

 ISSN (O): 2320-5407 ISSN (P): 3107-4928	Journal Homepage: www.journalijar.com INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR) Article DOI:10.21474/IJAR01/23790 DOI URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.21474/IJAR01/23790	 INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ADVANCED RESEARCH (IJAR) Volume 14(07) July-2026 Published Homepage: http://www.journalijar.com Journal ISSN (O) 2320-5407 Journal ISSN (P) 3107-4928
--	--	--

REVIEW ARTICLE

ERVARU: AN UNDEREXPLORED MEDICINAL PLANT IN AYURVEDA

Mehak Saini¹, Rohit Johari² and Monika Sharma³

1. PG Scholar, Department of Dravyaguna, Dayanand Ayurvedic College, Jalandhar, Punjab, India.
2. Professor, Department of Dravyaguna, Dayanand Ayurvedic College, Jalandhar, Punjab, India.
3. Assistant Professor, Department of Dravyaguna, Dayanand Ayurvedic College, Jalandhar, Punjab, India.

Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 08 May 2026
Final Accepted: 10 June 2026
Published: July 2026

Key words:-

Ervaru, *Cucumis utilissimus*, Ayurveda, Rasapanchaka, Doshakarma, Nighantu, Medicinal plant.

Abstract

Ervaru (*Cucumis utilissimus* Roxb.), a member of the Cucurbitaceae family, is an underexplored medicinal plant with significant Ayurvedic therapeutic uses. To provide a thorough understanding of Ervaru's Ayurvedic identity and therapeutic importance, the current review attempts to compile the existing classical and contemporary literature on the plant. Major Ayurvedic texts, such as the Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya, Ashtanga Sangraha, and other Nighantus, were used for a thorough analysis. Its classification, synonyms, Rasapanchaka, Doshakarma, Karma, and therapeutic indications as stated in classical writings are highlighted in the review. Ervaru is suggested in conditions like Daha, Trishna, and Mutrakricchra and is primarily defined by Madhura Rasa, Sheeta Veerya, and Guru Guna. Its taxonomy and therapeutic uses are further documented in contemporary literature.

"© 2026 by the Author(s). Published by IJAR under CC BY 4.0. Unrestricted use allowed with credit to the author."

Introduction:-

Cucumis utilissimus, commonly known as kakri or the long melon, is a popular summer vegetable. Botanically, it is a variety of the muskmelon species (*Cucumis melo*). It grows on creeping vines in India and Southeast Asia and is cultivated in many parts of the country, especially in upper India and particularly in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab¹. The unripe fruit is long, green, and crisp and tastes much like a traditional cucumber. Kakri is mostly eaten raw with salt and spices. It is great for hot summer days because it has very high water content and a cooling effect on your body. People also pickle or cook the fruit. The seeds are rich in oils and are often dried for health benefits. When unripe, it promotes taste and pacifies pitta dosha, but the same when ripe, it produces excessive thirst, stimulates digestive capacity, and aggravates pitta dosha².



Figure 1: Seeds of Ervaru

Ayurvedic Review:-

Ayurveda, originating in India over 3000 years ago, is an ancient holistic healing system based on the belief that health depends on a delicate balance between the mind, body and spirit. It emphasizes preventive strategies and natural treatments tailored to an individual's unique physical and mental constitution. The literary review of Ervaru is classified into three periods, i.e., Vedic kala, Samhita kala, and Nighantu kala.

Vedic Kala:-

On reviewing the Vedas, namely Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samveda, Atharvaveda, no references of Ervaru were found.

Samhita Kala:-

Charaka Samhita – 2nd to 3rd Century A.D.:-

The Charaka Samhita includes a mention of Ervaru in the Sutra Sthana, Chapter 27, "Annapaana Vidhi Adhyaya" (Recommendations on Food and Drink), where different foodstuffs are classified, and the rasa, guṇa, virya and karmas are described. "Ervaruis cool in potency, heavy, and sweet in nature. Both alleviate burning sensation, thirst, exhaustion, and mental distress when ripe³." This makes a clear and direct reference to Ervaru during the classical Samhita period. The characteristics mentioned are consistent with what is already known about fruits that resemble cucumber-like fruits: they are cooling, hydrating, and helpful in hot weather. Ervaru is positioned as more than just a food item; it has therapeutic value, especially in Pittaja ailments like daha (burning) and trsna (excessive thirst). This supports the Ayurvedic belief that "Ahaara is the best medicine," which holds that eating the correct foods can both prevent and treat ailments. The Charaka Samhita states that Ervaruka's cooling, hydrating, and relaxing qualities make it especially beneficial for Pitta-related conditions. The fruit is classified under Shaka Varga and is believed to be sweet, heavy, and cold in potency, supporting its use as both a culinary item and a therapeutic Dravya.

