

Plants are used in folk remedies for glandular tumors in India.⁴ Leaf used for asthma, bronchitis, consumption, cough, fever, jaundice, tuberculosis; smoked for asthma; prescribed as a mucolytic, antitussive, antispasmodic, expectorant.⁴¹ Ayurvedics use the root for hematuria, leucorrhoea, parturition, and strangury, the plant for asthma, blood impurities, bronchitis, consumption, fever, heart disease, jaundice, leucoderma, loss of memory (amnesia), stomatosis, thirst, tumors, and vomiting.²⁶ Yunani use the fruit for bronchitis, the flowers for jaundice, poor circulation, and strangury; the emmenagogue leaves in gonorrhoea, and the diuretic root in asthma, bilious nausea, bronchitis, fever, gonorrhoea, and sore eyes.⁴⁴

Used in Indian medicine for more than 2000 years, adhatoda now has a whole book dedicated to only one of its active alkaloids.⁷⁷ In addition to antiseptic and insecticidal properties, vasicine produces a slight fall of blood pressure, followed by rise to the original level, and an increase in the amplitude of heart beats and a slowing of the rhythm. It has a slight but persistent bronchodilator effect. With a long history as an expectorant in India, vasicine has recently been modified to form the derivative bromhexine, a mucolytic inhalant agent, which increases respiratory fluid volume, diluting the mucus, and reduces its viscosity. Fluid extract of leaves liquifies sputum, relieving coughs and bronchial spasms. The plant also contains an unidentified principle agent active against the tubercular bacillus.¹¹¹ Adhatodine, anisotinine, betaine, vasakin, vasicine, vasicinine, vasicinol, vasicinone, vasicoline, vasicolinone, are reported.⁴¹ Deoxyvasicine is a highly effective antifeedant followed by vasicinol and vasicine. "These plant products as antifeedants could be safely used for controlling pests on vegetable crops."⁷⁸

Toxicity — Vasicine and vasicinol exhibit potential to reduce fertility in insects. "Vasicine is also likely to replace the abortifacient drugs in current use as its abortifacient activity is comparable to prostaglandins."⁷⁸ In large doses the leaves cause diarrhea and nausea.