



Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)



Amman Paccharisi

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Botanical Name	:	<i>Euphorbia hirta</i> Linn.
Tamil Name	:	Amman Paccharisi
Sanskrit Name	:	Dugdhika
English Name	:	Asthma Weed

Distribution and Habitat

E.hirta belongs to the family Euphorbiaceae. It is a slender-stemmed, annual hairy plant with many branches from the base to top, spreading up to 40 cm in height, reddish or purplish in colour. The plant is distributed throughout the temperate or tropical parts of India, Asia, Africa and Australia, often found in lowland, paddy fields, wastelands, and along roadsides.



Leaves are opposite, elliptic, oblong, lanceolate, acute, dark green above, pale beneath, 1 – 2.5 cm long, blotched with purple in the middle, and toothed at the edge. Stem small, glabrous, hairy and long. The stem and leaves produce white or milky juice when cut. It has a distinct and developed primary root. The fruits are yellow, three celled, hairy, keeled capsules, 1 – 2 mm in diameter, containing three brown, wrinkled seeds.

Parts used: Whole plant

Phyto-chemical constituents

Coumarins, alkaloid, steroid, phyto-steroid, terpenoids, afzelin, quercitrin, myricitrin, rutin, euphorbin, kaempferol, gallic acid, proto-catechuic acid, β -amyrin, β -sitosterol, heptacosane, shikimic acid, tinyatoxin, choline, camphol and quercitol, rhamnose and chitol-phenolic acid.

Medicinal uses

E.hirta is a valuable medicinal plant used globally in different traditional systems of medicines. The plant is commonly called asthma weed in Asia and Australia, it is widely used to treat asthma, cough, diarrhoea and dysentery. The herb has been used as an antibiotic to treat dermatitis, ringworms, skin irritation and eczema since ancient times. Its leaves possess anthelmintic properties and are useful in treating intestinal worms among children. Leaf poultice is applied externally over wounds and ulcers. The decoction of the root is used to allay vomiting, chronic diarrhoea, fever, sores, wounds, boils and is beneficial for nursing mothers with deficient milk (Ubaid *et al.* 2018). A decoction made from the flowers can aid

in healing eye infections and inflammations, such as conjunctivitis or pinkeye. The whole plant has a reputation as an analgesic to treat kidney stones, skin and mucous membrane ailments, severe headache, toothache, rheumatism, colic and pains during pregnancy (Al-Snafi, 2017). It is used as an antidote and pain relief of scorpion stings and snakebites. The use of the latex to facilitate removal of thorns from the skin is common. Decoction of the leaves can be given in dengue to help increase the platelet count. It can also be used to relieve anxiety and stress. The whole plant possesses numerous pharmacological activities such as antibacterial, antifungal, anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, sedative, anticancer, antimalarial, antiviral and antidiabetic (Nguyen *et al.* 2020). The multidimensional role of *E.hirta* as a potential antiviral agent suggests its possible application to control COVID-19 along with modern and Western medicinal strategies (Khursheed *et al.* 2022).



Conclusion

E. hirta is one of the popular and important medicinal plants of tropical and moderate areas of the world. The plant has traditionally been used in Asia to treat bronchitis asthma and it is more used in the treatment of intestinal amoebic dysentery. The whole plant has been reported for its biochemical and pharmacological activities such as antidiabetic, anticancer, anthelmintic, antibacterial, antiviral, antimalarial, analgesic, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant activity.

Photo link

https://apps.lucidcentral.org/plants_se_nsw/text/entities/euphorbia_hirta.htm

