



Review Article

BRIHATI (*Solanum indicum* LINN.): A POTENT ANTI-INFLAMMATORY DRUG IN AYURVEDA - CLASSICAL REFERENCES

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Article info

Article History:

Received: 24-01-2026

Accepted: 27-02-2026

Published: 26-03-2026

KEYWORDS:

Brihati, *Solanum indicum* Linn., *Dashamoola*, Ayurvedic classics, *Shothahara*.

ABSTRACT

Brihati (*Solanum indicum* Linn.), a member of the Solanaceae family, is an eminent medicinal plant extensively documented in Ayurvedic literature. Classified among the *Dashamoola* (group of ten roots), *Brihati* is described in classical texts such as Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya, and various Nighantus for its diverse therapeutic benefits. Characterized by *Tikta* (bitter) and *Katu* (pungent) *Rasa* (taste), *Laghu* (light) and *Ruksha* (dry) *guna* (properties), *Ushna virya* (hot potency), and *Katu vipaka* (pungent post-digestive effect), *Brihati* exhibits *Shothahara* (anti-inflammatory), *Shwasahara* (alleviating dyspnea), *Kaphahara* (phlegm-reducing), and *Mutrala* (diuretic) actions. It is frequently incorporated into formulations like *Dashamoola Kwatha* and *Brihatyadi Kashaya*, emphasizing its role in managing respiratory disorders, urinary tract conditions, and inflammatory states. Contemporary studies have validated several of these classical claims, including its nephroprotective potential. This article compiles absolute Ayurvedic references on *Brihati*, presenting its classical descriptions, pharmacological properties, therapeutic applications, and continued relevance in modern research.

INTRODUCTION

Brihati (*Solanum indicum* Linn.) is a well-recognized medicinal plant in Ayurveda, belonging to the Solanaceae family. Revered as one of the ten roots of *Dashamoola*, it holds a prominent place in classical Ayurvedic formulations used for treating a wide range of disorders. Ancient texts such as Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, and Ashtanga Hridaya extensively mention *Brihati* for its potent therapeutic properties, particularly in conditions affecting the respiratory, urinary, and inflammatory systems.

Described as possessing *Tikta* (bitter) and *Katu* (pungent) *rasa*, with *Laghu* (light) and *Ruksha* (dry) *guna*, *Ushna virya* (hot potency), and *Katu vipaka* (pungent post-digestive effect), *Brihati* exhibits actions such as *Shothahara* (anti-inflammatory), *Shwasahara* (relieving dyspnea), *Kaphahara* (reducing phlegm), and *Mutrala* (diuretic).

Its inclusion in widely used formulations like *Dashamoola Kwatha* and *Brihatyadi Kashaya* underscores its therapeutic importance.

Modern phytochemical and pharmacological investigations have further validated many of *Brihati*'s classical uses, highlighting its potential in managing inflammatory conditions, respiratory ailments, and nephroprotective effects- reflecting the timeless relevance of this classical drug in contemporary medicine.

Nirukti (Etymology)

Kantakaryapekshaya brihat swaroopatwat^[1]

Brihati is described as having a larger form in comparison to *Kantakari*, as noted in Bhavaprakasha Nighantu. The term "*Brihati*" is derived from the Sanskrit root '*Brih*', meaning to grow, expand, or become large, with the suffix- '*Ati*' added to convey the sense of something that is greater in size or of notable significance.

Botanical identification

The Ayurvedic Pharmacopoeia of India mentioned the identity of *Brihati* as *Solanum indicum* Linn^[2].

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Quick Response Code	
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The Indian Medicinal Plants described the drug as *Solanum indicum* Linn^[3].

Quality standards of Indian medicinal plants (vol 7) describe *Brihati* as *Solanum anguivi* Lamk. with synonyms *Solanum violaceum* Ortega, *Solanum sodomeum* Linn, *Solanum indicum* auct. non Linn^[4].

Database on Medicinal Plants used in Ayurveda & Siddha (Vol 8) mentioned *Brihati* as *Solanum anguivi* Lam. with synonym *Solanum indicum* Linn^[5].

Indian Medicinal Plants forgotten healers told *Brihati* as *Solanum indicum*^[6].

