

Chapter VI

A Compendium of Traditional Thai Herbal Medicine

A WARNING ABOUT DOSAGE

Traditional prescriptions are notoriously vague; “a handful” or “a pinch” is often all of the information we are given. Fortunately, with most herbal treatments, there is little danger of adverse reaction. Medicinal herbs offer a natural balance of alkaloids, which work in harmony to promote health and fight disease, while on the whole avoiding severe side effects and other adverse reactions typical of allopathic drugs.

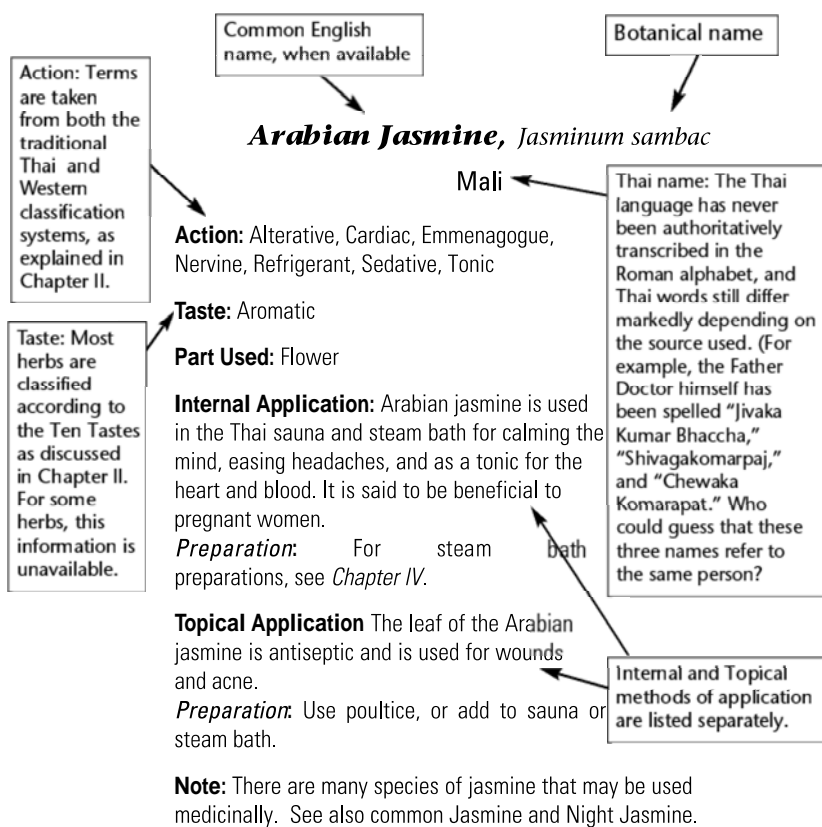
There are some notable exceptions to this generalization in the compendium of herbs found in the next pages. Opium poppy is listed in the traditional Thai pharmacopoeia, as are numerous toxic plants. When a plant in this book is known to be dangerous under certain conditions, a note has been made. However, people may react to herbs in dramatically different ways, and this text can not take into account individual sensitivities and allergies. In all cases, should the patient experience nausea, dizziness, headache, diarrhea, or other adverse reactions, this should be taken as an indication that an excessive amount has been used, and less should be prescribed on subsequent occasions, or alternative herbs should be used. These warnings should be especially heeded in regard to pregnant women, children, and the elderly, who often react with greater sensitivity to herbal medicines and other drugs.

One last caveat should be noted: the claims made in this collection are based on traditional medicinal uses of these herbs. Many of the more popular herbs in this collection are well known to the West, but in the case of some of the more unusual herbs, these therapeutic claims have not been evaluated by the professional herbalist community. Although these treatments are prescribed in Thailand by reputable healers and health institutions, I have not personally tested all of the herbal prescriptions given in this collection, and I strongly emphasize that this book should not replace consultation with a competent herbalist or physician.

The compendium that follows lists herbs commonly used in traditional herbalism in Thailand. Information has been compiled from many sources—including Thai, Ayurvedic, and Western—in order to give a complete picture of the herbs and their usage in many traditions. Sources are noted in the bibliography.

Below is a sample entry, with explanation of the terminology used throughout the collection:

Note that the word “herb” is used throughout this collection to indicate a substance used by Thai herbalists and may refer to fruits, vegetables, barks, minerals, and other natural substances in addition to the more commonly held notion of an herb.



Alexandrian Senna, *Cassia acutifolia*, Ma Khaam Kh

Action: Alterative, Anthelmintic, Antipyretic, Antispasmodic

Taste: Bitter **Part Used:** Fruit

Internal application: Tea made from Alexandrian senna is a mild laxative for treatment of constipation. The leaves are traditionally used as a mild laxative for children. The fruit stimulates the liver and encourages the production of bile.

Preparation: Decoction of 6–12 pods in cold water for 15 minutes to prevent cramping. Strain; take 1–4 tbs before breakfast.

Topical application: Decoction of Alexandrian senna is used topically, it is used traditionally as a treatment for bacterial infections of the mouth, throat, and mouth sores.

Preparation: Decoction as above; use as gargle and wash.

Caution: Senna is not recommended for patients with high levels of stress, tension, or chronic anxiety.

Note: Where *C. acutifolia* can not be found, the related *Marilandica* or *C. angustifolia*, can be used.

Aloe, *Aloe indica*, Waan Haang Jar

Action: Adjuvant, Alterative, Anthelmintic, Antipyretic, Emollient, Emmenagogue, Laxative, Purgative

Taste: Bitter **Part Used:** Leaf

Internal application: The Thai name for aloe is known to the Western tradition as a bitter tonic, astringent, and tonic for the spleen, uterus, and blood. The gel of the aloe leaf is used for menstruation, for detoxification, for clearing up persistent constipation, and for chronic constipation. As it is a gently detoxifying agent, it is used in the treatment of any infectious disease. Large doses of aloe gel expel intestinal worms and other parasites. The latex is used to combat parasites, vomiting, diarrhea, dysentery, constipation, flatulence, fever, blood in breast milk, and infected or inflamed skin to combat epilepsy, seizures, and rabies.

