconstituents, namely, flavonoids, alkaloids, saponins, antioxidants, piperine, phenolic compounds, *etc* [17]. The synergistic antioxidant effects of vitamin C along with vitamin E and carotenoids are well known. The rich nutritive composition and antioxidant biomolecules of Chyawanprash act both singly as well as synergistically for immuno-modulation, body building, health restoration, and prevention of oxidative damage (a leading cause of several degenerative diseases) [18].

HEALTH BENEFITS

Chyawanprash helps to balance the three doshas—Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. In the Ayurvedic perspective, the specific actions of herbs in Chyawanprash in the micro and macronutrient supplement level, metabolic level, and tissue nourishment level are well recognized [18].



Fig. 1. Ingredients of Chyawanprash and Their Health Benefits [19].

Chyawanprash contains anti-ageing properties, making it one of the most appreciated foods long before vitamins, minerals, and antioxidant supplements came into existence. It is an Ayurvedic formulation that boosts the immune system and protects the body from infections. It contains anti-ageing properties, making it one of the most appreciated foods long before vitamins, minerals, and antioxidant supplements came into existence. Here are some amazing health benefits of taking the ancient Indian health supplement every morning.

1. It clears respiratory passages
2. It improves digestion and eases constipation
3. It enhances energy
4. It purifies the blood and eliminates toxins
5. It normalizes blood pressure
6. It is good for cholesterol
7. It improves complexion
8. It may help improve alertness and concentration
9. It can help protect the body against infections
10. Rejuvenates all tissues in the body
11. Supports overall strength and energy
12. Promotes muscle mass
13. Builds Ojas for supporting a healthy immune response and youthfulness
14. Supports healthy function of the heart and respiratory systems
15. Tonifies the reproductive system
16. Kindles Agni (digestive fire)
17. Gently encourages elimination
18. Supports optimal urinary health

Other Preventive, Promotive and Curative Health Benefits

Chyawanprash helps in better absorption of calcium and protein synthesis, thereby strengthening bones and teeth, and

improving muscle tone. It also promotes growth in juveniles and helps in gaining weight. Its profound Rasayana effect due to potent herbs like Amla, Guduchi, and Ashwagandha helps to balance the body's natural processes and modulate the neuroendocrine-immune activities. It eliminates blood impurities and acts as a natural detox. It promotes hair growth, skin complexion, cures dermal infections, and improvises personality characteristics by imparting splendor, exquisiteness, youthfulness, wisdom, vitality, and glow [19].

CONCLUSIONS

Chyawanprash is a natural health product with medicinal value gaining importance healthcare. It is enormously valuable in terms of therapeutics and global trade. It is multifaceted preventive, promotive, and curative health benefits; proving it to be an ancient elixir with a modern cure.

To sum up, Chyawanprash is an Ayurvedic superfood and healer par excellence that strengthens the immune system and revitalizes the psychosomatic system, a superior, nutritious, and safe health tonic that is beneficial for all age groups and genders alike.

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