Sushruta Samhita – (5th Century A.D.):-

In Chapter 42 of the Sutra Sthana, Rasa Viseṣa Vijnaniya Adhyaya, different substances are categorized based on their main taste, such as the Madhura Varga (sweet group)⁴. One of the substances in this group that is highlighted for its sweet taste and cooling qualities is Ervaru. Its presence suggests that it has therapeutic value in Ayurvedic medicine, especially for pitta balancing, lowering inflammation, and treating heat-related ailments. Ervaru is referenced along with other highly valued fruits like Trapusha, Karkaruka, and Alabu, emphasizing its role in traditional medicine and the meticulous botanical knowledge that has been maintained in the Sushruta Samhita. Sutra Sthana, Chapter 46 - Annapana Vidhi Adhyaya, explains Ervaru's attributes in further depth. It has an alkaline, slightly sweet taste, elevates Vata and Kapha, is mild on Pitta, and facilitates digestion. Additionally, when discussing wound assessment in Sutra Sthana, Chapter 22 - Vrana-Srava Vijnaniya Adhyaya - the phrase "juice of Ervaru" is used to compare and contrast various exudates that are seen in Sannipata (tridoshic) conditions. Ervaru's importance in traditional Ayurvedic literature as a food item as well as a diagnostic and therapeutic agent is highlighted by these numerous references.

Ashtang Hridaya –(7th to 8th Century A.D.):-

There are 120 chapters in Ashtang Hridaya, which is divided into six sthanas, each of which has a different number of adhyayas. Ervaru (also called Varu) is referenced mostly in relation to food classification and qualities in the Ashtanga Hridaya. Chapter 6-Annasvarupa Vijnaniya Adhyaya in Sutra Sthana mentions it. Along with Kusmanda, Tumba (Alabu), Kalinga, and others, Ervaru raises kapha and vata, breaks down hard feces, remains undigested in the stomach for a long time, promotes secretion in the tissues, and tastes pleasant after digestion⁵.

Ashtang Sangraha –(9th to 10th Century A.D.):-

Ervaru is briefly mentioned in the Ashtanga Sangraha in Annasvarupavigyaniya Adhyaya under Shaka Varga⁶.

Nighantu Kala:-

Ervaru is detailed in many Ayurvedic lexicons throughout the Nighantu Kala. The drug is listed under various synonyms. Its characteristics, activities, and medicinal applications have all been thoroughly explained by the Nighantu authors. Sheeta Veerya (cold potency), Madhura Rasa (sweet taste), and Kapha-Pitta calming qualities are commonly associated with Ervaru. It is thought to help in conditions like Mutrakricchra (dysuria), Trishna (excessive thirst), Daha (burning sensation), and other urinary ailments. Ervaru's nutritional and therapeutic importance in Ayurveda is highlighted by the thorough discussion of it in several Nighantus.

Bhavprakash Nighantu:-

Ervaru is mentioned in Bhavprakash Nighantu by the synonym karkati in the shaaka varga. It is said to be dry (ruksha) and cooling (sitala) in nature, and it functions as a grahiṇi, which means it aids in the body's absorption and retention of fluids. It may be sluggish to digest, but its weighty (guru) nature and sweet (madhura rasa) taste indicate that it is nourishing. Particularly when unripe, Ervaru is pitta-pacifying (pittahara) and delicious (rucya). It can, however, enhance pitta, thirst, and digestive fire (agni) when fully ripe (pakva), suggesting that its effects on the body vary according to age⁷.

Dhanvantari Nighantu:-

In this Nighantu, Ervaru is mentioned in Guduchyadi Varga, one of the 07 vargas⁸.

Raj Nighantu:-

In this Nighantu, Ervaru is mentioned in Moolakadi Varga, one of the 23 vargas⁹.

Kaiyadeva Nighantu:-

In this Nighantu, Ervaru is mentioned in Oshadhi Varga, one of the 08 vargas¹⁰.

Dravyaguna Sangraha:-

In this Nighantu, Ervaru is mentioned in Shaaka Varga; various benefits have been described in this¹¹.

Nighantushesha:-

In this Nighantu, Ervaru is mentioned in Shaaka Kanda; various synonyms are mentioned here¹².

