

10 Medicinal Plants Approved by the Department of Health

1. Lagundi (*Vitex negundo L.*)

- **Common names:** *Dangla* (Ilokano); five-leaved chaste tree, horseshoe vitex
- **Indication:** Leaves and flowering tops decoction, syrup, tablets and capsules for coughs, colds, fever and asthma.
- **Description:** A shedding shrub or small tree up to 8 m tall, bark surface slightly rough, peeling off in papery flakes, pale reddish-brown. Leaflets 3-5, narrowly elliptical. Fruit spherical to broadly egg-shaped, 3-6 mm long, purple or black when mature.
- **Found in:** in humid places or along watercourses, in waste places and mixed open forest
- **Parts used:** Leaves and flowering tops
- **Special precautions:** Make sure to have the five-leaved varieties, as there are other varieties of *lagundi*.
- **Traditional uses:**
 - a. roots and leaves - for pain, bitter tonic, expectorant and diuretic
 - b. sap from crushed leaves - for coughs and sore throat
 - c. leaf decoction - for wounds, ulcers, aromatic baths, and internally to promote the flow of milk, to induce menstruation, against gastric colic, and against flatulence
 - d. seeds - boiled and eaten to prevent the spread of toxins from poisonous bites of animals
 - e. flowers - for diarrhea, cholera and liver disorders

2. Yerba Buena (*Clinopodium douglasii*)

- **Common name:** *Peppermint*
- **Indications and preparations:** for pain, cough, colds, nausea, dizziness, and pruritus
- **Description:** a small, multi-branching herb with small elliptical leaves
- **Parts utilized:** leaves, sap of plant
- **Traditional uses:**
 - a. For pain in different parts of the body as headache, stomachache- boil chopped leaves in two glasses of water for 15 minutes. Cool and strain. Divide decoction into two parts and drink one part every three hours
 - b. Rheumatism, arthritis and headache - crush the fresh leaves squeeze sap. Massage sap on painful parts with eucalyptus.
 - c. Cough and colds - get about 10 fresh leaves and soak in a glass of hot water. Drink as tea. Acts as an expectorant.
 - d. Swollen Gums - steep 6 grams of fresh plant in a glass of boiling water for 30 minutes. Use solution as gargle.
 - e. Toothache - cut fresh plant and squeeze sap. Soak a piece of cotton in the sap and insert this in aching tooth cavity. Mouth should be rinsed by gargling salt solution before inserting the cotton. To prepare salt solution add 5 grams of table salt to one glass of water.
 - f. Menstrual and gas pain - soak a handful of leaves in a glass of boiling water. Drink infusion. It induces menstrual flow and sweating.
 - g. Nausea and fainting - crush leaves and apply at nostrils of patient
 - h. Insect bites - crush leaves and apply juice on affected part or pound leaves until paste-like. Then rub this on affected part.
 - i. Pruritis- boil plant alone or with eucalyptus in water. Use decoction as wash on affected area

