

For the month of November



## **Herbal Medicine : Ampalaya (*Momordica charantia*)**

**Ampalaya**(*Momordica charantia*) - known as "bitter gourd" or "bitter melon" in English, it most known as a treatment of diabetes (diabetes mellitus), for the non-insulin dependent patients. Ampalaya (Bitter Melon) with a scientific name *Momordica charantia*, is a climbing vine and the tendrils of which grow up to 20 centimeters long. This herbal plant belongs to the family of Cucurbitaceae, and it is a tropical as well as a subtropical vine. Ampalaya leaves are heart-shaped, which are 5 to 10 centimeters in diameter. The fruits of the ampalaya vine are fleshy green with pointed ends at length. It can never be mistaken for any other variety because its ribbed and wrinkled surface had always been ampalaya's distinct physical structure. The bitter taste of the ampalaya fruit had also been the distinguishing factor from the rest of the fruits with medicinal value, and this is due to the presence of a substance known as momorcin.

Ampalaya has been a folkloric cure for generations but has now been proven to be an effective herbal medicine for many ailments. Most significant of which is for Diabetes. The Philippine variety has proven to be most potent. Ampalaya contains a mixture of flavanoids and alkaloids make the Pancreas produce more insulin that controls the blood sugar in diabetics. Aside from Ampalaya's medicinal value, it is good source of vitamins A, B and C,

iron, folic acid, phosphorous and calcium. Ampalaya has been for used even by the Chinese for centuries. The effectiveness of Ampalaya as an herbal medicine has been tried and tested by many research clinics and laboratories worldwide. In the Philippines, the Department of Health has endorsed Ampalaya as an alternative medicine to help alleviate various ailments including diabetes, liver problems and even HIV. Aside from these, ampalaya also helps treat skin diseases and cough. Note: In large dozes, pure Ampalaya juice can be a purgative and abortifacient.

## **Herbal Benefits of Ampalaya**

- Good for rheumatism and gout
- And diseases of the spleen and liver
- Aids in lowering blood sugar levels
- Helps in lowering blood pressure
- Relives headaches
- Disinfects and heals wounds & burns
- Can be used as a cough & fever remedy
- Treatment of intestinal worms, diarrhea
- Helps prevent some types of cancer
- Enhances immune system to fight infection
- For treatment of hemorrhoids
- Is an antioxidant and parasiticide
- Is antibacterial and antipyretic

## **Preparation and Use of Ampalaya**

- For coughs, fever, worms, diarrhea, diabetes, juice Ampalaya leaves and drink a spoonful daily.
- For other ailments, the fruit and leaves can both be juiced and taken orally.
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- Powdered leaves, and the root decoction, may be used as stringent and applied to treat hemorrhoids.
- Internal parasites are proven to be expelled when the ampalaya juice, made from its leaves, is extracted. The ampalaya juice, and grounded seeds is to be taken one spoonful thrice a day, which also treats diarrhea, dysentery, and chronic colitis.