

## Navadurga and Respective Divya Vanaoushadhi

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### Abstract

*In ancient India there was a belief that every herb has got special action, and which represents one or the other god/goddess. Ayurveda is a life science that explained more usage of herbs to treat many ailments. Maximum part of the Ayurveda Chikitsa are covered by herbs. Here is an attempt to identify the herbs with different avatars of goddess Durga. As Indians are celebrating a festival called 'Navaratri' that includes nine different forms of goddess Durga mentioned in Markandeya purana. To all these nine avatars, respective herbs are selected from the Ayurveda granthas on the base of appearance of avatara and herbs description in Ayurveda classics. Here is an attempt to establish some similarities between the herbs and nine avatars of goddess Durga.*

**Keywords:** Navadurga, Divya Vanoushadhi, Markandeya purana, herbs, Ayurveda

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### INTRODUCTION

India is known as the land of spirituality and philosophy. Spirituality refers to worshipping of god/goddess in different names in different religion. There are many festivals held throughout the world. A festival may be observed with acts of worship, offerings to deities, fasting, *puja*, *homa*, etc. The festivals typically celebrate events from Hindu mythology, often coinciding with seasonal changes. *Navaratri* festival is one among them, falls on the lunar month of *Ashwin* which is either in September or October and is celebrated with all religious and spiritual significance for the next nine days. *Navaratri*, as name suggest, is celebrated for nine days, with nine different *avatars* of Goddess Durga (*Navadurga*). Reference of *Navadurga* was first found in "*Markandeya Purana*". It was hidden, later it was exposed to the world by Lord Brahma as,

प्रथमं शैलपुत्रीच, द्वितीयं ब्रह्मचारिणी।  
तृतीयचन्द्रघण्टेति, कूष्माण्डेति चतुर्थकम्॥  
पंचमं स्कन्दमातेति, षष्ठं कात्यायनीति च।  
सप्तमं कालरात्रीति, महागौरीति चाष्टमम्॥  
नवमं सिद्धिदात्री, च नवदुर्गाः प्रकीर्तिताः।  
उक्तान्येतानि नामानि, ब्रह्मणैव महात्मना॥

This shloka explains nine *avatars* of goddess Durga especially called as *Panadura avatar* a celebrated during *Navaratri*.

One can get many references of god/goddess relation with some herbs in *purana*, *veda* etc. viz,

श्वेतार्क - गणपती

अश्वत्थ- श्रीकृष्ण

तुलसी - विष्णुप्रिय

कमल - आसन for लक्ष्मी and ब्रह्म

शमी - शनि and भैरव निवासस्थान

Means along with the worship using respective herbs as a medicine, may increase the potency of the medicine.









Ayurveda speaks about three types of *chikitsa* namely, YUKTIVYAPASHRAYA (*Yuktipurvaka oushadha* and *Ahara prayoga*), DAIVAVYAPASHRAYA (Gods grace; *Puja*, *Homa*, *Havana*, *bali* etc.) and SATVAVAJAYA (Psychotherapy) explained by Acharya Charaka.






In *Ayurved Chikitsa*, especially in *Yuktivyapashraya chikitsa* major part is of *vanaoushadhi* (herbs).

Here is an attempt to compare similarities between *Daiva* (Durga) and *Divya Vanoushadha*. That means respective herbs

can be used to treat many ailments along with pooja of respective *Rupa of Navadurga* especially in *Navaratri*.

