

Latin: *Gymnema sylvestre* R.Br.  
Family: Asclepiadaceae

Vernacular names: Sanskrit - Meshasringa; Hindi - Gurmar; English - Gurmar; Unani - Gokhru; Tamil - Sirukurinjan

Part Used: root, leaves

Ayurvedic Energetics: Rasa: astringent, pungent Veerya: heating Vipaka: pungent Guna: light, dry

Doshas: KV - ; P+

Pharmacological Action: diuretic, astringent, hypoglycemic, refrigerant, stomachic

Clinical Research: The leaf powder caused a clinically insignificant decrease in serum glucose in normal rats but a significant reduction in serum glucose in experimentally induced hyperglycemic animals. Body weight and urine output both increased in rats treated with the herb. Both of these effects may be due to stimulation of pancreatic insulin secretion. There is however currently no good evidence to show that *G. sylvestre* powder or extract has any effect on the serum or urine glucose concentrations of humans suffering from diabetes mellitus. no water-soluble or alcohol-soluble constituents which have glucose-destroying action in vitro have been isolated.

Traditional Uses: Diabetes mellitus, snakebites (root powder), fever, and cough. In Ayurveda, *G. sylvestre* also is used to treat somatic burning sensations, biliousness, hemorrhoids, and urinary disorders. When chewed the leaves have the remarkable property of abolishing the ability to taste sweet and bitter substances. It also has a mild laxative effect, probably due to its anthraquinone content which irritates the bowel walls (similar to *Cassia angustifolia*, rhubarb, or the aloes.)

Indications: type 2 diabetes mellitus as an adjunct to other treatments, snakebite.

Formulations and Dosage: leaf powder 2-4 g. tild leaf decoction 30 ml.