

# Capsule Summary

## Role of Ashwagandha in Reducing Anxiety

The root of Ashwagandha has multiple properties and has been widely used in Ayurveda.

Some of its known uses are:

- The root of Ashwagandha is regarded as tonic, aphrodisiac, narcotic, diuretic, anthelmintic, astringent, thermogenic, and stimulant.
- It is commonly used in emaciation of children (when given with milk, it is the best tonic for children),
- Debility from old age, rheumatism, vitiated conditions of Vata, leucoderma, constipation, insomnia, nervous breakdown, goiter, etc.
- The paste formed when roots are crushed with water is applied to reduce the inflammation at the joints
- It is also locally applied in carbuncles, ulcers, and painful swellings.

Recently a study was carried out to understand the effects of Ashwagandha on reducing stress. The Summary of this study can be found below:

### Study design

This was a prospective, double-blind, randomized, placebo-controlled study conducted at Risk Care Hospital, Thane, Maharashtra, India. The study population included adults between the age of 18-55 years. Participants were randomized into the three study groups through 1: 1: 1 randomization. A dose of 250 mg/day and 600 mg/day Ashwagandha root extract was used for the treatment groups respectively and the placebo group was given 250 mg/day starch for the entire study duration of eight weeks.

### Key Study Results:

- Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) score Relative to the value at the baseline, the mean PSS was significantly lower ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the Ashwagandha 250 group and also ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the Ashwagandha 600 group. The reduction in mean PSS relative to the baseline was significant compared to the placebo group both for the Ashwagandha 250 group ( $p < 0.05$ ) and in the Ashwagandha 600 group ( $p < 0.001$ )
- Serum cortisol (mcg/dL) At the end of the study, there was a significant decrease in serum cortisol levels in the Ashwagandha treatment groups compared to the placebo group.
- Sleep quality assessment Relative to the value at baseline, the mean sleep quality score was statistically significantly higher ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the Ashwagandha 250 group and also ( $p < 0.05$ ) in the Ashwagandha 600 group. The increase in the mean sleep quality score, relative to the baseline was statistically significantly higher both in the Ashwagandha 250 group ( $p < 0.05$ ) and in the Ashwagandha 600 group ( $p < 0.0001$ ), than in the placebo group.

### Conclusions:

Study findings suggested that eight weeks of supplementation of aqueous Ashwagandha root extract was associated with a significant reduction of stress levels in individuals and improved the overall quality of life. Hence, the use of this herb as a supplement for stress and anxiety management could be an excellent alternative option.

The complete article can be accessed at <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32021735/>

Information Source:

Salve J, Pate S, Debnath K, Langade D. Adaptogenic and Anxiolytic Effects of Ashwagandha Root Extract in Healthy Adults: A Double-blind, Randomized, Placebo-controlled Clinical Study. *Cureus*. 2019 Dec 25;11(12):e6466. doi: 10.7759/cureus.6466. PMID: 32021735; PMCID: PMC6979308.

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