

Can giloy have a bad effect on your liver? Here's what Ayurvedic doctors says



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Giloy is a herb used in many Ayurvedic medicines. (Source: pixabay)

The Ministry of Ayush has issued a statement challenging the findings of a study that linked the herb giloy to liver damage.

The study, published in the *Journal of Clinical and Experimental Hepatology*, mentioned that the “use of herb *Tinospora Cordifolia* (TC), commonly known as giloy or guduchi, resulted in liver failure in six patients in Mumbai”.

The ministry, however, said that relating giloy or TC to liver damage would be “misleading and disastrous to the traditional medicine system of India as herb guduchi or giloy has been used in Ayurveda since long. The efficacy of TC in managing various disorders is well established”.

In the statement published by PIB, the ministry further argued that the authors of the study “have not analysed the contents of the herb that was consumed by the patients”.

Elaborating on the “flaws” in the study, the statement further read, “In fact, there are many studies that point out that identifying the herb not correctly could lead to wrong results. A similar-looking herb *Tinospora Crispa* might have a negative effect on the liver. So, before labelling a herb, such as giloy, with such toxic nature the authors should have tried to

correctly identify the plants following the standard guidelines, which they did not. Other than this, the study has many flaws. It is unclear that what dose the patients had taken or whether they took this herb with other medicines. The study has not taken into account the past or present medical records of the patients.”

Giloy, used in many herbal and ayurvedic medicines, is known to treat many health issues. It has a high nutritional content and includes steroids, flavonoids, lignans, and carbohydrates.

Giloy during Covid-19 pandemic

Almost 70 per cent of the Indian population consumed Giloy in some form during Covid-19, Dr Partap Chauhan, Ayurvedacharya and director, Jiva Ayurveda, told the outlet.

“It has been part of clinical trails conducted by various Ayurvedic institutions. If the herb had any adverse effect, then it would have been noticed. In one study published in the World Journal of Gastroenterology, it was found that both Giloy (*Tinaspora cordifolia*) and turmeric (*Curcuma longa*) are hepato-protective in patients who were taking anti-tuberculosis treatment,” he stated.

Can giloy cause liver damage?

There is no “concrete evidence” for this yet, Dr Chavan said. While there are no serious or potential side effects of the herb, in some cases, it can cause constipation or lower blood sugar levels, the doctor further cautioned. “Also, avoid giloy if you are pregnant or breastfeed a baby. Anything consumed in excess can be harmful to health. So, have it in the quantity recommended by the doctor,” she added.

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