

POPULAR MEDICINAL HERBS with HEALTH BENEFITS

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Introduction

Recently, three medicinal plants (herbs) attracted the attention of the population globally because of the medicinal value and health benefits these plants provide when use following recommended and suggested information. These plants are Ashitaba (*Angelica keiskei*), Insulin plant (*Costus igneus*), and Serpentina (*Rauvolfia serpentina*). I gathered the information and description of these plants from my research using the world wide web.



ASHITABA

Angelica keiskei, commonly known under the Japanese name of **ashitaba** (アシタバ or 明日葉), literally "tomorrow's leaf", is a species of flowering plant in the carrot family. It is native to Japan, where it is found on the Pacific Coast.[1] It is endemic to the area of the Bōsō Peninsula, Miura Peninsula, Izu Peninsula, and the Izu Islands. It has been widely cultivated outside its natural range.

Description

It is a perennial, with a typical growth height of 50–120 cm. Like most other members of the carrot family, it produces large umbels of white flowers and has dissected leaves. *Angelica keiskei* closely resembles *Angelica japonica*, but can be distinguished by its blooming period, which lasts from May to October, whereas *A. japonica*'s blooming period lasts only between May and July. Another indicator is the characteristic color of its sap.

Taxonomy

This species is named in honor of Keisuke Ito, a Japanese physician and biologist. A named cultivar of this species, "Koidzumi", refers to botanist Gen'ichi Koizumi. The Japanese name of *Angelica keiskei*, "ashitaba", stems from the above-average regenerative capabilities it exhibits after injury.

Uses

As food

The main use of their stipes, leaves, and taproots is in regional cuisine, where they are prepared as soba, tempura, shōchū, tea, ice cream, pasta, etc. The 'Mikura-jima' variety might excel in this regard as it is reputed to be less bitter than others.

As medicine

A. keiskei has been claimed to exhibit cytotoxic, antidiabetic, antioxidative, anti-inflammatory, antihypertensive, and antimicrobial properties via in vitro studies, but the efficacy of these qualities have not been confirmed in vivo.

INSULIN PLANT

Costus igneus, also called the Fiery Costus or Spiral Flag, is a member of the Costaceae family that is native to many tropical areas of the world. The leaves spiral around the stems as they grow from the underground roots. Flowers are up to 15 inches wide and orange in color. *Costus igneus* is not difficult to grow, has few diseases and is only rarely troubled by pests. *Costus igneus* is hardy in USDA Hardiness Zones 9b through 11.



INSULIN PLANT

Health Benefits of Insulin Plant

The insulin plant is a magical cure for diabetes. It is so effective that consumption of its leaves reduces the blood sugar level. It also maintains the cholesterol level which is high due to diabetes.

The leaves are anti-inflammatory. It promotes the smooth airflow in the lungs. Thus, helps to alleviate the symptoms of bronchitis and asthma.

It exhibits antioxidant properties which helps to decrease the oxidative stress and damage healthy cells. In short, it is a cancer preventive herb.

It is a good diuretic. The decoction prepared with insulin plant leaves increases the urination.

It also provides relief from fever. The paste of leaves is good for skin. It tightens and increases elasticity of the skin. It is effective for Candidiasis of the nails and hair.

SERPENTINA

Rauwolfia serpentina is an evergreen shrub growing to 1.5 m (5 ft) by 1.5 m (5 ft) at a medium rate. It is hardy to zone (UK) 10. Suitable for: light (sandy), medium (loamy) and heavy (clay) soils and prefers well-drained soil. Suitable pH: acid, neutral and basic (alkaline) soils. It can grow in semi-shade (light woodland) or no shade. It prefers moist soil.

Medicinal Uses

Plants for A Future cannot take any responsibility for any adverse effects from the use of plants. Always seek advice from a professional before using a plant medicinally. The roots are hypnotic, hypotensive and sedative. They are used particularly in the treatment of hypertension, where they are said to cause a lowering of the blood pressure without dangerous side effects, and are considered a specific in the treatment of insanity. They are also used in decoction to treat painful affections of the bowels and to increase uterine contractions when giving birth. The juice of the leaves is used to remove opacities of the cornea of the eyes and also to treat wounds and itches. The bark, leaves, and roots are used against snake and scorpion poisoning. The roots yield up to 1.3% medically active alkaloids, as well as oleoresin and the sterol serposterol. The alkaloid rauwolfine has been shown to decrease the heart rate.