Indian Medicinal Plants A Compendium of 500 species Vol 5 Mentioned it as *Solanum anguivi* Lam. with synonym *Solanum indicum* auct. non Linn^[7].

Solanum xanthocarpum and *Solanum indicum* are the plants mentioned as the botanical source of *Brihati* in authoritative books on Indian Materia Medica^[8].

Classification of Brihati (*Solanum indicum* Linn.)

S.No	Ancient Literature	Gana/Varga
1	Charaka samhita ⁹	<i>Kanthy</i> , <i>Shothahara</i> , <i>Angamarda Prashamana</i> , <i>Hikka Nigrahana Mahakashayas</i>
2	Sushruta samhita ¹⁰	<i>Brihatyadi</i> , <i>Laghu panchamoola</i>
3	Ashtanga Sangraha ¹¹	<i>Dashamoola</i>
4	Ashtanga Hridaya ¹²	<i>Hraswa panchamoola</i>
5	Bhavaprakasha Nighantu ¹	<i>Guduchyadi varga</i>
6	Kaiyyadeva Nighantu ¹³	<i>Aushadhi varga</i>
7	Raja Nighantu ¹⁴	<i>Shathahvadi varga</i>
8	Dhanwanthari Nighantu ¹⁵	<i>Guduchyadi varga</i>
9	Shodhala Nighantu ¹⁶	<i>Guduchyadi varga</i>
10	Shaligrama Nighantu ¹⁷	<i>Guduchyadi varga</i>
11	Madanapala Nighantu ¹⁸	<i>Abhayadi varga</i>
12	Priya Nighantu ¹⁹	<i>Haritakyadi varga</i>
13	Madhava Dravyaguna ²⁰	<i>Vividhoushadhi varga</i>
14	Abhidhana Ratnamala ²¹	<i>Katudravya skandha</i>
15	Saraswathi Nighantu ²²	<i>Ulpaladi varga</i>

Paryaya (Synonyms)

Synonym	BPN ¹	KN ¹³	RN ¹⁴	DN ¹⁵	Sho N ¹⁶	Sha N ¹⁷	MP N ¹⁸	PN ¹⁹	Sa N ²²	Ab R ²¹
<i>Akrantha</i>						+				
<i>Bahupatra</i>					+					
<i>Bahuputra</i>		+								
<i>Bahuputri</i>			+							
<i>Bhantaki</i>		+	+							
<i>Brihati</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Dorali</i>			+							
<i>Dushpragharshini</i>	+									
<i>Dusparsha</i>									+	
<i>Hinguli</i>	+					+				
<i>Kantakarika</i>									+	
<i>Kantaki</i>		+					+			
<i>Kantalu:</i>			+							
<i>Kantatanu:</i>			+							
<i>Kantha</i>										
<i>Katphala</i>			+							
<i>Krantha</i>		+	+	+	+					
<i>Kshavathu</i>					+					
<i>Kshudra</i>									+	
<i>Kshudrabhantaki</i>	+							+		
<i>Kshudravarthaki</i>						+				+

<i>Kuli</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		+	
<i>Madotkata</i>							+			
<i>Mahathi</i>	+	+	+	+			+	+		
<i>Mahoshtri</i>	+									
<i>Mahoshtrika</i>		+								
<i>Mahotika</i>			+	+	+					
<i>Mehani</i>					+					
<i>Nidigdhika</i>									+	
<i>Peethathandula</i>					+					
<i>Prachodani</i>									+	
<i>Prasaha</i>						+				
<i>Raashtrika</i>	+	+	+	+	+		+		+	+
<i>Rakthapakilatha</i>						+				
<i>Rohini</i>					+					
<i>Simhi</i>	+	+				+	+			
<i>Simhika</i>			+	+	+					
<i>Sprishi</i>									+	
<i>Sthulabhantaki</i>		+			+		+			
<i>Sthulakanta</i>		+	+							
<i>Sthulakantaki</i>				+						
<i>Vaarthaki</i>	+	+	+	+	+			+		
<i>Vanavrinthaki</i>			+							
<i>Vidhavika</i>		+								
<i>Vishada</i>		+		+	+		+			+
<i>Vrinthaki</i>							+			
<i>Vyaghri</i>									+	

Rasa panchaka (Fundamental Properties)