Preparation: Incise fresh mature leaves to extract gel. Add 1 cup palm sugar or 1 cup (250 ml) sweet fruit juice 1–3 times daily to the leaves.

Topical application: Topical Application: Thai traditional medicine at each temple is a great cure for tension headaches. Aloe gel is used for skin conditions.

texts as a topical remedy for convulsions, tetanus, backache, boils, swelling, and tendinitis. It is commonly used topically in Eastern and Western herbalism to soothe burns, cuts, herpes, eczema, and other skin irritations.

Preparation: Incise fresh mature leaves to extract gel. Apply topically to affected area frequently.

Alum Powder Saansom

Action: Astringent, Antiparasitic, Antiseptic

Taste: Sour

Part Used: Alum powder is a white crystalline salt derived from aluminum sulfate.

Internal Application: Alum powder is an antibacterial for infections of the ear, bladder, or eye. An effective astringent, it also is used to treat hemorrhoids, diarrhea, and internal bleeding.

Preparation: Take 1 tsp alum powder in hot water daily.

Topical Application: Alum powder is added to toothpaste or tooth powder to fight tooth decay and to strengthen unhealthy or loose teeth. It may be used on the skin for rashes, eczema, itching, scabies, ringworm, and other skin parasites.

Preparation: Apply powder directly to teeth with toothbrush. Rinse.

Alumina Clay

Action: Antipruritic, Astringent

Taste: Bland

Part Used: A white powdered clay derived from bauxite or aluminum oxide.

Topical Application: Alumina clay is applied topically to soothe skin rashes, hives, insect bites, and irritations.

Preparation: Mix clay with warm water; apply to affected areas as needed.

Angelica, Angelica archangelica Kot Hua Bua

Action: Analgesic, Antirheumatic, Antispasmodic, Appetizer, Carminative, Diaphoretic, Emmenagogue, Expectorant, Stimulant, Stomachic, Tonic

Taste: Hot

Part Used: Root, Seed, Rhizome

Internal Application: Angelica is beneficial for any type of pre-menstrual symptoms, including cramps, headaches, bloat, and muscle spasms. It is also effective in promoting regular menstruation when blocked. Angelica is used as a cold remedy and against flu,

fever, and generally low energy and low immunity. In addition, it may stimulate appetite.

Preparation: Decoction

Topical Application: Angelica is applied topically to soothe burns, cuts, wounds and cuts. It also may be applied with hot compresses to relieve pain.

Preparation: Mash angelica with mortar and pestle.

Arabian Jasmine, Jasminum Mali

Action: Alterative, Cardiac, Emmenagogue, Female Tonic

Taste: Aromatic

Part Used: Flower

Internal Application: Arabian jasmine is used internally to calm the mind, easing headaches, and as a tonic especially beneficial to pregnant women.

Preparation: For steam bath and sauna preparations, use dried flowers.

Topical Application: The leaf of the Arabian jasmine is used to soothe skin rashes and acne.

Preparation: Use poultice, or add to sauna or steam bath.

Note: There are many species of jasmine that may be used, including Arabian Jasmine, and Night Jasmine.

Asafoetida, Ferula foetida

Action: Analgesic, Anthelmintic, Antirheumatic, Antispasmodic, Carminative, Digestive, Expectorant, Laxative, Stimulant, Stomachic

Taste: Hot

Part Used: Resin

Internal Application: As a hot herb, asafoetida is used to stimulate digestion and to help cases of flatulence, indigestion, and constipation. Its action makes it ideal to fight colds, congestion, and is also reputed to be a tonic for the brain and senses, and is used in large doses. In large doses, it is a purgative used to expel intestinal parasites.

Preparation: Take decoction of 1 tsp resin or 1 gram powder. Use ginger as an adjuvant to lessen side effects and to stimulate digestion.

Topical Application: Topically, a poultice of asafoetida is used to soothe other joint pain.

Preparation: Make thick paste by adding warm water to resin.

Betel Leaf, *Piper betel*
Phlu

Action: Antiparasitic, Antipruritic, Antiseptic, Bronchodilator, Expectorant, Stimulant

Taste: Hot

Part Used: Leaf

Topical Application: The leaf of the Piper betel is commonly used to wrap a small amount of betel nut (*Areca catechu*), an addictive stimulant nut chewed by many throughout South Asia. The betel leaf is used topically as an antibacterial and as a treatment for allergic hives, itching, ringworm, and skin parasites. Betel leaf applied topically to the chest acts as a decongestant and bronchodilator and is successfully used in cases of congestion, difficult respiration, asthma, and diphtheria.

Preparation: Mash 3–4 fresh leaves with mortar and pestle, adding alcohol to make a paste. Apply to affected areas 4 times daily for 3–5 weeks. For respiratory ailments, this poultice may be applied liberally to chest and throat as needed while symptoms persist.

Bitter Gourd, Bitter Melon, Balsam Pear, *Momordica charantia*
Mala

Action: Alterative, Anthelmintic, Antioxidant, Antipyretic, Bitter Tonic, Blood Tonic, Carminative, Cholagogue, Digestive, Laxative, Stomachic

Taste: Bitter

Part Used: Fruit, Leaf

Internal Application: Bitter gourd works powerfully to detoxify the blood and colon. This fruit is commonly used in rural Thailand to fight AIDS, hepatitis, and cancer, as well as other systemic diseases. It has particularly beneficial effects on diseases of the liver, spleen, and pancreas. The juice of the vegetable is a laxative and antipyretic. Eaten daily as a bitter tonic, steamed bitter gourds are routinely suggested for the elderly, diabetics, hypoglycemics, and those with chronic disease or illness. It has also been shown to increase insulin production and to have anti-carcinogen properties. As it encourages proper digestion, bitter gourd is recommended for sluggish digestion, dysentery, chronic constipation, and flatulence. It is also reputed to be beneficial for poor eyesight and is high in the antioxidant vitamins A and C. Bitter gourd is listed in the Wat Po texts as an appetizer, purgative, anthelmintic, and as a cure for leprosy. It appears in treatments for fever, infections, menstrual problems, hemorrhoids, and constipation.

