

# *Polygonatum verticillatum*

No Image

**Family:** Liliaceae

**Local/common names:**  
Whorled Solomon's Seal,  
Mahameda

**Trade name:** Mahameda

**Profile:**

*Polygonatum verticillatum* is often confused with Solomon's Seal (*Polygonatum biflorum*). Many forms of this plant exist such as a broader leafed form, a dwarf form, larger forms (up to six feet) as well as the white versus pink flowering forms. Although no reports of toxicity have been seen for this species, some members of this genus have poisonous fruits and seeds. The plant is an important member of the famous Ashtavarga (Group of eight) in the Ayurveda and known as 'Meda'. Sweet in taste and cold in potency, it pacifies *vata* and *pitta*. It is also known in ancient literature as Dhara, Manichhidra and Shalyaparni.

**Habitat and ecology:** The plant is commonly found in forests, shrubberies and open slopes with altitudinal variations of 1500-3700 m. This species has an extensive range in the northern hemisphere from Europe to the Himalayas up to Siberia. In the Himalayas the plant is available in Pakistan, India and southeastern Tibet.

**Morphology:** It is an erect rather robust plant with many whorls of narrow lanceolate leaves, bearing branched clusters of 2-3 small, pendulous, tubular and white flowers with green tips in their axils. The stem is angled and grooved, 60-120 cm long. The flowers are 8-12 mm long, fused into a broad tube below with short triangular spreading lobes. The fruit is a berry, which at first is bright red, becoming dark purple later. The rootstock is thick and creeping.

**Distinguishing features:** The plant has white flowers with green tips.

**Life cycle:** The plant completes its life cycle in May-June when flowering takes place.

**Uses:** The roots of this plant have several chemical components that have been used for synthesizing steroidal hormones. In action the plant has a cooling effect and is spermopiotic. It is febrifuge and effective on burning sensation and phthisis. Young shoots are consumed after cooking and often used as a substitute for asparagus. The roots are also consumed in a cooked form.

**Market rate:** It is sold at the rate of Rs.50/- per kg in Delhi market.