S.No	Navadurga	Description	Divya Vanaoushadhi	Description
01	शैलपुत्री (Shailaputri) 	The name <i>Shailaputri</i> means 'Daughter of the Mountain'. Parvathi /Hemvathi is the daughter of Himavan /Himalaya, The king of mountains.	Haritaki ( <i>Terminalia chebula</i> ) 	<b>Nirukti:</b> हरस्यभवनेजाताहरिताचस्वभावतः।हरयेत्सर्वरोगांश्चतेनप्रोक्ताहरीतकि॥ [1] (M.N.) <b>Synonyms:</b> हेमवतिपन्चवक्त्ररसांहैमी सर्वशोकनिवारिणीम्। सर्वशक्तिमयीं वन्दे शिवामभयकारिणीम् ॥ <b>Properties:</b> हरीतकीपन्चरसालवणातुवरापरम्। रूक्षोष्णादीपनीमेध्यास्वादुपाकारसायनी ॥ [2] (B.P.N.)
02	ब्रह्मचारिणी (Brahmacharini) 	<i>Bharmacharini</i> means one who practices devout austerity. She enlightens us in the magnificent embodiment of Durga with great powers and divine grace.	Brahmi ( <i>Bacopa monnieri</i> ) 	<b>Synonyms:</b> ब्राह्मी कपोतवन्का च सोमवल्लि सरस्वति । मण्डूकपर्णी मण्डूकी त्वाष्ट्री दिव्या महौषधी ॥ [3] (B.P.N.) <b>Properties:</b> ब्राह्मी हिमासरा तिक्ता लघुर्मध्या च शीतला । कषाया मधुरा स्वादुपाकाऽऽयुष्या रसायनी ॥ स्वर्या स्मृतिप्रदा कुष्टपाण्डुमेहास्त्रकासजित् । [3](B.P.N.)
03	चन्द्रघन्टा (Chandraghanta) 	She has a <i>chandra</i> or half-moon on her forehead in the shape of a <i>ghanta</i> (bell)—the reason why she is called <i>Chandraghanta</i> . She is charming, has a golden bright complexion and rides a lion. With ten hands, three eyes and holdings weapons in her hands, she is the apostle of bravery and possesses great strength to fight in the battle against demons.	Chandrashura ( <i>Lepidium sativum</i> ) 	<b>Nirukti:</b> चन्द्रति आह्लादयति लोकान् बलपुष्टिवर्धनद्वारा इति चन्द्रः । शूरयति विक्रमं करोति वातादिरोगेषु इति शूरः ॥चन्द्र ईव शूरो वा चन्द्रशूरः । [4] (N.A.) श्वेत वर्ण (चन्द्रमा) पुष्प <sup>4</sup> <b>Synonyms:</b> चन्द्रिका चर्महन्ति च पशुमेहनकारिका । नन्दिनि कारवि भद्रा वासपुष्पा सुवासरा ॥ [5](B.P.N.) <b>Properties:</b> चन्द्रशूरं हितं हिक्कावातश्लेष्मातिसारिणाम् । असग्वातगदद्वेषि बलपुष्टिविवर्धनम् ॥ [5] (B.P.N.) धात्री दुग्धवर्धक

04	<p><b>कूष्माण्डिनि</b> (Kushmandini)</p>  <p>Kushmanda is the fourth form of the mother goddess and is worshipped on the fourth day of Navaratri.</p>	<p>"Ku" = "a little", "ushma" = "warmth", "anda" = "the cosmic egg". So Kushmanda is considered the creator of the universe—the universe was no more than a void full of darkness until her light spreads in all directions like rays from the sun.</p> <p>दुर्गाप्रीयपुष्प (पीतपुष्प)</p>	<p>Kushmanda (Benincasa hispida)</p> 	<p><b>Synonyms:</b> पीतपुष्प [6], पुष्पफल, पुष्पसहितम् फलमस्य</p> <p><b>Nirukti:</b> कु नास्ति ऊष्मा अण्डेषु बीजेष्वस्य। [7] (B.P.N.)</p> <p>स्थिरफला- स्थिरं द्रुढं</p> <p><b>Properties:</b> बलदायक निद्राजनक मेधाशक्तिवर्धक शीतवीर्य । (B.P.N.) [7]. Instead of पशुबलि, कूष्माण्डबलि can be given</p>
05	<p><b>स्कन्दमाता</b> (Skandamata)</p>  <p>The fifth form of Mother Durga and is worshipped on the fifth day of Navaratri.</p>	<p>The mother of Skanda, Kartikeya, born out of her powers.</p>	<p>Atasi (Linum usitatissimum)</p> 	<p><b>Nirukti:</b> अतति सततं गमयति वातव्याधिप्रतिषेधेन</p> <p><b>Synonyms:</b> अतसि नीलपुष्पि च पार्वति स्यादुमाक्षुमा ॥ [8] (B.P.N.)</p> <p>उमा - शक्तिशालिनि</p> <p><b>Properties:</b> अतसीमधुरातिक्तास्निग्धापाकेकटुर्गुरुः। उष्णाद्रुक्छुक्रवातघ्नीकफपित्तविनाशिनी ॥ [9] (B.P.N.)</p>
06	<p><b>कात्यायनी</b> (Katyayani)</p>  <p>The sixth form of Mother Durga is known as Katyayani and is worshipped on the sixth day of Navaratri.</p>	<p>The daughter of sage Katyayana, who incarnated to help the Devas.</p>	<p>Ambalika (Hibiscus cannabinus)</p> 	<p><b>Synonyms:</b> माचिका प्रस्थिकाम्बष्ठा तथा चाम्बालिकाम्बिका। मयूरविदलाकेशी सहस्रवातमूलिका ॥ [10] (B.P.N.)</p> <p><b>Properties:</b> मोचिकोष्णारसेपाकेकषायाशीतलालघु : । पक्वातीसारपित्तास्रकफकण्ठामयापहा ॥ [11] (M.N.)</p>
07	<p><b>कालरात्री</b> (Kaalatratri)</p>  <p>This is the seventh form of Mother Durga,</p>	<p>She is black, like Goddess Kali, and holds a sparkling sword in her right hand to battle all evil. Her gesture of protection assures us of freedom from fear and troubles.</p>	<p>Nagadamani (Crinum asiaticum)</p> 	<p><b>Synonyms:</b> नागदमनि बलामोटा विषापहा । नागपुष्पि नागपत्रा महायोगेश्वरीति च । [12] (B.P.N.)</p> <p><b>Properties:</b> बलामोटा कतुस्तिकता लघुः पित्तकफापहा। मुत्रक्रच्छ्रवणान् रक्षो नाशयेज्जलगर्दभम् ॥ सर्वग्रहप्रशमनी निःशेषविषनाशिनि जयं सर्वत्र कुरुते धनदासुमतिप्रदा ॥ [12] (B.P.N.)</p>