Preparation: Eat vegetable lightly steamed, preferably with chili sauce. Or drink fresh juice from raw vegetable.

Topical Application: The juice of the bitter gourd can be used topically on the skin and in the mouth as an antiseptic. The leaves are mentioned in the Wat Po texts in topical remedies for tendinitis, swellings, infections, and headaches.

Preparation: Liquefy fresh vegetable in blender or juicer.

Black Bean, *Castanosoparia*
Tua Pum

Action: Antirheumatic, Diuretic

Taste: Oily

Part Used: Seed

Internal Application: Black beans are used traditionally for rheumatism and other joint problems. Black beans also have been shown to be beneficial for diabetes. They are recommended for diabetics and hypoglycemics. In Wat Po texts, black bean is used for its diuretic properties in kidney or bladder problems.

Preparation: Eat beans cooked. Make tea from fresh beans.

Black Pepper, *Piper nigrum*
Prik Thai Dan

Action: Antipyretic, Carminative, Digestive, Expectorant, Stimulant

Taste: Hot

Part Used: Fruit

Internal Application: The fruit of the black pepper is used traditionally for colds, other joint problems, and other ailments. The riper the seed, the more potent the fruit. Black pepper seeds are the only type commonly used by herbalists. In Wat Po texts, medicinal peppercorns are those that are found in birch bark. Black pepper is used traditionally for treating colds, congestion, sore throat, and other ailments. As a hot herb, it is also a powerful digestion stimulant. It is used in the treatment of temporary paralysis (such as Bell's Palsy syndrome), and in the treatment of other elements.

Preparation: Make tea from 1 tsp dried peppercorn in 1 cup water. Black pepper is commonly used with basil as a cold remedy, and is also used as a digestive adjuvant. (See *Special Medicinal Recipes, Chapter V*.)

Caution: Black pepper may be slightly poisonous in large quantities.

Blue Crab, *Portunus*
Putalay

Action: Female Tonic, Nutritive Tonic

Taste: Salty

Part Used: Meat

Internal Application: The meat of the blue crab is used traditionally for its tonic properties. It is typically given to children to promote growth and to women for tonification of the uterus and to prevent miscarriage or pregnancy.

Preparation: Eat steamed.

Note: The field-crab, *Paratelphusa sexpunctatum*, which is commonly substituted by those who live far from the sea.

Heart-Leaved Moonseed, *Tinospora tuberculata*, *Tinospora crispa*
Boraphet

Action: Antipyretic, Appetizer, Bitter Tonic, Stomachic

Taste: Bitter **Part Used:** Stem

Internal Application: Boraphet (pronounced "bora-pet") is used to treat any disease in which fever is the initial symptom. It also stimulates the appetite and is considered to be a bitter tonic especially beneficial for the lungs, bile, and lymphatic system. The Wat Po texts mention boraphet as a cure for intestinal parasites, stomach problems in babies, malaria, eye and ear disease, and for mucous congestion.

Preparation: A foot-long segment of stem (about 30–40 grams) is pounded with a mortar and pestle. Mashed stalks are soaked in water, and strained. Decoction is drunk twice daily until fever is gone. Or one inch of fresh stem is chewed with lots of water 2–3 times daily.

Note: *T. baenzigeri*, may also be used.

Bulletwood, *Mimusops elengi*
Mak sa koun

Action: Antipyretic, Antirheumatic, Cardiac, Female Tonic, Sedative

Taste: Aromatic **Part Used:** Flower, Wood

Internal Application: The bulletwood flower, like many herbs with aromatic taste, is taken either as tea or used in the sauna. It is administered through inhalation to treat arthritis, heart disease, as well as to calm anxiety, stress, and panic attacks. The tea is used to treat fevers, sore throat, and muscular pain. Tea made from the wood is considered to be a tonic for the heart and circulatory system, and a tonic for pregnancy, especially when the wood is infected by a particular fungus. Decoction of the stem bark is used as a gargle for gingivitis.

Preparation: Make tea from dried flowers or decoction from wood.

Butterfly Pea, Blue Pea, *Clitoria ternatea*
Aan Chan

Action: Diuretic, Laxative, Stomachic **Part Used:** Seed, Root

Internal Application: The butterfly pea seed is used to treat constipation and to soothe stomach pains and cramps. The root has similar properties but is also a diuretic and an antirheumatic. The decoction is dropped into the eyes to treat poor vision and is added to toothpaste or powder to treat toothache.

Preparation: Tea or powder.

Burr Bush, *Triumfetta*
Seng

Action: Antipyretic, Stomachic **Part Used:** Root

Internal Application: The burr bush is used to treat indigestion, and to treat fever during menstruation.

Preparation: Decoction

Calamus, Sweet Sedge, *Acorus calamus*
Waan nam

Action: Antirheumatic, Antispasmodic, Antitussive, Emetic, Emmenagogue, Expectorant, Nervine

Taste: Hot **Part Used:** Root

Internal Application: Calamus is a stomachic to relieve heartburn, gastritis, and hyperacidity, as well as to expel kidney stones. It is also an effective cold cure and decongestant. It is used to treat congestion, asthma, sinusitis, and fever. Calamus is a stimulant for the nervous system, especially the serotonergic system. Western herbalism prescribes calamus tea for sufferers of typhoid, epilepsy, and to expel kidney stones. Taken daily, calamus is said to cure depression. In Western herbalism, smokers are told to chew the fresh root to relieve symptoms of nausea which aids in quitting smoking.

