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Ayurveda and Asthma.

■■Asthma is a respiratory disease that affects both adults and children and asthma is today one of the most common chronic childhood ailments. There is no scientifically proven cure for asthma but it can be controlled and regulated.

Asthma occurs when inhaled antigens encounter antigen presenting cells (APC) that lines the airway inflammation.
When IgE activates APC, the naïve T cells get differentiated into TH2 cells which further binds to IgE receptors (present on mast cells).

The later interactions result in release of biologically active mediators either histamine or leukotrienes, which mediates the symptoms of allergy. IL-5 is essential for recruitment of eosinophils which has a major role in pathogenesis of asthma.

The recruitment of eosinophil leads to release of toxic granules further leading of damage of tissue and chronic inflammation.

Asthma is one of the most common chronic diseases globally and currently affects 300 million people worldwide with 250,000 annual deaths attributed to the disease
and is the third-ranking cause of hospitalization among children under age of 15.

The overall burden of asthma in India is estimated at more than 15 million patients and is recognized to be a major cause of morbidity and mortality in people of all age groups.

■Ayurvedic Herbs used in Asthma treatment.
■■■■■■■■- ■■■■■■ has been used traditionally to restore breathing and calm the breathing passageways.
■■■■■■■- ■■■■■ is a plant indigenous to India and reputed to be able to provide relief to patients with bronchial asthma.

■■■■■■■- It is a small herb with tuberous roots that is used in Ayurvedic medicine for the treatment of various conditions including lung diseases such as asthma and bronchitis.

■■ ■■■■■■ (Boswellia serrata)-
The gum resin of B serrata is known in the Indian Ayurvedic system of medicine as Salai guggal and contains boswellic acids which have been shown to inhibit leukotriene biosynthesis.

■■Solanum xanthocarpum/trilobatum.
S xanthocarpum and S trilobatum as a powder of the whole dried plant or decoction are widely used to treat respiratory disorders by practitioners of the Siddha system of medicine in Southern India.

■■Adhatoda vasica - The leaf has been used for centuries to treat asthma where it works as a bronchodilator and mild expectorant. Adhatoda also works by decreasing the viscosity of mucous to assist with expectoration.

Key constituents of adhatoda leaf are the quinazoline alkaloids (0.5–2%). The major alkaloid is vasicine present at levels of 45–95% and is the original source of the drug bromhexine, which is often still used to assist expectoration.

■■Turmeric- In an uncontrolled trial in India, 60% of asthma patients given 6-12 grams of turmeric powder that had been fried in ghee showed a relief in their symptoms. Curcumin is a powerful anti-inflammatory in both acute and chronic conditions.