Paryayratnamala:-

Several synonyms of Ervaru are mentioned in this. These names are used to identify the drug in different regions and across various traditional sources¹³.

Madhava Dravyaguna:-

Ervaru is mentioned in Shaaka varga in this Nighantu; its dosha-shamana properties are mentioned in this text¹⁴.

Rajvallabh Nighantu:-

Various guna of Ervaru is mentioned in this Nighantu¹⁵.

Table 1: Synonyms of Ervaru in Various Nighantus

Synonym	D.N	K.N	B.P.N	R.N	N.S	P.R.M	D.G.S	M.D.G	R.V.N
Ervaru	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Ervaruka	+	+	-	+	-	+	+	+	+
Urvaru	+	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Karkati	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-
Karkatika	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Trapusi	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Vyalapatra	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Vyalapatrika	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Lomasha	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Lomashi	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sthula	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Brihatphala	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Toyaphala	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Hastidantaphala	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-
Gajadantaphala	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Mutraphala	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Chirbhiti	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Valungi	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Rajadani	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Lata	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-
Chitra	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Godumbika	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-
Karkaru	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-

Table no. 2: Classification of Ervaru in Ayurvedic classics is as under

S.no.	Nighantu	Varga
1.	Charak Samhita	Shaka Varga
2.	Sushruta Samhita	Madhura Varga
3.	Ashtanga Hridaya	Shaka Varga
4.	Ashtanga Sangraha	Shaka Varga
5.	Bhavaprakasha Nighantu	Shaaka Varga
6.	Dhanvantari Nighantu	Guduchyādi Varga
7.	Raja Nighantu	Moolakhadi Varga
8.	Kaiyadeva Nighantu	Aushadhi Varga
9.	Dravyaguna Sangraha	Shaaka Varga
10.	Nighantushesh	Shaaka Kanda
11.	Paryayratnamala	-
12.	Madhava Dravyaguna	Shaaka Varga
13.	Rajvallabh Nighantu	-

Table No.3: Rasapanchaka of Ervaru Detailed by Different Acharyas

Properties		C.S.	D.N.	K.N.	B.P.N.	D.G.S.
Rasa	Madhura	+	+	+	+	+
	Katu	-	-	-	-	-
	Tikta	-	-	-	-	-
Guna	Guru	+	-	+	+	-
	Ruksha	-	-	+	+	-
	Grahi	-	-	+	+	-
Veerya	Sheeta / Hima	+	+	+	+	-
	Ushna	-	-	-	-	-

Vipaka	Madhura	–	–	–	–	–
	Katu	–	–	–	–	–

Table No. 4: Doshakarma of Ervaru as described in Classical Texts

Doshakarma	C.S.	D.N.	K.N.	B.P.N.	D.G.S.
Pittahara	–	+	–	+	–
Kaphahara	–	–	–	–	–
Vatakara	–	–	–	–	+
Kapha-Vatakara	–	–	–	–	+

Table no. 5: Karma of Ervaru in various nighantus

Karma	C.S.	D.N.	K.N.	B.P.N.	D.G.S.	M.D.G.	R.V.N.
Daha-hara	+	–	–	–	–	+	+
Trishna-hara	+	–	–	–	–	+	+
Klamahara	+	–	–	–	–	+	+
Mutrala	+	+	+	–	–	–	–
Ruchya / Rochana	–	+	+	+	+	–	–
Deepana	–	–	–	–	+	–	–
Grahi / Sangrahi	–	–	+	+	–	–	–
Pittahara	–	+	–	+	–	–	–
Santapahara	–	+	–	–	–	–	–
Murchahara	–	+	–	–	–	–	–
Kaphahara	–	–	–	–	–	+	–

Modern Literature:-

Medicinal plants are herbs, roots, or trees used to treat illnesses or promote health. They contain phytochemicals-natural chemicals plants make to survive. These compounds often act as mild medicines in the human body. Underexplored medicinal plants are species that have traditional indigenous uses but lack modern scientific study. Many wild plants contain phytochemicals. Scientists are trying to decode how these plants work to turn them into safe, modern medicines. Medicinal plants research helps to explore many compounds to cure many diseases.

Classical uses of Medicinal Plants (Prof. P.V.Sharma – 20th Century A.D.):-

Description of Ervaru according to its therapeutic indications has been documented¹⁶.

Medicinal Plants (S.G.Joshi–20th Century A.D.):-

In this text, synonyms, chemical composition, part used, ayurvedic properties, actions and therapeutics of Ervaru have been mentioned¹⁷.