S.no	Book	Rasa	Guna	Virya	Vipaka
1	BPN ¹	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	-	<i>Ushna</i>	-
2	KN ¹³	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	-	<i>Ushna</i>	-
3	RN ¹⁴	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	-	<i>Ushna</i>	-
4	DN ¹⁵	-	-	<i>Ushna</i>	-
5	ShoN ¹⁶	-	-	<i>Ushna</i>	-
6	ShaN ¹⁷	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	-	<i>Ushna</i>	-
7	MPN ¹⁸	-	-	<i>Ushna</i>	-
8	PN ¹⁹	-	-	<i>Ushna</i>	-
9	MDG ²⁰	-	-	<i>Ushna</i>	-

According to API

Rasa – Katu, Tikta

Guna – Laghu

Virya – Ushna

Vipaka – Katu²

Doshagnatha (Effect on Dosha)

S.no	Nighantu	Doshagnata
1	BPN ¹	-
2	KN ¹³	Vatha- Kapha hara
3	RN ¹⁴	Vatha hara
4	DN ¹⁵	Vatha hara, Kapha – Vatha hara
5	ShoN ¹⁶	Vatha hara
6	ShaN ¹⁷	Kapha – Vatha hara
7	MPN ¹⁸	Kapha – Vatha hara
8	PN ¹⁹	Kapha – Vatha hara

Karma (Pharmacological action)

	KN ¹³	DN ¹⁵	ShoN ¹⁶	ShaN ¹⁷	MPN ¹⁸	PN ¹⁹
<i>Deepana</i>	+			+		+
<i>Pachana</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Hridya</i>	+			+	+	+
<i>Grahini</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Ruchya</i>						+

Rogagnatha (Therapeutic indications)

	BPN ¹	KN ¹³	RN ¹⁴	DN ¹⁵	ShoN ¹⁶	ShaN ¹⁷	MPN ¹⁸	PN ¹⁹
<i>Aasayavairasya</i>	+	+				+		
<i>Malanashaka</i>	+	+						
<i>Arochaka</i>	+	+	+			+		
<i>Kushta</i>	+	+				+	+	
<i>Jwara</i>	+	+	+	+		+	+	+
<i>Swasa</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
<i>Shoola</i>	+	+		+		+	+	+
<i>Kasa</i>	+	+	+		+	+	+	+
<i>Agnimandya</i>	+			+		+	+	+
<i>Aama</i>			+	+		+		
<i>Hidroga</i>			+	+		+		
<i>Chardi</i>				+		+		
<i>Krimi</i>						+		
<i>Hrillasa</i>						+		
<i>Kandu</i>						+		

References in Samhitas and Nighantus**Samhita period**

The *Samhita Kala* refers to the era when drugs were categorized into different groups based on their properties and effects.

Brihat trayi frequently used it with *Kantakari* giving rise to the name *Brihati dwa*.

Charaka Samhita

Acharya Charaka has categorised *Brihati* in *Kanthy*, *Shothahara*, *Angamarda Prashamana* and *Hikka Nigrahana Mahakashayas*^[9].

He is included *Brihati* in *Ushna Virya dravyas* (drugs having hot potency)^[23].

Brihati, classified under *Shatyadi Varga*, is also a part of *Brihatyadi Gana*, both of which are beneficial in the treatment of *Sannipata Jwara*^[24].

Additionally, *Brihati* is referenced in multiple formulations for *Grahani* (digestive disorders), *Kasa* (cough), and *Trimarmiya* (diseases affecting vital organs- head, heart, and bladder)^[25].

Sushruta Samhita

In *Sushruta Samhita*, *Brihati* is included in the *Brihatyadi Gana*, a group of drugs that also comprises *Kantakari*, *Kutajaphala*, *Patha*, and *Madhuka*. It is described as *Pachaneeya* (digestive), *Pittanilahara* (pacify *Pitta* and *Vatha*), and beneficial in pacifying

Kapha, as well as in the management of *Arochaka*, *Hridroga*, *Mutrakrichra*, and *Ruja*^[26].

Brihati is also a component of *Vidarigandhadi gana* which is told as *Vathapithahara* and indicated in *Shosha*, *Gulma*, *Angamarda*, *Oordhwashwasa* and *Kasa*^[27].

