



## Review Article

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## Tabasheer (*Bambusa arundinaceae* Retz.) a plant origin drug of Unani medicine– a review

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### ABSTRACT

Herbal drugs have got enormous momentum in global health care. Tabasheer (*Bambusa bambos* Druce or *Bambusa arundinaceae* Retz.) is one of the valuable plant resources of the earth. Tabasheer belongs to the family Gramineae, and is highly venerable Unani medicinal plant, commonly known as Bamboo. It has proven pharmacological benefits and is also used as a folklore medicine. Since ancient times Tabasheer is common among the common man, as “Poor man’s timber” and because of its numerable applications has attained the status of the “Green gold of forest”. Tabasheer possess anti inflammatory, carminative, anti diabetic, anti oxidant, aphrodisiac, astringent, desiccant, demulcent, diuretic, expectorant, liver and cardio tonic, refrigerant, rejuvenative, styptic etc. This review paper reveals high nutritive values, phytochemical and pharmacological functions and health benefits of Tabasheer.

**Keywords:** Tabasheer, Bamboosa, Medicinal plant, Pharmacological functions.

### INTRODUCTION

Tabasheer is a dull white, brittle, chalky, translucent, extract of the stems of *Bambusa bambos* Druce <sup>(1)</sup> and belongs to family Gramineae.<sup>(2-4)</sup> *Bambusa arundinaceae* (Retz) Roxb or *Bambusa* Druce is known as Indian thorny bamboo. Bamboos are members of Gramineae family, as are corn, sugarcane and other grasses. However, bamboos differ from other members of grasses family by presence of branches at each node. <sup>(5)</sup> This genus has 1200 species of bamboo worldwide, of which 33 species found in India. <sup>(6,7)</sup> It is extracellular silica found in the hollow stems as a gelatinous mass about one inch thick and containing about 1% organic matter and can be easily isolated from the plant tissues. The hardness and stiffness of bamboo is due to the presence of intracellular silica in the fibre structure. <sup>(2, 8, 9, 10)</sup> It is a highly demanded substance, versatile described to be cold in nature.<sup>(6,10)</sup> Tabasheer is insoluble in water and partially soluble in alcohol. <sup>(1)</sup> Tabasheer owes its alternative name ‘sugar of bamboo’ due to the sweet taste of an organic residue.<sup>(10)</sup>

Ibn Sina describes various action of Tabasheer, Tabasheer was generally paid for by its weight in silver, he also describes black or grey Tabasheer which was of less value and was obtained by burning the bamboo cane.<sup>(11)</sup> Ibne Baitar describes that white Tabasheer is of superior quality which is found in internode of Bamboo, he further explains with the reference of Ali Ibn Mohammad that in the places where it was not cultivated, people used to sell burnt bones of wolf as Tabasheer in view of its high cost.<sup>(12)</sup>

Bamboo is a common name for about 45 genera and about 480 species of the subfamily *Bambusoideae* of the grass family Poaceae.<sup>(10)</sup> The plants of genus *Bambusa* are large, erect, sometimes climbing. <sup>(6)</sup>

**Botanical name:** *Bambusa arundinaceae* Retz.<sup>(2, 3, 11, 13)</sup>

**Family:** Poaceae (Gramineae)<sup>(2,3)</sup>

### Synonyms

*Bambusa bambos* Druce<sup>(6)</sup>

*Bambusa arundinaceae* Willd<sup>(8, 9, 14)</sup>

*Bambosa bambos* Linn. Voss.<sup>(3)</sup>

*Arundo bambos* Linn. <sup>(3)</sup>

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