Indian Medicinal Plants (Kirtikar and Basu – 20th Century A.D.):-

Botanical description, distribution, vernacular names, medicinal uses, and phytochemistry of *Cucumis utilis* are documented in this text¹⁸.

API (Ayurvedic Pharmacopeia of India Part-I, Vol-II):-

Latin name, family, general description, distribution, vernacular names with classical names, its macroscopic and microscopic description, chemical constituents, properties, action, formulations, dosage and therapeutic uses, standards for identification, and quality control parameters have been mentioned in this book¹⁹.

The Useful Plants of India (Ambasta – 20th Century A.D.):-

Ervaru is an edible cucurbit whose fruits are consumed fresh or pickled, while the seeds are nutritious, rich in fixed oil, and traditionally used as a cooling and diuretic agent in urinary disorders.²⁰

Modern Review:-**Table No. 6 Taxonomic Classification of Ervaru²¹**

Root	Root
Kingdom	Plantae
Phylum	Tracheophyta
Class	Magnoliopsida
Order	Cucurbitales
Family	Cucurbitaceae
Genus	Cucumis
Species	utilissimus

Indications:-**Calculus-Dysuria:-**

- The seeds of ervaru, trapusa and kusumbha; kumkuma and vasa taken with grape juice are efficacious in all types of dysuria²².
- In paittika type, seeds of ervaru mixed with madhuka and daruharidra should be taken with rice water²³.
- Paste of ervaru seeds 10 g mixed with rock salt and taken with sour gruel removes dysuria²⁴.

Udavartta caused by suppression of urine:-

One should take with water seeds of ervaru mixed with a little salt²⁵.

Pain during pregnancy:-

Milk cooked with ervaru root should be taken. It removes pain²⁶

Pharmacological Actions²⁷:-**Antioxidant activity:-**

Ervaru (*Cucumis utilissimus*) seeds exhibit strong antioxidant activity by scavenging free radicals and reducing oxidative stress. This helps protect cellular components from damage caused by reactive oxygen species. The antioxidant studies were carried out using in vitro experimental methods.

Anti-inflammatory activity:-

The seed extract shows significant anti-inflammatory effects in carrageenan-induced edema models in albino rats. It reduces swelling and suppresses inflammatory responses, indicating its potential usefulness in managing inflammatory conditions.

Analgesic activity:-

Ervaru seeds demonstrate notable analgesic activity in experimental animal models, particularly in mice, where the extract reduced pain perception. This supports its traditional use in relieving mild to moderate pain.

Abbreviations:-

The following abbreviations have been used throughout this review article: API – Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia of India; C.S. – Charaka Samhita; Su.S. – Sushruta Samhita; A.H. – Ashtanga Hridaya; A.S. – Ashtanga Sangraha; B.P.N. – Bhavaprakasha Nighantu; D.N. – Dhanvantari Nighantu; K.N. – Kaiyadeva Nighantu; R.N. – Raja Nighantu; N.S. – Nighantushesha; P.R.M. – Paryayaratnamala; D.G.S. – Dravyaguna Sangraha; M.D.G. – Madhava Dravyaguna; R.V.N. – Rajavallabha Nighantu.

Conclusion:-

Ervaru (*Cucumis utilissimus* Roxb.), a medicinal plant belonging to the family Cucurbitaceae, has been described extensively in the Ayurvedic classics for its nutritional and therapeutic importance. Classical texts such as the Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya, Ashtanga Sangraha, and various Nighantus describe its synonyms, classification, Rasapanchaka, Doshakarma, Karma, and therapeutic indications. Ervaru is predominantly

described as having Madhura Rasa, Sheeta Veerya, and Guru Guna, and is indicated in conditions such as Mutrakricchra (dysuria), Daha (burning sensation), Trishna (excessive thirst), and other urinary disorders. The drug has also been mentioned as an important dietary and therapeutic agent in Ayurveda. This review compiles the available classical and modern literary information on Ervaru, providing a comprehensive understanding of its Ayurvedic identity and therapeutic significance.