In *Varunadi gana* also *Brihati* is an ingredient and is indicated in *Shirashoola*, *Gulma*, *Medoroga* and *Abhyanthara vidradhi* and this *Gana* is told as *Kaphahara*^[28].

Brihati is mentioned in *Kaneeya panchamoola* also known as *Laghu panchamoola*^[29].

Acharya Sushruta included *Brihati* in *Tiktha skandha dravyas*^[30].

He also included *Laghu panchamoola* (in which *Brihati* is a component) in *Vatha samshamana Varga*^[31].

The *Brihatyadi gana* is included in *Kapha samshamana varga*^[32].

Brihati is mentioned as an ingredient in various formulations used for the management of *Pramehapidaka*, *Ashmari*, *Switra*, *Mahavatavyadhi*, *Shleepada*, *Vishamagni*, and *Swasa*^[33].

Ashtanga Sangraha

In *Ashtanga Sangraha*, Acharya Vagbhata included *Brihati* (*Solanum indicum* Linn.) in *Dashamoola* which is having *angamardahara* and *shophaghna* actions^[34].

Ashtanga Hridaya

In *Ashtanga Hridaya*, *Brihati* (*Solanum indicum* Linn.) is mentioned in *Hraswa panchamoola*^[35].

Brihati is included in *Tiktha skandha dravyas* by Vagbhata^[36].

Also, he included *Brihati* in *Nirooha gana* as well as *Vathaghna gana*^[37].

Brihati is an ingredient in *Vidaryadi gana*^[38] and *Varunadi gana*^[39].

Brihati is included as an ingredient in various formulations for *Sthoulya Chikitsa* (management of obesity) in *Dwividhopakramaneeya*^[40].

Nighantu period

A detailed summary of the therapeutic indications of *Brihati* can be derived from the Nighantus.

In Bhavaprakasha Nighantu, it is mentioned as it pacifies *Aasyavairasya*, *Mala*, *Arochaka*. And it is useful in treatment of *Kushta*, *Jwara*, *Shwasa*, *Shoola*, *Kasa* and *Agnimandya*.

Kaiyadeva explain it as *Deepani*, *Pachani*, *Hridya* and *Grahini*. It pacifies *Jwara*, *Kushta*, *Shwasa*, *Aasyamala*, *Aasyavairasya*, *Kasa*, *Arochaka* and *Shoola*. Kaiyadeva enumerated 11 varieties of *Brihati*. They are – *Simhi*, *Brihati*, *Kantakari*, *Nidigdhika*, *Valli brihati*,

Vriksha brihati, *Swetha brihati*, *Alabuphala brihati*, *Amla brihati*, *Jala brihati* and *Sthula brihati*^[13].

In Raja Nighantu, *Brihati* is mentioned as *Jwarahara* and indicated for *Arochaka*, *Aama*, *Kasa*, *Shwasa* and *Hridroga*.

In Dhanwanthari Nighantu mentioned as it pacifies *Shwasa*, *Shoola*, *Jwara*, *Chardi*, *Hridroga*, *Mandagni*, *Aamadosha*^[15].

In Shodhala Nighantu, it is mentioned as *Brihati* is *Grahini* and the *Shweta brihati* is good for *Vandhya*^[16].

Shaligrama Nighantu told it as *Hridya*, *Aamapachika*, *Grahini*, *Agnideeptikara*, *Jwarahara* and good for *Kushta*, *Arochaka*, *Chardi*, *Shwasa*, *Kasa*, *Krimi*, *Mukhavairasya*, *Hrillasa*, *Kandu*, *Shola*, *Aamadosha*, *Hridroga* and *Agnimandya*^[17].

In Priya Nighantu, it is mentioned as *Grahini*, *Pachani*, *Ruchya*, *Hridya* And *Vahnipradeepani*. And it is useful in diseases like *Jwara*, *Kasa*, *Shwasa*, *Shoola* and *Agnimandya*^[19].

Madanapala Nighantu told *Brihati* as *Grahini*, *Hridya*, *Pachani* and *Kapha vatha hara*. And it is told in treatment of *Kushta*, *Jwara*, *Shwasa*, *Shoola*, *Kasa* and *Agnimandya*^[18].

