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## Indian Gooseberry (Amla) Natural Purgative

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. Ramesh Tewani

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Jitendra Kumar Sharma

<sup>3</sup>Dr. S.V. Rao

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<sup>1</sup>Ph.D (Yoga) Scholar, M.G. Chitrakoot Gramodaya Vishavidyalaya, Chitrakoot (Satna) M.P

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor of Philosophy, M.G. Chitrakoot Gramodaya Vishavidyalaya, Chitrakoot (Satna) M.P

<sup>3</sup>Ex. Vice Dean & Retd. Professor of Physiology.

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**Corresponding author:**

Dr. Ramesh Tewani

[eduinfoexpert@gmail.com](mailto:eduinfoexpert@gmail.com)

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### ABSTRACT

Amla or Amalaki can be said as the most used Naturopathic ingredient. It is both a food and medicine. The little fruit is stuffed with innumerable health benefits that can ever be imagined. Medicinal plants are natural gift to human lives to promote disease free healthy life. Indian gooseberry commonly known as Amla is widely distributed in tropical and subtropical areas and has therapeutic potential against deleterious diseases. (Vasant B.S. et. al. 2013). Amla literally means "sour"; it is the Hindi word for a fruit tree (*Emblica officinalis* or *Phyllanthus emblica*) that grows throughout India and bears sour-tasting gooseberry-like fruits. Amla is also known by the Sanskrit name "Amalaki." Other Sanskrit nicknames for amla—names meaning "mother," "nurse," and "immortality"—are a testament to the healing capacity of its fruits. Amla enhances food absorption, balances stomach acid, fortifies the liver, nourishes the brain and mental functioning, supports the heart, strengthens the lungs, regulates elimination of free radicals, enhances fertility, helps the urinary system, increases skin health, promotes healthier hair, acts as a body coolant, flushes out toxins, increases vitality, strengthens eyes, improves muscle tone and, acts as an antioxidant. Amla is probably the ideal fruit you are able to take in on regular basis with no negative effects. Being natural, it may be ingested frequently for extended amounts of time, with no undesirable or even unwanted effect. This particular all-natural compound has countless advantages for mankind. Due to several health advantages, Amla turns into component of almost all the hair care, eye care, as well as digestive care.

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**Keywords-** Amla, Health Benefits, Antioxidant.

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## INTRODUCTION

According to principle of Yoga and Naturopathy sound body, sound mind is necessary for Health. So Amla is a gift of nature to mankind and gifted by mother nature as blessing of God to their children (humans), which gives us healthy and disease free life. Amla (also called Indian Gooseberry in English) is an important medicinal plant. The word “amla is derived from the Sanskrit word “amlaki”, which means “the sustainer” or prosperity. Its fruit pulp is used for rejuvenation (Srivasuki, 2012) purposes and anti-ageing properties (Srivasuki, 2012). It has potent immunomodulatory and antioxidant (Jain et al., 2015). Amalaki reduces free radicals in the body and provides good amount of nutrients, especially Vitamin C. The fruit pulp of an Amla contains 20 times more Vitamin C content than an orange. The Indian gooseberry holds a high place among the fruits which offer a definite contribution to health. The WHO is encouraging, promoting and facilitating the effective use of natural medicine for the developing countries health program (Jain et al., 2015). Indian gooseberry is a wonderful fruit and one of the precious gifts of nature to man. Through centuries the berry has been the friend of the common man in the East. From time immemorial it has been used as an useful ingredient of various medicines in India and the Middle East. It is enormously used as a tonic to restore the lost body's energy and

vigor (Singh et al., 2012). It is equally esteemed both by Hindu and the Muhammadan physicians. It has now been definitely ascertained by laboratory test that no other fruit or foodstuff can stand comparison with this berry as a source of vitamin C (Kulrajan 1983). Amla effective in slowing down the ageing process. Ageing is a cumulative result of damage to various cells and tissues, mainly by oxygen free radicals. Vitamin C is a scavenger of free radicals which breaks them down; it has an antioxidant synergism with vitamin E which prevents pre-oxidation of lipids. Liver toxins, high blood cholesterol and age-related kidney disorders have all been scientifically proven to be corrected with the antioxidant properties contained in Amla berries (Jain et al., 2015). It has been worshiped since ancient times as the “Earth Mother”. The tree is best known for its succulent fruit. The fruit is small and light green in color with six vertical stripes and a hard seed inside. The seed has three angles and three sides.