References:-

1. Government of India, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia of India. Part I. Vol. II. New Delhi: Department of AYUSH; 1999.
2. Kamat SD, editor. Bhavaprakasha Nighantu (Indian Materia Medica) of Shri Bhavamishra. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan; 2002.
3. Shastri K, Chaturvedi G, editors. Charaka Samhita of Agnivesha with Vidyotini Hindi Commentary. Part 1. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Bharati Academy; Reprint 2017. Sutra Sthana, Chapter 27, Verses 110–111.
4. Sushruta. Sushruta Samhita with Ayurveda Tattva Sandipika Hindi Commentary. Shastri AD, editor. Reprint ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan; 2017. Sutra Sthana, Chapter 42, Verse 18.
5. Vagbhata. Ashtanga Hridaya with Sarvangasundara commentary of Arunadatta and Ayurveda Rasayana commentary of Hemadri. Paradakara HS, editor. Reprint ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Krishnadas Academy; 2000. Sutra Sthana, Chapter 6, Verse 87.
6. Vagbhata. Ashtanga Sangraha with Shashilekha Sanskrit Commentary of Indu. Sharma SP, editor. Vol. 1. 3rd ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Series Office; 2012. Sutra Sthana, Chapter 7, Verse 133.
7. Bhavamishra. Bhavaprakasha Nighantu. Chunekar KC, commentator. Pandey GS, editor. Reprint ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Bharati Academy; 2015. Shaka Varga.
8. Dhanvantari. Dhanvantari Nighantu. Dwivedi BK, editor. 1st ed. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Krishnadas Academy; 2008. Guduchyadi Varga, Verses 201–202.
9. Narahari. Raja Nighantu. Tripathi I, editor. 3rd ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Krishnadas Academy; 2003. Moolakadi Varga, Verses 207–208.
10. Kaiyadeva. Kaiyadeva Nighantu. Sharma PV, Sharma GP, editors. 2nd ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Orientalia; 2006. Oshadhi Varga, Verses 544–546.
11. Chakrapanidatta. Dravyaguna Sangraha. Sena S, commentator. Mishra U, editor. Varanasi: Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan; 2003. Shaka Varga, Verses 31–32.
12. Hemachandra Suri. Nighantushesha. Shaka Kanda. Hyderabad: National Institute of Indian Medical Heritage, Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS); 2012. Verses 363–364.
13. Madhavakara. Paryayaratnamala. Chowdhury T, editor. Patna: Patna University; 1946. Verses 713–714.
14. Madhavakara. Madhava Dravyaguna. Tripathi I, editor. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Krishnadas Academy; 2005. Shaka Varga, Verse 40.
15. Madhavakara. Madhava Dravyaguna. Tripathi I, editor. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Krishnadas Academy; 2005. Shaka Varga, Verse 40.
16. Sharma PV. Classical Uses of Medicinal Plants. Reprint ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Visvabharati; 2025. p. 66.
17. Joshi SG. Medicinal Plants. New Delhi: Oxford & IBH Publishing Co. Pvt. Ltd.; 2000. p. 158.
18. Kirtikar KR, Basu BD. Indian Medicinal Plants. 2nd ed. Dehradun: International Book Distributors; 1987.
19. Government of India, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia of India. Part I. Vol. II. New Delhi: Department of AYUSH; 1999.
20. Ambasta SP, editor. The Useful Plants of India. New Delhi: Publications and Information Directorate, Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR); 1994.
21. India Biodiversity Portal. Cucumis utilisissimus Roxb. Bengaluru: India Biodiversity Portal.
22. Shastri K, Chaturvedi G, editors. Charaka Samhita of Agnivesha with Vidyotini Hindi Commentary. Part 2. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Bharati Academy; Reprint 2017. Chikitsa Sthana, Chapter 26, Verse 52.
23. Shastri K, Chaturvedi G, editors. Charaka Samhita of Agnivesha with Vidyotini Hindi Commentary. Part 2. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Bharati Academy; Reprint 2017. Chikitsa Sthana, Chapter 26, Verse 53.
24. Sushruta. Sushruta Samhita with Ayurveda Tattva Sandipika Hindi Commentary. Shastri AD, editor. Part 2. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan; Reprint 2017. Uttara Tantra, Chapter 58, Verse 29.
25. Sushruta. Sushruta Samhita with Ayurveda Tattva Sandipika Hindi Commentary. Shastri AD, editor. Part 2. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan; Reprint 2017. Uttara Tantra, Chapter 55, Verse 25.
26. Sharma HL. Vaidyamanorama. Delhi: Chaukhambha Orientalia; 2012. Chapter 3, Verse 23.
27. Kumar, S., Sharma, P., Singh, R. (2015) Study on Cucumis melo var. utilisissimus seeds for the therapeutic potential. International Journal of Pharmaceutical Sciences and Research.