Useful parts

Root, whole plant, fruit, seed, leaf^[2]

Matra

Decoction – 40 – 80ml

Powder – 3 – 6 gm

10-20 gm of the drug for decoction^[5]

Aushadha Yoga

Asava and *Arishta*- *Dashmoolarishta*,
Amritarishta, *Punarnavasava*, *Dantyadyarishta*,
Mrithasanjivani sura.

Avaleha and *Paka* – *Dashamoola rasayana*, *Dashamoola haritaki lehya*, *Agastya haritaki rasayana*, *Brahma rasayana*, *Bharangi guda*, *Chyavanaprasha*, *Kamsaharitaki*.

Ghritha- *Amritaprasha ghritha*, *Kalyanaka ghritha*, *Dashmoola ghritha*, *Dashmoolashatpalaka ghritha*, *Dadhika ghritha*, *Dhanvantaram ghritha*, *Kalyanaka ghritha*, *Maha Panchagavya ghritha*, *Sukumara ghritha*, *Indukanta ghritha*, *Brihachhagaladya ghritha*.

Churna - *Rajanyadi churna*

Kashayam- *Brihatyadi kashayam*, *Dashamoolam kashayam*, *Dashmoolakatutrayam kashayam*, *Elakanadi kashayam*, *Dashmoolapancakoladi kashayam*, *Dhanvantaram kashayam*, *Indukantham kashayam*, *Sukumaram kashayam*

Taila - *Anu taila*, *Dhanvantaram taila*, *Narayana taila*, *Mahanarayana taila*, *Vishnu taila*, *Mushikadya taila*, *Sahacaradi taila*, *Dashmoola taila*, *Agarvadyam taila*.

Vati And *Gutika* - *Khadiradi gutika* (*Kasa*), *Dhanvantaram gutika*, *Manasamitram vatakam*

Rasayoga - Shirahshooladivajra rasa

Lavana Kshara - Abhaya Lavana

Amayika prayoga

A formulation comprising *Brihati*, *Kantakari*, *Vatsaka*, *Musta*, *Devadaru*, *Mahoushadha*, and *Kolavalli* is beneficial in the management of *Sannipata Jwara*^[41].

Nasya therapy utilizing *Ksheera* or *Sarpi* processed with *Prapoundarika*, *Madhuka*, *Pippali*, *Brihati*, and *Bala* acts as an effective *Swarya*^[42].

Massage with a combination of *Kakamachi*, *Brihati*, *Kushta*, *Punarnava*, *Chitraka*, and *Nagara* using *Mutra* helps in alleviating *Sopha* (*Ch. Chi. 12/73*)^[43].

Ghrita prepared with *Brihati*, *Ashwagandha*, *Pippali*, and *Surasa* is beneficial in the management of *Shushkarsha* (*Ch. Chi. 14/50*)^[44].

Ghrita prepared with *Brihati*, *Kantakari*, *Kashmari*, *Shunga* and *Twak* of *Kshiri vriksha* is beneficial in managing *Garbhasrava* occurring in the fifth month of pregnancy^[45].

In *Vataja Abhishyanda*, *Ashchyotana* prepared with *Bilwadi*, *Erandamoola*, *Brihati*, and *Madhushigru* is considered beneficial^[46].

In *Shiroroga*, *Nasya* with *Taila* processed using *Brihatyadi Gana* is considered effective^[47].

In *Kaphaja Shleepada*, *Lepa* prepared with *Sarshapa*, *Brihati Moola*, or *Dhanwa* is beneficial^[48].

For conception: The woman should take white *Brihati* (root) by right nostril for male progeny and by left one for female child. (*BS. Stiroga.153*).^[49]

In *Grahani*: The preparation of buttermilk processed with *Brihati* root is considered beneficial for promoting overall health^[50].

Kashaya prepared with *padma*, *vari*, *kathaka*, *gokshura*, *darbha*, *kusha*, *pathuramoola*, and *Brihati* is useful in all *Mutrakrichra*^[51].

Brihati, *kantakari*, *erandamoola*, *karpasa*, and *gokshura* made into *Kashaya* taken with milk is good for *Mutrakrichra*^[52].

Kashaya or *ksheerapaka* prepared with *trinapanchamoola*, *musali*, *padma*, *vari*, *Brihati*, *gokshura* etc is beneficial in *Mutrakrichra*^[52].