Preparation: Take decoction once daily. Use ginger and lemon in the preparations.

Topical Application: Calamus is traditionally applied to fractures or broken bones.

Preparation: Mash root; apply locally to affected area.

Caution: Calamus should not be used in cases of bleeding.

Camphor, Cinnamon
Ga ra boon

Action: Analgesic, Anti-inflammatory, Antirheumatic, Antitussive, Bronchodilator, Cardiac, Diaphoretic, Nervine, Sedative, Stimulant

Taste: Hot and Aromatic **Part Used:** Bark

Internal Application: Camphor is used in nearly all traditional Thai medicine. It carries a spiritual connotation throughout the rest of the world. Leaving any ash, it is commonly considered to be a medicinal herb.

vanishes into Nirvana without a trace. Camphor crystals are a common ingredient in most Thai saunas, from the traditional hospitals to the modern health clubs.

Camphor is a bronchodilator and a decongestant, and is inhaled to treat colds, congestion, sore throat, cough, bronchitis, and sinusitis. Inhalation of camphor is also beneficial for irregular or blocked menstruation, eye infections, fevers, typhoid, and lung infections. Camphor crystals stimulate the brain, heart, and circulation, but paradoxically have a calming effect on stress, anxiety, and insomnia. Camphor is therefore listed both as a calming and a stimulant, and it is used both internally and externally in small quantities for both purposes. The wood of the camphor tree is used as an expectorant and carminative.

Preparation: For more information on inhalation by steam bath or sauna, see *Chapter IV*. Only a sprinkle of camphor crystals is necessary to experience the stimulating effects. Internal dosage is no more than .05 grams.

Topical Application: Camphor crystals are used topically as an anti-inflammatory for arthritis, sprains, and muscle pain, and as an antiseptic and analgesic on mild cuts, insect bites, and skin infections.

Preparation: Apply crystals topically with hot towel or compress.

Caution: In large doses, camphor is a narcotic poison and may cause convulsions.

Candelabra Bush, Ringworm Bush, Cassia alata, Senna alata Chumet Thet

Action: Antiparasitic, Antiseptic, Diuretic, Laxative

Taste: Bitter **Part Used:** Leaf, Flower

Internal Application: The candelabra bush, like other cassias, is used as a laxative. It is mentioned in the Wat Po texts as a cure for constipation, flatulence, diarrhea caused by intestinal parasites, and blood or mucous in the stools. It is said that it should be "powdered together with zedoary and dusted on the body of a child who is difficult to rear, in order to prevent illness."

Preparation: Eat two or three fresh flower clusters, lightly steamed, with chili sauce. Or flame-roast 12–15 dried leaves. Make decoction; take before breakfast or at bedtime. For tapeworms or other intestinal parasites, use the "Five Parts" remedy—trunk, root, fruit, flowers, and leaves powdered together.

Topical Application: The leaves of the candelabra bush are used topically as an antiseptic and antiparasitic for treatment of ringworm, fungal and bacterial skin infections, and wounds.

Preparation: Bruise or crush fresh leaves with mortar and pestle, combining with alcohol or lime juice to make paste. Apply topically to affected areas twice daily as a poultice or hot compress. The decoction described above may also be used topically.

Note: Note that candelabra bush leaves may cause nausea and vomiting if the leaves are not fully roasted, and may cause cramping. This plant should not be used for children or patients with inflammatory bowel diseases. Overdose may cause damage to kidneys. Prolonged use may cause chronic diarrhea.

Cardamom, Amomum krervanh *Amomum uliginosum*

Krawaan (*Amomum krervanh*), Wan Sao L
Reo krawaan (*Amomum*)

Action: Antitussive, Carminative, Diaphoretic, Expectorant

Taste: Hot **Part Used:** Seed

Internal Application: Cardamom is known for its stimulating effect on the gastrointestinal system. The tea is taken all day long to relieve a bloated stomach, sluggish digestion, irritable bowels, and indigestion. Siamese cardamom and bastard cardamom are used to treat ailments associated with gastritis and indigestion. Cardamom is also used as a suppressant, as well as to treat colds, bronchitis, asthma, and cough.

Preparation: Make powder from dried seeds. Take 2 teaspoons 3 times a day. For meals. For cough, drink tea or suck on whole seeds.

Note: Where these varieties of cardamom are not available, *Amomum cardamom*, may be used.

Caricature Plant, Caricature *Graptophyllum peltatum*

Action: Antipyretic, Blood Tonic, Tonic

Taste: Bland **Part Used:** Leaf, Flower

Internal Application: The caricature plant is used as a tonic, especially in cases of fever, chronic thirst, measles, and other febrile conditions. It is a tonic and detoxifying agent for the liver.

Preparation: Tea. Drink 1–3 times daily.

Cashew, Anacardium occidentale Ma-muang-him-ma-pa,

Action: Expectorant, Nutritive Tonic

Taste: Oily **Part Used:** Nut

Internal Application: Cashew nuts are a common ingredient in Thai desserts, and are often stir-fried with chicken and vegetables. In traditional Thai medicine, cashews nuts are recommended by traditional healers for those suffering from skin or bone problems, chronic cough, and allergic rashes. As it is high in caloric energy, protein, and fat, it is a nutritive tonic that gives increased energy and strength. It is also used to treat emaciation, low immunity, low energy, and chronic diarrhea. Cashews are eaten raw or in soups, and are expectorants. Decoction is used to treat diarrhea and dysentery.