3. **Sambong (*Blumea balsamifera* L. DC)**
- **Common names:** *Sambong* (Tagalog); *lakad-bulan* (Bikol); Ngai camphor (English)
 - **Indications:** Diuretic in hypertension; dissolves kidney stones
 - **Description:** Erect, semi-woody, aromatic herb or shrub about 4 m tall; Leaves alternate, coarse, large with slightly toothed margins. Flowerheads stalked, terminal panicles, yellowish-white flowers numerous
 - **Found in:** In roadsides, fields, lowland and mountainous regions
 - **Parts used:** Leaves and flowering tops
 - **Special precautions:** Avoid using with other diuretics. When taking diuretics, eat at least one banana a day.
 - **Traditional use:** Anti- edema, diuretic, anti- urolithiasis -boil chopped leaves in water for 15 minutes until one glassful remains. Cool and strain. Divide decoction into 3 parts. Drink one part 3 times a day.
4. **Tsaang Gubat (*Carmona retusa* (Vahl) Masam.)**
- **Common names:** *Putputai* (Bikol); *alangit* (Bisaya); forest tea, wild tea.
 - **Indications:** pills, leaf decoction for gastroenteritis; as gargle to prevent cavities
 - **Description:** Shrub or much-branched small tree 1 - 4 m tall. Leaves simple, coarse, alternate, toothed towards the apex, gradually narrowing towards base, sometimes two or three arising from the same point. Flowers white, small, axillary, one to four from a common stalk. Fruit round, 4 - 5 mm in diameter, yellow-orange when ripe.
 - **Found in:** In secondary forests at low and medium altitudes. Sometimes cultivated as ornamentals.
 - **Parts used:** Leaves
 - **Traditional uses:**
 - Diarrhea - boil the following amount of chopped leaves in 2 glasses of water for 15 minutes or until amount of water goes down to 1 glass. Cool and strain. Divide decoction into 4 parts. Let patient drink 1 part every 3 hours
 - Stomachache- wash leaves and chop. Boil chopped leaves in 1 glass of water for 15 minutes. Cool and filter, strain and drink.
5. **Niyog- Niyogan (*Quisqualis Indica* L.)**
- **Common names:** *Tartaraok* (Tagalog); *balitadham* (Bisaya); Rangoon creeper, Chinese honeysuckle, liane vermifuge.
 - **Indications:** Fruit (kernel) anthelmintic; leaves poultice for headache.
 - **Description:** Woody climber up to 8 m, young branchlets sparsely pubescent. Leaves opposite, entire, 7 - 15 cm long. Inflorescence terminal or axillary clusters of fragrant, tubular, showy flowers varying in color from white to pink to red. Petals 10 - 20 mm long. Fruit ellipsoidal, long, with 5 prominent wings lengthwise. Fruit when mature taste like almonds.
 - **Found in:** In forest margins at low altitude, in gardens and backyards. Native to Asian tropics and throughout Malesian region.
 - **Parts used:** Fruits
 - **Special precautions:** Follow recommended dosage. Overdose causes hiccups.
 - **Traditional uses:**
 - For washing wounds- may be used twice a day.
 - For diarrhea- may be taken 3-4 times a day.
 - As gargle and to relieve toothache. Warm decoction is used for gargle. Freshly pounded leaves are used for toothache. Guava leaves are to be washed well and chopped. Boil for 15 minutes at low fire. Do not cover pot. Cool and strain before use.

6. **Akapulko (*Cassia alata* L.)**

- **Common names:** *Katanda* (Tagalog); *andadasi* (Ilokano); *palochina* (Bisaya); ringworm bush, seven golden candlesticks, bayabas-bayabasan
- **Indications:** *Katanda* (Tagalog); *andadasi* (Ilokano); *palochina* (Bisaya); ringworm bush, seven golden candlesticks
- **Description:** A shrub, 1-2 m tall, with thick branches, pubescent. Leaves with 8-20 pairs of leaflets oblong-elliptical. Flowers with oblong sepals. Fruit tetragonal, winged and glabrous. Seeds quadrangular, flattened, and shiny
- **Found in:** Abundantly naturalized in South East Asia, and occasionally planted throughout the region for medicinal and ornamental purposes
- **Parts used:** Leaves
- **Special precautions:** Apply thinly twice daily on affected part. Improvement should occur 2 - 3 weeks after treatment.
- **Traditional uses:**
 - As antifungal- Fresh, matured leaves pounded. Apply as soap to the affected part 1-2 times a day

