



Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)



Musumusukkai

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Botanical Name	:	<i>Cucumis maderaspatanus</i> Linn.
Tamil Name	:	Musumusukkai
Sanskrit Name	:	Paripushkara
English Name	:	Madras pea pumpkin

Distribution and Habitat

C. maderaspatanus belongs to the family of Cucurbitaceae. It is found in India and Sri Lanka, mainly in Maharashtra, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and commonly seen in plain lands and in deciduous forests.



It is a soft spiny, hairy, climbing herb. Stem succulent and green, covered with thin, white hairs making the plant look prickly and rough. Leaves heart-shaped, 3-9 cm long. Flowers small, yellow about 1-3 mm long, grows from leaf axils placed right above the leaf. Fruits, berry scarlet, globose, green when young and turn red when ripe. Seeds grey or light black, compressed, wrinkled. It is globally distributed throughout the tropics and subtropics.

Parts used: Whole plant

Phyto-chemical constituents

Alkaloids, flavonoids, tannins, saponin, steroids, terpenoids, cardiac glycerides, carbohydrates, and phenolic compounds.

Medicinal uses

C. maderaspatanus is used in traditional medicine in Ayurveda, Siddha and Naturopathy. The Ayurveda medical system prescribes the leaves and root of this plant for asthma, cough, burning sensation, dyspepsia, colic, constipation, ulcer and vertigo. The fruit is used in dysuria, polyuria, piles and tuberculosis. Leaf decoction is consumed orally to



treat piles by the Irula tribal community in southern Western Ghats (Venkatachalapathi et al. 2018). Leaves of this plant and tulsi leaves mixed to prepare juice and given orally to treat fever, cough, vomiting, common cold, throat infection in Bidar district of Karnataka (Sujata, 2021). In Siddha medicine the root and leaf of the plant are used to treat fever, abdominal disorder, hepatic disorder, cough and vomiting. The root is used in the treatment of male infertility, vomiting, gastritis, *Pitha* diseases and indigestion (Murugesamuthaliyar, 2018). The roots are powdered and eaten to treat nausea and chest pain. The oil extracted from the plant is used as hair tonic to postpone greying of hair (Sudhakar, 2007). Whole plant is used for liver cirrhosis and as appetizer and blood purifier. It has pharmacological properties such as anti-bacterial, anti-rheumatic, anti-asthmatic, anti-bronchitic, hypo-lipidemic, hepato-protective, hypo-glycemic, and antiulcer. The plant paste is used to treat tick (ecto-parasite) of cattle. It acts as an immune booster in cattle and prevents digestive disorder.

Conclusion

C. maderaspatanus is one of the popular and important medicinal plants of tropical and moderate areas of the world. The whole plant has been in use for the treatment of various ailments in people and animals. The plant is used as herbal drug in cough and cold and also reported for its biochemical and pharmacological activities such as diuretic, antihypertensive, anti-hyperlipidemic, anti-diabetic, anticancer, hepato-protective, antibacterial, analgesic, anti-inflammatory, and antioxidant activity.

Photo link: <https://tamil.krishijagran.com/health-lifestyle/surprising-benefits-of-musumuzukai-leaf/>