Cassod Tree, Siamese Cassia, Cassia siamea
Kee Lek

Action: Antioxidant, Antipyretic, Appetizer, Diuretic, Laxative, Sedative, Stomachic, Tonic

Taste: Bitter **Part Used:** Leaf, Shoot, Flower, Wood

Internal Application: The young leaves and flower buds of the cassod tree are often eaten in curries and soups. Medicinally, decoction of the flower or the heartwood is used as a calmate for cases of anxiety, stress, and nervousness. The wood is also used to reduce fever. The flowers and leaves of the cassod tree are used to treat insomnia and as a general tonic high in vitamins A and C. Both are effective laxatives, stimulating digestion and promoting appetite.

Preparation: Decoction from 2–3 handfuls of young shoots, leaves, and/or wood boiled in water with a pinch of salt. Take before bed. For insomnia, a tincture in alcohol is made by soaking shoots and flowers in alcohol for 7 days. Stir frequently. Strain, and take 1–2 tpsps at bedtime.

Cassumunar Ginger, Zingiber cassumunar
Phlai

Action: Anti-inflammatory, Astringent, Bronchodilator, Carminative, Emmenagogue, Laxative, Vulnerary

Taste: Hot **Part Used:** Rhizome

Internal Application: Juice squeezed from the fresh cassumunar rhizome is taken with salt for indigestion, dysentery, diarrhea, inflammation of the intestine, and injury to internal organs. It acts as an emmenagogue, as well as a bronchodilator for treatment of asthma. Some Hill-Tribes use cassumunar ginger to help new mothers recover after delivery.

Preparation: Mash 1 thumb-length cassumunar ginger rhizome with water to make paste. Strain; mix with 1 tbs salt. Drink up to 3 times daily.

Topical Application: Cassumunar ginger is used topically to soothe contusions, sprains, and inflammations of joints and ligaments. Like common ginger, it is also used topically as an antiseptic for wounds, cuts, and skin infections. Mixed with alcohol, it is an effective mosquito repellent.

Preparation: Mash plant with mortar and pestle; add a pinch of salt, and enough water to make a paste. Apply topically to affected areas. Cassumunar ginger is a useful ingredient for hot or cold compresses (See *Chapter IV* for more information.)

Castor Oil Plant, Ricinus communis
Lahung

Action: Adjuvant, Diuretic, Galactagogue, Laxative

Part Used: Oil pressed from Seed, Leaf

Internal Application: Castor oil is a gentle laxative used in Thailand mainly for the elderly and children, or as an adjuvant to other laxative or purgative remedies. Decoction of the leaf

is used to stimulate breast-milk production and to in and bladder stones and infections. The castor oil plan indigestion, ear problems, kidney disease, and post-p

Preparation: Castor oil can be bought over the coun directions on packaging.

Topical Application: Castor oil is applied topically dermatitis, rashes, inflammation, and over broken bo

Note: Use only cold-expressed castor oil. Hot-expres

Catechu, Acacia
Seesiat

Action: Antiemetic, Astringent, Purgative

Taste: Astringent **Part U**

Internal Application: Catechu resin, known in Thai stimulant betel nut preparations chewed in many So used for dyeing cloth. Medicinally, it is used as an astr of diarrhea. Catechu is also taken in larger doses parasites, food poisoning, and allergic reactions to fo

Preparation: For diarrhea, make tea from 1/2 tsp dried water. Drink 3 times daily before meals while sym simmer resin in water to make thick paste. Take 1 ts

Topical Application: As an astringent herb, catech counteract boils, sores, skin ulcers, and infections

Preparation: Apply dried powdered resin to affected

Cat's Whisker, Orthosiphon
Ya Huad Mae

Action: Diuretic **Part U**

Internal Application: As a diuretic, cat's whisk gallstones, and gout. It decreases the levels of uric ac and is said to be a tonic for the kidneys.

Preparation: Make tea from 4 g dried powdered plan long.

Topical Application: The whole plant is used topic **Preparation:** Bruise plant with mortar and pestle; compress.

Caution: Due to high potassium content, this herb m disease.

Cayenne, Capsicum frutescens
Prik kheenuu

Action: Alterative, Anthelmintic, Antioxidant, Antiseptic, Cardiac, Carminative, Diaphoretic, Expectorant, Stimulant, Stomachic, Tonic

Taste: Hot **Part Used:** Fruit, Leaf

Internal Application: As a hot herb, the fruit of the cayenne pepper is useful in cases of colds, flu, and congestion. A stimulant of digestion, it relieves constipation, indigestion, intestinal cramps, irritable bowel, and gastritis, and tends to increase appetite. Cayenne is a circulatory stimulant, used to treat low blood pressure, fainting, and circulatory deficiency. As an antioxidant rich in vitamins A and C, it is useful as a general tonic and detoxifier, and may be used as an adjuvant herb in preparations to boost immunity.

Preparation: Eat chili as a condiment with food. (See recipe for chili sauce in *Chapter III*.) Cayenne leaves or juice of the leaves may be added to soups or curries.

Topical Application: Essential oil of cayenne is frequently used in hot herbal compresses to relax tense muscles. It increases blood supply to skin and mucous membranes.

Preparation: See *Chapter IV*.

Caution: Do not use on sensitive skin. Topical application should be of cayenne oil, not the fresh fruits, and should be of low dosage to prevent irritation or blistering of skin. If any irritation results from topical or internal application of cayenne, discontinue use.

Champaca, Champak, Michelia, Michelia champaca,
Michelia alba
Champee

Action: Antiemetic, Antipyretic, Cardiac, Diuretic, Nervine, Stimulant

Taste: Aromatic **Part Used:** Whole plant

Internal Application: Tea from the champaca flower, like many aromatic herbs, is used to treat fever, chronic fatigue, and low immunity. It is also prescribed traditionally as a tonic for the heart, the nervous system, and the blood. Both the flower and the fruit are diuretic, antiemetic, antipyretic, and are considered to be general tonics for the four elements. The leaf is used for neural disorders, the bark of the stem is antipyretic, and the wood is a menstrual tonic.

Preparation: Tea or decoction.

