

HTML clipboard *Emblica officinalis*) is a deciduous tree of the Euphorbeaceae family. It is known for its edible fruit of the same name. Common names of this tree include amalaka in Sanskrit, amla in Hindi, Usirikai in Telugu, aonla, aola, amalaki, amla berry, dharty, aamvala, aawallaa, emblic, emblic myrobalan, Malacca tree, nellikai, nillika, and nellikya.

The tree is small to medium sized, reaching 8 to 18 m in height, with crooked trunk and spreading branches. The leaves are simple, subsessile, the flowers are greenish-yellow. The fruit is nearly spherical, light greenish yellow, quite smooth and hard on appearance, with 6 vertical stripes or furrows. The fruits ripen in autumn. Its taste is bitter-sour. Being more fibrous than most fruits, it cannot be consumed raw in vast quantity; indeed, it is taken with salt. A glass of water taken immediately after eating a large fruit makes the water seem sweeter.



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For medicinal purposes dried and fresh fruits of the plant are used. The fruit allegedly contains 720 mg of vitamin C per 100 g of fresh fruit pulp, or up to 900 mg per 100 g of pressed juice. Apart from this it also contains tannins; a reason why even dried form retains most of the vitamin content.

Particularly in Southern India, the fruit is pickled with salt, oil, and spices, and also used as a primary ingredient in the Ayurvedic tonic Chyawanprash. Its extract is popularly used in inks, dyes, shampoos and hair oils.

In Hinduism it is regarded as a sacred tree and worshipped as Mother Earth in India.

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