## CLASSIFICATION

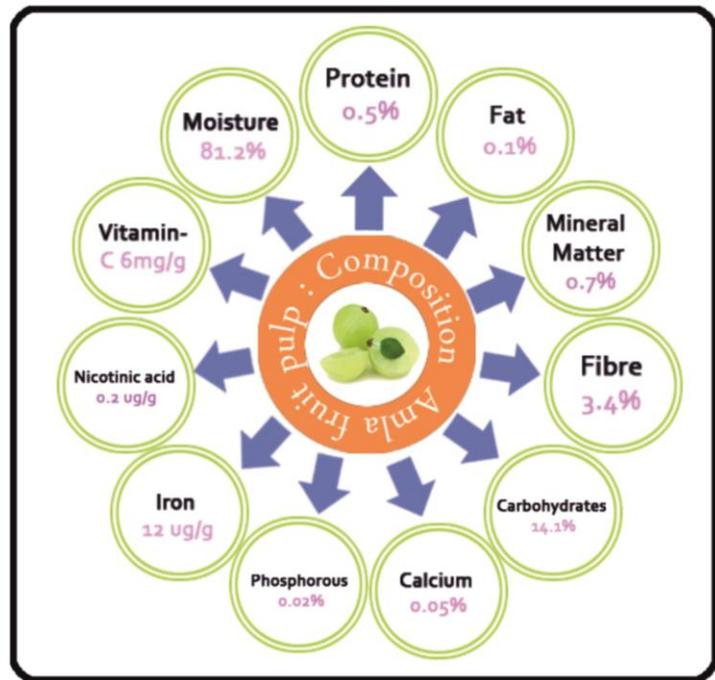
Kingdom: Plantae  
Division: Angiospermae  
Class: Dicotyledonae  
Order: Geraniales  
Family: Euphorbiaceae  
Genus: *Emblica*  
Species: *officinalis* Geartn.  
Botanical name: *Phyllanthus emblica*

**PHYSICAL AND CHEMICAL PROPERTIES OF AMLA (Phytochemicals constituents & active ingredients)**

Table of chemical constituents (Kulranjan 87)

Content	Amount in Percentage (%)
Protein	0.5
Fat	0.1
Mineral salt	0.7
Cellulose	3.4
Carbohydrate	14.1
Calcium	.05
Phosphorus	0.02
Iron	1.2 mg
Niacin/ Nicotinic acid	traces/ 0.2mg/100g
Moisture	81.2

Repeated laboratory tests made in Coonoor have revealed that Amla is excellent source of vitamin C.



Fruit name	Vitamin C amount/100gms (in mgs)	Form of Amla	Amount of Vitamin C in mgs /100 gms
Amla (King of vitamin C)	600	Fresh Fruit	470-680
Tomatoes	32	Dehydrated berry	2428-3470
Lime juice	63	Shade dry (powder form)	1780-2660
Pineapple	120	Sun dry	1550-1840
Banana	170		
Guava(Queen of vitamin C)	200		