Topical Application: Decoction of the champaca flower is applied to the temples to relieve headache. Decoction of the dried ground root in milk is applied to abscesses.

Chebulic Myrobalan, Chebulic
Samoh Thai

Action: Anthelmintic, Antipyretic, Antitumor, Antitoxic, Demulcent, Expectorant, Hemostatic, Laxative

Taste: Astringent **Part Used:** Fruit

Internal Application: The chebulic myrobalan fruit is used in the Ayurvedic tradition, and consequently, in the Royal Thai tradition, as a common detoxifying remedy for fever, parasitic infections, skin disease, and allergic reactions of the skin. Chebulic myrobalan and can be used for constipation, diarrhea, dysentery, and has a beneficial effect on the nervous system, nervous disorders, and is an expectorant used for colds, congestion, cough, asthma, and is an astringent used to halt blood or mucous in stool, sputum, and is astringent, demulcent, and anti-diarrheal.

Preparation: Eat fruit ripe or unripe.

Note: This herb is often combined with beleric myrobalan elsewhere in this collection. (See Triphala in *Special Applications* for information.)

Chinese Chive, Allium chinensis
Kui Chaai

Action: Anthelmintic, Diuretic, Emmenagogue, Galactagogue

Taste: Hot **Part Used:** Whole plant

Internal Application: The Chinese chive is primarily used to increase production of urine in order to treat kidney or bladder stones (hematuria, urination), and gonorrhea. The leaves of the Chinese chive are used for the ear canal.

Preparation: Chinese chives are frequently added to soups. The flowers may be eaten raw or added to salads.

Topical Application: Chinese chive seeds are used to treat the ear canal.

Preparation: As you roast seeds, allow the smoke to enter the ear canal.

Chiretta, Chirata, Andrographis
Fa Thalaai

Action: Alterative, Antiallergic, Anti-inflammatory, Blood Tonic, Cholagogue, Stomachic

Taste: Bitter **Part Used:** Whole plant

Internal Application: Chiretta tea is reputed to be useful for the respiratory system, including cold with congestion, cough, fever, and other allergies. As a bitter tonic, it is particularly useful for

increases production of bile. It has a beneficial effect on all liver and gall bladder disorders, as well as diabetes and hypoglycemia. Chiretta is a detoxifying herb, useful in cases of intestinal infection such as dysentery and other diarrhea, and in cleansing the blood. Chiretta is also used to relieve constipation, treat fever, and to reduce blood pressure.

Preparation: Tea from 1–5 handfuls fresh herb. Drink 3–4 times daily. Or powder dried herb; take 1.5 grams 3–4 times daily.

Topical Application: Fresh chiretta stalks are used to treat toothaches and abscesses.

Preparation: Chew raw stalks. Or pound leaves with mortar and pestle; mix with a bit of water; apply to affected area.

Caution: In larger doses, chiretta may cause nausea.

Note: *A. paniculata* is a local species of chiretta. Where it is not available, *Swertia chirata* (common chiretta) may be substituted.

Chrysanthemum, Chrysanthemum indicum Geh Huay

Action: Alterative, Antipyretic, Antispasmodic, Bitter Tonic, Cardiac, Carminative, Diaphoretic, Emmenagogue, Nervine, Sedative, Stimulant

Taste: Bitter **Part Used:** Flower

Internal Application: Iced chrysanthemum tea is one of the most popular drinks in Thailand, available at any market or restaurant. It is reputed to be a stimulant and tonic for the eyes, liver, heart, and nervous system. Therapeutically, chrysanthemum is used to treat all disorders of the liver and eyes, irregular or blocked menstruation, menstrual cramps, and PMS. It is also said to cure headaches and sore throat, to lower fever, and to calm the mind.

Preparation: Drink tea 1–3 times daily, hot or iced.

Cinchona, Quinine Bark, Peruvian Bark, *Cinchona officinalis, Cinchona succirubra*

Action: Analgesic, Antipyretic, Antiseptic, Astringent, Bitter Tonic, Nervine, Stomachic

Taste: Bitter **Part Used:** Bark

Internal Application: Until the advent of more potent synthetic medications, cinchona was the remedy of choice for malaria. It is still used for this purpose in isolated areas of rural Thailand and throughout Southeast Asia in places where modern drugs and medical attention are unavailable. In smaller doses, cinchona is also useful for cases of influenza and fever, and as a daily bitter tonic to promote health and longevity.

Preparation: Tea. Drink 1–3 times daily.

Caution: In large doses, cinchona may cause headaches, dizziness, or stomach irritation. Cinchona may cause uterine contractions and should be avoided by pregnant women.

Cinnamon, Cinnamomum Ob Chuey

Action: Alterative, Analgesic, Antiemetic, Antiseptic, Diaphoretic, Diuretic, Expectorant, Stimulant

Taste: Hot **Part Used:** Bark

Internal Application: Cinnamon is a stimulant for the digestive system and is especially good in cases of chronic circulatory coldness. As a hot herb, cinnamon is used internally to stimulate the digestive system against indigestion and sluggish digestion, to relieve vomiting, soothes peptic ulcers and gastritis, and promotes menstruation.

Preparation: Tea is made from dried cinnamon bark.

Topical Application: Cinnamon is used topically to relieve colds and coughs, as well as on the thoracic area to break up colds and coughs. Cinnamon is also an antiseptic useful for toothaches and mouth sores.

Preparation: Gargle with cinnamon tea, or apply directly to the affected area. The base oil, essential cinnamon oil is applied directly to the affected area. See *Homemade Tiger Balm* in *Special Medicinal Recipes* for the main ingredients in the traditional herbal salve.

Citronella Grass, Cymbopogon nardus Ta Khrai Non

Action: Blood Tonic, Carminative, Diaphoretic, Emmenagogue

Taste: Hot **Part Used:** Leaves

Internal Application: Infusion of citronella leaves is used to counter flatulence, stomachache, indigestion, intestinal gas, and gastritis. The essential oil is also diaphoretic and used to induce detoxification through encouraging sweating. Citronella is used to regulate menstruation, treats blocked menstruation, and halts labor. Citronella is used to induce labor, as it promotes uterine contractions.

