



## Herbal Garden (Muligai Vanam)

### Karpooravalli



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<b>Botanical Name</b>	:	<i>Coleus amboinicus</i> Lour.
<b>Tamil Name</b>	:	Karpooravalli
<b>Sanskrit Name</b>	:	Ajagandha Parna
<b>English Name</b>	:	Indian mint; Mexican mint

### Distribution and Habitat

*Coleus amboinicus* Lour is a dicotyledonous herbal plant of the *Lamiacea* family. The plant is distributed throughout India. The plant is widely cultivated and naturalized elsewhere in the tropics where it is used as a spice and ornamental plant. It is known to grow in rocky, loamy or sandy soil. *C. amboinicus* is a perennial herb with a life cycle of 3 – 10 years, fleshy and highly



aromatic. It has a tendency to climb or creep, and can reach up to 1 m tall. Leaves simple, thick and fleshy, light green with opposite leaf arrangement (2.5 – 3 cm long, 2.5 – 3 cm wide). Leaves are broadly ovate or triangular in shape. Stems are tomentose (densely covered with short, soft hairs). 10 – 20 flowers are arranged in a verticil inflorescence (10 – 20 cm long). Flower has bell shaped calyx. Fruits are smooth nut lets, pale brown in colour.

### Parts used

Leaves

### Phytochemical constituents

Monoterpenoids, diterpenoids, triterpenoids, sesquiterpenoids, phenolics, flavonoids and esters.

## Uses

The strong flavour and aroma of these leaves make them ideal for flavouring. It is also eaten raw with bread and butter, used as fried snack, and used for flavouring beer and wine. The plant is also used as a food supplement and flavouring for drinks.

## Medicinal uses

*C.amboinicus* is used in the treatment of diseases such as digestive and respiratory disorders, skin infections and pain. In India, it is used to treat malaria, cough, chronic asthma, bronchitis, epilepsy. Leaves have many traditional medicinal uses for the treatment of cough, sore throat and nasal congestion, malarial fever,



hepatopathy, renal and vesical calculi, cough, chronic asthma, and convulsions. The pharmacological properties recorded include antibacterial, antifungal, antioxidant, analgesic, anti-inflammatory, fungi-toxic, and anti-malarial activities (Lukhoba et al., 2006). Indian traditional medicinal uses the herb for skin ulcerations, scorpion bite, skin allergy, wounds. Leaves are often utilized in the treatment of urinary diseases, kidney troubles, and vaginal discharges in the Amazon and India. In Uganda, the plant is used in traditional medicine to treat ailments such as, cough, diarrhoea, immunity boosting and fungal infections of the skin (Asiimwe et al., 2013).

## Conclusion

*C.amboinicus* (Lour.) herb has therapeutic and nutritional properties attributed to its natural phyto-chemical compounds which are highly valued in the pharmaceutical industry. Besides, it has horticultural properties due to its aromatic nature and essential oil producing capability. It is widely used in folk medicine to treat conditions like cold, asthma, constipation, headache, cough, fever and skin diseases. The leaves of the plant are often eaten raw or used as flavoring agents, or incorporated as ingredients in the preparation of traditional food.