7. **Ulasimang-bato (*Peperonia pellucida*)**

- **Common names:** *Ulasimang-bato*, *pansit-pansitan* (Tagalog); *olasiman-ihalas* (Cebu, Bisaya); *tangon-tangon* (Bikol); *peperonia* (English)
- **Indications:** Infusion, decoction or salad for gout and rheumatic pains; pounded plant warm poultice for boils and abscesses
- **Description:** Small fleshy herb up to 30 cm tall. Stem initially erect, rooting at nodes, glabrous. Leaves spirally arranged, simple and membranous when dry. Flowers bisexual, without a stalk, floral bracts rounded. Fruit fleshy, one-seeded
- **Found in:** in disturbed habitats, in gardens and cultivated areas that are damp and lightly shaded, on damp hard surfaces such as walls, roofs, steep gullies, and in flower pots
- **Parts used:** aerial plant parts
- **Special precautions:** Avoid using with other pain relievers, diuretics
- **Traditional uses:**
 - Lowers uric acid. (rheumatism and gout)- Wash leaves well. One and a half cup leaves are boiled in two glassfuls of water over lower fire. Do not cover pot. Cool and strain. Divide into three parts and drink each part three times a day after meals.
 - May also be eaten as salad. Wash the leaves well. Prepare one and a half cups of leaves. Divide into 3 parts and take as salad three times a day.

8. **Bawang (*Alium sativum* L.)**

- **Common names:** *Ajos* (Bisaya); garlic
- **Indications:** Fresh cloves, capsules for lowering blood cholesterol levels; antiseptic.
- **Description:** Erect, low, annual herb, 30-60 cm high. Leaves flat, or V-shaped in transverse section, alternate, arranged in two opposite rows, arising from underground bulbs. Cloves enclosed by papery protective coats. Flowers often imperfect or absent
- **Found in:** cultivated all over the world. Probably originated from Central Asia
- **Parts used:** Leaves and bulbs (cloves)
- **Special precautions:** Avoid taking with medicines for lowering blood sugar, and medicines for thinning blood. Dosage must not exceed 6-8 cooked cloves a day. Stomach ulcer may develop if garlic is eaten raw.

- **Traditional uses:**
 - for lowering blood sugar and cholesterol levels-- May be fried, roasted, soaked in vinegar for 30 minutes or blanched in boiled in water for 5 minutes. Take 2 pieces three times a day after meals.
 - for headache, insect bites, ringworm, athlete's foot, toothache, rheumatism- Pound a small piece and apply to affected part

9. **Ampalaya (*Momordica charantia* (L.) DC)**

- **Common names:** *mpalaya* (Tagalog); *paria* (Ilokano); *palia* (Bisaya); *bitter gourd*, *bitter cucumber*, *bitter melon* (English)
- **Indications:** lowers blood sugar levels; for fertility regulation
- **Description:** Monoecious, annual vine up to 5m long. Stem 5-ridged. Leaf blade broad. Flowers, yellow. Fruit, irregularly warty, orange when ripe, dehiscent. Seeds brown.
- **Found in:** In lowland rain forest, thickets, hedges, waste places, and roadsides.
- **Parts used:** Young leaves
- **Special precautions:** Blood sugar levels should be monitored regularly. The native variety with small bitter fruit is recommended.
- **Traditional uses:**
 - To lower blood sugar levels- Gather and wash young leaves very well. Chop. Boil 6 tablespoons in two glassfuls of water for 15 minutes under low fire. Do not cover pot. Cool and strain. Take one third cup 3 times a day after meals. Leaves may be blanched/ steamed and eaten ½ glassful 2 times a day.

10. **Guava (*Psidium guajava* L.)**

- **Common names:** *Guava*, *bayabas* (Tagalog); *guyabas* (Iloko); *Guava* (English).
- **Indications:** antidiarrheal and antiseptic
- **Description:** Shallow-rooted shrub or small tree, up to 10 m tall, branching from the base and often producing suckers. Bark, smooth, green to red brown, peeling off in thin flakes. Leaves opposite and with glands. Flowers solitary or in 2-3 flowered cymes. Seeds of the fruit are usually numerous, embedded in pulp, yellowish, 3 - 5 mm long.
- **Found in:** Common in the Philippines
- **Parts used:** Leaves, fruits
- **Special precautions:** Eating too much guava fruit may cause constipation
- **Traditional uses:**
 - For diarrhea- may be taken 3-4 twice a day
 - For washing wounds, skin infections, feminine hygiene, and mouthwash- Guava leaves are to be washed well and chopped. Boil for 15 minutes at low fire. Do not cover pot. Cool and strain before use.

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