Preparation: Infusion of leaves or essential oil, decoction.

Topical Application: Citronella is a natural insect repellent. A decoction of pounded citronella leaves under the bed to ward off mosquitoes.

Preparation: For insect repellent, apply citronella oil to the affected area over a light bulb. Citronella may be applied to the affected area in citronella in 93% alcohol, or see *Herbs in Cosmetics* for more information.

Caution: Citronella should never be used internally.

Clove, *Syzygium aromaticum*
Kan Pluu

Action: Analgesic, Antiemetic, Antiseptic, Aphrodisiac, Blood Tonic, Carminative, Diaphoretic, Emmenagogue, Expectorant, Female Tonic, Stimulant, Stomachic

Taste: Hot **Part Used:** Flower

Internal Application: Like most hot herbs, clove is a digestion stimulant used traditionally to counter flatulence and indigestion. Hot herbs are also effective expectorants and are called for in cases of the common cold, especially with accompanying congestion. Clove is used frequently for this purpose, as well as for cough, bronchitis, lymph problems, and asthma. Clove tea is very effective for controlling nausea and vomiting, and is also used traditionally for lymph disease and uterine disorders. Due to its stimulating effect on the Fire element, clove tea warms the body, combating chronic coldness, hypothermia, chilblains, and frost-nip. The herb is reputed to have aphrodisiac qualities, although this is probably due to a general stimulating effect.

Preparation: Make tea from 3–4 crushed cloves in 1 cup (250 ml) boiling water.

Topical Application: Topically, cloves have an antiseptic and analgesic effect, and they are therefore used both on the skin and in the mouth for sores and cuts. A gargle of tea is also beneficial for sore throat and toothaches.

Preparation: Make tea from 3–4 crushed cloves in 1 cup (250 ml) boiling water; apply topically when lukewarm with towel. (See also, *Homemade Tiger Balm* in *Chapter V*.)

Note: *S. aromaticum* is a locally occurring clove. Where it is not available, *Eugenia caryophyllata* (common clove) may be substituted.

Coconut, *Cocos nucifera*
Ma Phrao

Action: Diuretic, Emollient, Nutritive Tonic, Refrigerant

Taste: Sweet **Part Used:** Meat of the coconut

Internal Application: The coconut palm is one of the most useful plants in Thailand. The fibrous husks of the coconut are used to make rope, mats, and brushes. Young green coconuts are prized for their sweet water, while the mature nut is shredded, mixed with hot water, and strained to produce coconut cream. An essential ingredient in Thai curries, coconut cream is frequently eaten as a nutritive tonic in cases of low immunity, low energy, emaciation, and wasting, and coconut milk may be used as a milk substitute for vegans or the lactose intolerant.

Preparation: To make homemade coconut cream, grate one fresh coconut with a coconut shaver, fish-scaler, or other scraping instrument. Place grated coconut in a pan and cover with boiled water. Let stand until lukewarm. Strain coconut shavings with cheesecloth and set aside. Refrigerate liquid until cream separates. The thick cream will rise to the top of the container where it can be easily scraped off, leaving coconut milk underneath. (Dried grated coconut may be used to extract coconut milk, but will yield very little cream.)

Topical Application: Coconut oil is an indispensable in Thai cooking (see *Chapter III* for more information). As it is also used topically to burns, wounds, and skin lesions, *Preparation:* Slowly mix together 1 part coconut oil v

Combretum, *Combretum*
Sa-kae

Action: Analgesic, Anthelmintic

Taste: Toxic **Part Used:** Seed

Internal Application: Combretum seeds are used to treat other intestinal parasites. Decoction of the root is used to combat narcotic addiction. Decoction of the leaves is used to combat narcotic addiction. Used topically to relieve muscular pain. The Wat Po temple is used in the treatment of bladder stones and abdominal distention.

Preparation: For anthelmintic, grind seeds finely to meal and mix with fried eggs. For other uses, make decoction from root.

Corkwood Tree, *Sesbania*
Khae

Action: Antipyretic, Astringent, Hemostatic

Taste: Astringent **Part Used:** Bark

Internal Application: The bark of the corkwood tree is used to treat diarrhea and dysentery. The fresh leaves are used to treat hemorrhoids.

Preparation: Decoction from fire-roasted bark. Fresh leaves may be steamed and eaten with chili sauce.

Topical Application: Decoction of the stem-bark is used to treat hemorrhoids, a hemostatic.

Crocodile, *Crocodil*
Jarakae

Action: Bitter Tonic, Female Tonic

Taste: Bitter **Part Used:** Bile

Internal Application: Crocodile bile is an expensive and difficult to obtain. It is used to treat other female reproductive organs, used in the treatment of low energy, fainting, and vertigo.

Culantro*, *Eryngium foetidum
Phak-chee farang

Action: Blood Tonic, Laxative, Purgative **Part Used:** Leaf, Bud, Young Shoot

Internal Application: The Hill-Tribes use this herb to flavor soups and curries. Medicinally, it is used as a laxative and as a detoxifying purgative for malaria, allergic reactions, and poisonous insect bites. Another species, the Amethyst Holly (*E. amethystinum*) is used for these purposes, as well as for increased immunity, chronic colds, and general longevity.

Preparation: Decoction

Cuttlefish
Pla Muuk

Action: Nutritive Tonic

Taste: Salty

Part Used: Meat of Sepia spp.

Internal Application: Cuttlefish is considered a nutritive tonic which promotes general health and well-being. As a regular part of the diet, it is also said to be a remedy for chronic diseases of the teeth and gums, for mouth sores, acne, and skin diseases.

Preparation: Eat fish steamed or smoked.