**Table-2: showing various properties of Amla fruit**

S. no.	Properties	Components	Mechanism	Reference
1.	Anticancer	Aqueous/methanolic fruit extract and polyphenols of <i>Emblica officinalis</i> .	<i>In vitro</i> apoptosis, <i>In vitro</i> invasiveness, Inhibition of nf k- $\beta$ cell	Ngamkitidechakul <i>et al.</i> , 2010; Baliga and Dsouza, 2011; Aggarwal and Shishodia, 2004
2.	Hepatoprotective	Vitamin C, Gallic acid, Flavonoids, Tannins and Phyllanthin.	By enzymatic antioxidants defense system (SOD, CAT, and GPx)	Reddy <i>et al.</i> , 2009; Sharma <i>et al.</i> , 2009
3.	Cardioprotective	Emblicanin A, B, Ascorbic acid, Polyphenols, Ellagic acid	Prevents ischemia- reperfusion induced oxidative stress and inhibit oxidation of DNA	Bhattacharya <i>et al.</i> , 2002; Pandey and Govind, 2011
4.	Anti inflammatory	Methanolic extract of fruit	Reduced inflammation by carrageenan induced rat paw edema method	Golechha <i>et al.</i> , 2014
5.	Immunostimulant	Vitamin C (ascorbic acid)	Improve natural killer cell activity and antibody dependent cellular toxicity	Suresh and Vasudevan, 1994
6.	Antioxidant	Flavonoids, Phenolic compound, Tannin and Vitamin C	Free radical scavenging activity Increases the level of GSH, antioxidant capacity, and activities of antioxidant enzyme (SOD, CAT, GSH peroxidase and GSH reductase)	Prakash <i>et al.</i> , 2012 Shivananjappa and Joshi, 2012
7.	Antimicrobial	Ethanollic extract	Inhibiting the adhesion of candida albicans to human buccal epithelium cells.	Thaweboon and Thaweboon, 2011

8.	Gastroprotective	Fruit extracts	By inhibited the development of gastric lesions	Al-Rehaily <i>et al.</i> , 2002
9.	Hypolipidemic	Flavonoids	Attenuating oxidative stress	Yokozawa <i>et al.</i> , 2007a
10.	Nephroprotective	Fruit extract	Reduced the elevated levels of serum creatinine and urea nitrogen, thiobarbituric acid reactive substance level of serum	Yokozawa <i>et al.</i> , 2007b
11.	Metabolic syndrome	Polyphenol	Metabolic syndrome is attenuated by polyphenol rich fraction of amla	Kim <i>et al.</i> , 2010
12.	Osteoporosis	Fruit extract	Triggering programme cell death of human primary osteoclasts	Penolazzi <i>et al.</i> , 2008
13.	Dermoprotective and ageing	Fruit extract and Vitamin C	Stimulated fibroblast proliferation and induced production of pro collagen	Fujii <i>et al.</i> , 2008

(Sharma *et al.*, 2015)

## Health Benefits of Amla

### GIT

Amla helpful in jaundice, piles, indigestion, cough and dimness of vision (Mukharjee, 1983). The fresh fruit is diuretic and laxative (Sivananda S., 1999). Amla has been reported to possess expectorant, purgative, spasmolytic, antibacterial, hypoglycemic (Jamwal *et al.*, 1959; Jayshri and Jolly, 1993), hepatoprotective and hypolipidemic (Thakur and Mandal, 2004) activity (Mishra *et al.*, 2009).

### Diarrhoea and Dysentery

Amla is very useful in diarrhoea and blood dysentery (Mukharjee 88). The dried fruit is valuable in diarrhoea and dysentery. A drink made from amla mixed with lemon juice and honey is considered highly beneficial in controlling acute bacillary dysentery (Bakhru, 2001). Amla makes the flow of

urine clear and relieves the burning sensation in urination (Mukharjee 1983).

### Arthritis

Amla has anti-inflammatory property. Its use has been found beneficial in reducing inflammation in arthritis and other rheumatic conditions (Bakhru 2014).

### Respiratory Disorders

A tablespoonful of the fresh juice mixed with equal quantity of honey taken every day in the morning is the surest medicine to prevent one from tuberculosis of lungs, asthma, bronchitis, lung abscess, pneumonia (Aman, 1969).

### Diabetes

A tablespoonful of amla juice mixed with a cup of fresh bitter -gourd juice taken once daily for a couple of months stimulates the islets of langerhans and help them to secrete

their own natural insulin. Thus a genuine diabetic, it reduces the blood sugar, imparts a feeling of well-being, prevents from neuritis, eye complications (Aman, 1969). Dry powder of amla 1 teaspoonful given with a glassful of butter milk once daily is a medicine for burning in the rectum, soles and palms. Given with a teaspoonful jamun seeds powder daily once is a medicine to control sugar in the urine of a diabetic (Aman, 1969).