	who is worshipped on the seventh day of Navaratri.			
08	<p><b>महागौरी (Mahagauri)</b></p>  <p>Mahagauri is the eighth form of the Goddess Durga and is worshipped on the eighth day of Navaratri.</p>	<p>Maha Gauri is intelligent, peaceful and calm. Due to her long austerities in the deep forests of the Himalayas, she developed a dark complexion. When Lord Shiva cleaned her with the water of the Ganges, her body regained its beauty and she came to be known as "MahaGauri," which mean "extremely white."</p>	<p>Tulasi (<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>)</p>  <p>Haridra (<i>Curcuma longa</i>)</p> 	<p><b>Synonyms</b> of Tulasi: तुलसी सुरसा गौरी भूतघ्नी बहुमन्जरी । [13] (M.N.) देवदुन्दुभि-(B.P.N.) [14]</p> <p><b>Properties:</b> तुलसी कटुका तिक्ता हृदयोष्णा दाहपित्तकृत् । दीपनी कुष्ठकुच्छासपाश्वरूकफवातजित् ॥ [13] (M.N.)</p> <p><b>Synonyms</b> of Haridra: हरिद्रा रजनी गौरी रन्जिनी वरवर्णिनी । पिण्डा पीता वर्णवति निशा वर्णा विलासिनी ॥ [15] (M.N.)</p> <p><b>Properties:</b> हरिद्रा कटुका तिक्ता रूक्षोष्णा श्लेष्मपित्तनुत् । वर्णया त्वग्दाहमेहास्रशोफपाण्डुव्रणपहा ॥ [15] (M.N.)</p>
09	<p><b>सिद्धिदात्री (Siddhidatri)</b></p>  <p>Siddhidatri is the ninth form of the Goddess. She is worshiped on the ninth day of Navaratri. Siddhidatri has supernatural healing powers.</p>	<p>In the <i>Devi Bhagvata Purana</i>, it is mentioned that Lord Shiva worshiped her and as a result was blessed with all <i>Siddhis</i> (supernatural powers). By her blessing, half his body became female and other half, male, as the <i>avatara</i> of <i>Ardhanareeshwara</i></p>	<p>Shatavari (<i>Asparagus racemosa</i>)</p> 	<p><b>Synonyms:</b> शतावरी द्वीपिशतुर्द्वीपिका धरकण्टका । नारायणी शतपदी शतपाद्बहुपत्रिका ॥ [16] (M.N.)</p> <p><b>Properties :</b> शतावरी गुरुः शीता स्वादुः स्निग्धा रसायनी । शुक्रस्तन्यकरा बल्या वातपित्तास्रशोफजित् ॥ [16] (M.N.)</p>

B.P.N. = Bhavaprakasha Nighantu; M.N.=MadanapalaNighantu ; N.A.=Nighantu Adarsha

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

While screening Ayurveda classics one can find many herbs that can be correlated with respective god/goddess on the base of its synonyms, karma, availability, morphology etc. The potency of the drug may increase on the particular day of pooja; for example, Haritaki may have more potency on 1<sup>st</sup> day of Navaratri with the worship of Goddess Shailaputri. Same may be considered for further drugs also. Further researches on clinical aspect can be conducted to observe the drug action (potency) on that particular day.

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