

Ayurveda

Bronchitis is an inflammation of airways characterized by fever, cough, expectoration, and malaise. Acute bronchitis is caused by an imbalance of *kapha dosha*, and chronic bronchitis secondary to cigarette smoking is caused by an imbalance of *pitta dosha*.

Apart from *kapha*-balancing lifestyle recommendations, several herbs are useful for controlling the symptoms of acute bronchitis. I use six different preparations in patients with acute bronchitis (*Triphala*, *Trikatu*, *Mulethi*, *Vasa*, *Tulsi*, and *Haldi*). *Triphala* (a formulation made from fruits of *Emblica officinalis*, *Terminalia bellerica*, and *Terminalia chebula*) is widely used as a colon cleanser and digestive.¹ *Trikatu* (a formulation made from *Zinziber officinale*, *Piper nigrum*, and *Piper longum*) reduces *kapha* and enhances the action of other herbs.² *Mulethi* (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*),³ *Vasa* (*Adhatoda vasica*),⁴ *Tulsi* (*Ocimum sanctum*),⁵ and *Haldi* (*Curcuma longa*)⁶ are well-known for treatment of bronchitis in Ayurvedic literature. Honey is a good medium to mix and facilitate ingestion of these herbs and may also have a role in helping patients with bronchitis.⁷

I have successfully used a combination of these six preparations, mixed in equal quantities. For nondiabetic adults, the dose is 1 tsp (5 g) of the herbal combination mixed with 1 tbsp of honey and given orally 2–3 times a day. Water is substituted for honey in patients with diabetes, and the dose is reduced for pediatric patients. This combination may reduce the severity of symptoms, their total duration, and the need for antibiotics. Further research is needed to substantiate the role of these herbs for managing bronchitis. ■

References

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