### **Heart disease**

Indian gooseberry is considered an effective remedy for heart disease. It tones up the functions of all organs of the body and builds up health by destroying the heterogeneous elements and renewing the body energy (Bakhru, 2001). Amla helps to treat in acute cardiac emergencies, high B.P (Aman, 1969).

### **Cancer**

The powerful antioxidant Ellagic acid, present in Amla, can inhibit mutations in genes and repairs the chromosomal abnormalities. Amla inhibits the growth and spread of various cancers like breast, uterus, pancreas, stomach and liver cancers. It can prevent and /or reduce the side effects of chemotherapy and radiotherapy (Dasaraju and Gottumukkala, 2014). Amla, as a super food source of vitamin C, can be beneficially used in fight against cancer. Vitamin C is the most potent anti-toxin known. It can effectively neutralise or minimize the damaging effect of most chemical carcinogens in food and environment and thus be of great value in cancer prevention program as well as treatment of cancer (Bakhru, 2014).

### **Excessive Bleeding**

Fresh amla juice with honey as a medicated tonic during the treatment of excessive

bleeding during menstruation, abortions, child birth, post-partum haemorrhage (Aman, 1969).

### **Leucorrhoea**

Decoction of the dry fruit is used as a douche for leucorrhoea, gonorrhoea etc. (Bakhru, 2001). When there is excessive haemorrhage from uterus, the juice of fruit is administered together with honey. It is regarded as a food medicine for leucorrhoea (Mukharjee, 1983).

### **Prevents Ageing**

Indian gooseberry has revitalising effect. It contains an element which is very valuable in preventing ageing and in maintaining strength in old age. It improves body resistance and protects against infection. It strengthens the heart, hair and different glands in the body (Bakhru, 2001). Amla is a food which removes premature oldness and gives along life (Mukharjee, 1983). Amla is best of all acid fruits and is most useful in health and disease (Mukharjee, 1983).

### **Hair Tonic**

Amla is an accepted hair tonic in traditional recipes for enriching hair growth and hair pigmentation. The fruit, cut into pieces, is dried preferably in shade. These pieces are boiled into coconut oil till solid matter become like charred dust. This darkish oil is an excellent oil to prevent greying. The water in which dried amla pieces are soaked overnight is also nourishing to hair. This water should be used for last rinse while washing the hair (Bakhru, 2001). Premature grey hair, heaviness of head or dullness of brain (including lunacy), irritable temper, loss of patience, etc., have been relieved by use of amla, which is the richest source of vitamin C or ascorbic acid. The raw fruit is crushed and applied over the head, and allowed to dry while basking in the sun

followed by full bath (Lakshmana Sarma, 2005).

### Repairing

Amla with honey used in slow healing of ulcers, fractured bones before and after surgery (Aman1969).

### Oral Health

Amla juice plays a important role to treat dental caries, Gingivitis (Aman, 1969).

### Eye diseases

A cupful of pure amla juice with honey given twice daily preserves eye sight, cures conjunctivitis and glaucoma. It reduces the intra ocular tension (Aman, 1969).

### Worms

A tablespoonful of the juice mixed with a cupful of coconut milk daily twice for a week expels tape-worm and hook worms (Aman, 1969).

### CONCLUSION

Amla is considered the “wonder-fruit”. Highly esteemed from the point of view of nutrition, it has great medicinal value. Amla is probably the richest known natural source of Vitamin C which is readily assimilated by the human system (Jussawala J.M., 1993). Amla is also a powerful antioxidant agent. Apart from supplementing nutrition, amalaki get rid of these free radicals which enhance cell aging due to high amount of vitamin C and flavonoids in it (M.B. Kavila et. al., 2015). Amla has various medicinal properties since ages. It is one of the oldest medicinal plants as potential effects for various ailments. It is considered to be a safe natural medicine without any adverse effects. So it can concluded that Indian gooseberry is a traditionally and clinical

proven fruit for both its application and efficacy.

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