Paste prepared with *eranda*, *Brihatimoola*, *gokshura*, and *kokilaksha* mixed with *takra* will pacify *Ashmari* ^[53,54].

Kashaya prepared with *padma*, *pathura*, *yashti*, *Brihati* *dwaya* etc mixed with *ghritha* is useful in *Mutrakrichra*^[55].

Ghritha prepared with *nirgundi*, *eranda*, *punarnava*, *varuna*, *kana*, *Brihati*, *shigrutwak* etc is good for *Mutrakrichra*^[54].

Folklore uses

The decoction (*Kashaya*) of *Brihati* root is beneficial in managing painful micturition, fever, and severe cold.

The root decoction of *Brihati*, when administered with honey, is effective in the management of *Timira* (visual disorders).

A decoction prepared from *Brihati* root along with *Ela* (cardamom) is useful in alleviating *Vatakopa* (aggravation of *Vata*) and abdominal pain.

The expressed juice (*Swarasa*) obtained from the root and leaves of *Brihati*, after cooking, promotes digestion.

Either the fresh juice (*Swarasa*) of *Brihati* combined with jaggery or its decoction (*Kashaya*) with honey helps in pacifying excess *Kapha*^[56].

To cure debility, Bangladesh's Santal Tribe, who dwell in Thakurgaon District, mix the bark from the root of *Solanum indicum* with the bark of *Alstonia scholaris*^[57].

Root powder of *Solanum indicum* coupled with *Solanum surattense* is given with curd for two weeks to cure kidney stones and urinary tract infection^[58].

In Rajasthan folk and traditional medicine, the root of *Solanum indicum* is used for aphrodisiac properties^[59].

DISCUSSION

The consistent inclusion of *Brihati* in classical Ayurvedic texts underscores its status as a foundational drug within traditional therapeutics. As a member of the *Dashamoola* group, *Brihati* represents the principle of synergistic polyherbal therapy, where the combined actions of ten roots are employed to address systemic imbalances, particularly those involving *Vata* and *Kapha* doshas. Its characterization as *Tikta-Katu rasa*, *Laghu-Ruksha guna*, *Ushna virya*, and *Katu vipaka* explains its effectiveness in alleviating *Shotha* (inflammation), *Shwasa* (dyspnea), and *Mutrakriccha* (urinary difficulties).

The wide therapeutic spectrum- from respiratory ailments to urinary and inflammatory conditions- illustrates Ayurveda's holistic approach, wherein a single plant's properties are understood in relation to dosha, dhatu, and srotas. Its repeated appearance in preparations like *Dashamoola Kwatha* and *Brihatyadi Kashaya* confirms its clinical utility across generations of practitioners.

Modern phytopharmacological research has begun to substantiate these classical claims. Studies investigating its anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and diuretic properties echo the actions described in Ayurvedic literature. Moreover, emerging evidence-including nephroprotective activity demonstrated in experimental models- points to its relevance in addressing contemporary health challenges. This convergence of classical wisdom and scientific validation positions *Brihati* as a promising candidate for integrative medicine approaches, where ancient knowledge informs modern therapeutic strategies.

CONCLUSION

Brihati (*Solanum indicum* Linn.) holds a firmly established place in Ayurveda as a vital component of the Dashamoola group. Its repeated citation across authoritative texts such as *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya* underscores its recognized efficacy in balancing Vata and Kapha doshas. The consistent description of its *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya*, and *Vipaka* aligns with its classical therapeutic applications in respiratory, urinary, and inflammatory disorders.

By compiling its absolute Ayurvedic references, this article reaffirms Brihati's enduring significance in traditional practice and highlights the depth of botanical knowledge preserved in the Ayurvedic pharmacopeia. Its longstanding use within revered formulations illustrates not only its versatility but also its integral role in maintaining health according to classical Ayurvedic principles.

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Cite this article as:

Indu. B. S, Arya Prabhu. Brihati (Solanum Indicum Linn.): A Potent Anti-Inflammatory Drug in Ayurveda - Classical References. International Journal of Ayurveda and Pharma Research. 2026;14(3):209-216.

<https://doi.org/10.47070/ijapr.v14i3.4036>

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared

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