



Ashwagandha

Why in News?

Ashwagandha is growing in popularity, both in India and abroad. It is an **evergreen shrub found in parts of India, Africa, and the Middle East.**

Key Points

- **Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera)** is a medicinal herb. It is reputed as an immunity enhancer.
- It is classified as **an adaptogen**, which means that it can **help the body to manage stress.**
- Ashwagandha also boosts brain function and lowers blood sugar and helps fight symptoms of anxiety and depression.
- Ashwagandha has shown clinical success in **treating both acute and chronic [rheumatoid arthritis](#).**
 - **Rheumatoid arthritis (RA)** is an autoimmune disease that can **cause joint pain and damage throughout your body.**
 - An autoimmune disease is a condition in which your immune system mistakenly attacks your body.
- Being **hardy and drought tolerant** species with its enormous **biocompounds**, its usage is forever regarded and continues to enjoy the monopoly in many parts of India, particularly in **Madhya Pradesh.**
 - It grows in **dry parts in sub-tropical regions.** Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh are the **major Ashwagandha producing states** of the country.
 - In Madhya Pradesh it is cultivated in more than 5000 hectares.
- The estimated production of Ashwagandha roots in India is more than 1500 tonnes and the annual requirement is about 7000 tonnes necessitating the increase in its cultivation and higher production.

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