

Angelica glauca Edgew.



Family: Apiaceae

Common names: Chora,
Angelica

Local name: Chura (Lahaul),
Chamchora, Gandrayna, Chora
(Joshimath), Choraka (Hindi)

Ayurvedic name: Kshemak,
Taskar

Plant profile:

The plant is distinguished by its pungently aromatic smell and the distinctive sheaths at the base of the upper leaves encircling the stem. *Angelica glauca* grows to about 1-1.5 m in height. The leaves are pinnately divided with the lower leaves being ternate pinnate. The leaflets are dark green above and shiny below, slightly oval, serrate and mucronate. The flowers are present in large stalked, highly branched umbels and are mostly whitish. The fruits are glabrous and flattened. The plant has a very well developed, thick and highly aromatic roots, which increase in size and thickness with age. Angelica is a tall, erect perennial glabrous herb with thick brownish aromatic roots. The plant is a partial shade bearer and is found growing in moist patches of the Himalayan hill slopes. Being a perennial in the high altitudes, it shows the classical sub-alpine growth cycle. The winter dormant roots produce new sprouts with the melting of snow and the onset of spring. The plant exhibits vigorous vegetative growth for 3 months and moves into the reproductive phase by mid-July. Seed setting is completed by the end of September. After the seeds are dispersed by wind, the shoots dry up and the roots become dormant before snowfall. The plant valued for its highly aromatic roots.

Medicinal uses:

- **Part used:** Root
- **Active principles:** The root yields an essential oil. Recent studies have revealed that the main constituents are beta-phellandrene (15.29%) and (Z)-ligustilide (31.55%).
- **Disease cured and dosage:**
 - **Ethnomedicinal:** The roots have been traditionally used for the control of constipation and flatulence. The root is also a stimulant, carminative, diaphoretic and diuretic. In the Tibetan health system it is considered to be beneficial in restoring kidney heat and treating anemia, debility, fluid retention in the joints, stomach disorders, first stage dropsy and lung diseases.
 - **Ethnoveterinary:** Data not sufficient
- **Ayurveda:** Mahapaishachic ghrita, Rasnadi-churna. The prescribed dose of churna is 1-2 g.
- **Ayurvedic properties and actions:**
 - Guna (qualities): Laghu (light), Tikshna (sharp)
 - Rasa (Taste): Katu (pungent), Tikta (bitter)
 - Vipaka (post digestive taste): Katu (pungent)
 - Virya (potency): Ushna (hot)

As per Charaka Samhita it is considered a Sangyasthapan (restorative of consciousness).

- **Therapeutic description:**
 - Effect on humours: Alleviates vata and kapha
 - Systemic effects: It is used in the treatment of pyrexia due to cold (oil massage) and epilepsy (rubbing of churna),
 - Nervous system: Used to treat nervine debility, epilepsy, schizophrenia and psychosomatic disorders
 - Blood vascular system: Used to treat cardiac debility
 - Respiratory system: Treats cough and dyspnoea.
 - Digestive system: Used in the treatment of dyspepsia, abdominal colic and flatulence.
 - Skin: Used to cure leprosy and skin diseases (because of diaphoretic nature).
 - Temperature: It is also used to treat mild fever.

- **Drug preparation:** To convert the plant into a drug, the roots are washed, roughly cut and dried. Then it is ground into fine powder before using as a medicine.
 - The root is stored in gunny bags
 - The shelf life of the powder is one year
 - Externally, it can be used as a churna or oil.