Daeng*, *Xylia xylocarpa

Action: Antipyretic, Astringent, Female Tonic, Laxative, Tonic

Part Used: Whole plant

Internal Application: The flower of the daeng is a cardiac tonic and is also prescribed for fever. The stem-bark is traditionally used to counter fever as well, and is an antidiarrheal. Decoction of the wood is a laxative and is a tonic used to treat uterine, ovarian, and lung diseases and cancers. Either the wood or the stem-bark can be used daily as an astringent to counter internal bleeding and blood in the vomit, stool, or vaginal discharge.

Preparation: Take decoction once daily.

Damask Rose*, *Rosa damascena
Kulaap Mon

Action: Alterative, Astringent, Calmative, Carminative, Cholagogue, Emmenagogue, Laxative, Nervine, Refrigerant, Sedative

Taste: Aromatic

Part Used: Flower

Internal Application: Rosewater is a common ingredient in Asian desserts. Hot or cold, it may be used as a stimulant to counter low immunity, low energy, and chronic fatigue. The tea is a cholagogue, or bile stimulant, which aids in digestion and assimilation of nutrients, and encourages regular menstruation. Rose flowers are added to the traditional sauna or steam bath for eye disorders and infections, and for a relaxing effect on nervous disorders, anxiety, insomnia, tension headaches, and stress.

Preparation: Rosewater can be made by cold infusion in distilled water. Let sit overnight. To make rose tea, heat rose water and add honey to taste. Ayurvedic herbalists macerate rose flowers in honey for 24 hours (1 spoonful. This recipe is very soothing for sore throats and coughs. For steam, see *Chapter IV*.)

Note: Rose Otto essential oil may be substituted for Datura.

Datura*, *Datura
Lanpong Kha

Action: Antiemetic, Antiparasitic, Antipyretic, Antispasmodic, Nervine, Tonic

Taste: Toxic

Part Used: Root, Fruit

Internal Application: The Wat Po texts mention datura as a cerebral tonic. Powder from the dried seeds of the datura plant is used to cure a cerebral tonic. The flower is dried and smoked by a person who has a cough. Decoction of the leaves is used traditionally to treat a cough. The juice of the fruit is administered in drops to treat a cough.

Topical Application: A poultice made from the seeds is used to treat ringworm and other skin parasites. This poultice may be used to treat toothache and abscesses. A poultice made from the roots, wounds, bruises, sprains, and sore muscles by some people.

Preparation: Powder from dried seeds; mix with hot water and apply to areas.

Caution: The old texts warn that small doses improve insanity. Always use datura with caution, as there are many extremely poisonous.

Ebony Tree*, *Diospyros
Ma Kluea

Action: Anthelmintic, Tonic

Taste: Toxic (root, fruit); Salty (bark)

Part Used: Root, Fruit, Bark

Internal Application: The fruits of the ebony tree are used as a dye for cloth. Medicinally, they are used to purge the body of parasites. The Wat Po texts mention ebony tree root as a remedy for emaciation or wasting.

Preparation: Adult dosage is 25 fruits. For children 10-15 fruits per year of age, up to maximum of 25. Mash raw fruits with coconut milk. Strain and drink before breakfast.

Caution: Not for use by children under 10 years of age with gastrointestinal complaints. Use with caution, as overuse is toxic.

Emblic Myrobalan, Indian Gooseberry*Phyllanthus emblica, Emblica officinalis*

Ma Khaam Bom

Action: Antioxidant, Antipyretic, Antitussive, Aphrodisiac, Astringent, Blood Tonic, Diuretic, Expectorant, Hemostatic, Laxative, Nutritive Tonic, Refrigerant, Stomachic**Taste:** Sour**Part Used:** Fruit**Internal Application:** The emblic myrobalan is used traditionally for respiratory afflictions, including colds, congestion, cough, and asthma, as well as for indigestion. The fruit is one of the highest natural sources of vitamin C and is a traditional daily tonic for the brain, nervous system, blood, bones, liver, spleen, stomach, heart, eyes, hair, bones, nails, teeth, and gums. Because of its detoxifying and antioxidant properties, emblic myrobalan is especially beneficial for those with frequent colds, low immunity, smokers, and those who live in polluted environments. In Thailand, the dried, pickled fruits are sold in bags, and eaten like we in the West would eat prunes. Emblic myrobalan is one of the most commonly used herbs in the Ayurvedic system, employed to increase immunity, regulate the digestive system, and to treat fever, internal bleeding, diabetes, hypoglycemia, gout, gastritis, hepatitis and other liver disease, jaundice, constipation, diarrhea, hemorrhoids, anxiety, stress, chronic fatigue, low immunity, low energy, osteoporosis, and for aiding in convalescence from chronic disease.**Preparation:** Two to five raw fruits are mashed with mortar and pestle, salted, and sucked 3–4 times throughout the day. For daily consumption, jellied or pickled fruits are highly recommended. Emblic myrobalan may also be powdered or taken in decoction. Use 250 mg – 1000 mg.**Note:** Thai healers may use *Phyllanthus urinaria*, called “Yaa Tai Bai,” as a substitute.**Eucalyptus, Eucalyptus globulus, others****Action:** Antiseptic, Antispasmodic, Antitussive, Expectorant, Diaphoretic, Nervine, Stimulant**Taste:** Hot and Aromatic**Part Used:** Leaf, Oil**Internal Application:** Eucalyptus is a popular herbal remedy in Thailand, and it has even become somewhat fashionable among young Thais to carry around a vial of eucalyptus and peppermint oil for frequent sniffing. There are many species of eucalyptus, most of which can be used medicinally. Eucalyptus is an extremely effective treatment for colds, especially those with excessive congestion of the sinus and/or lungs, as well as cough, bronchitis, asthma, sore throat, and other respiratory ailments. Symptoms are relieved by inhalation of the vapors, by tea, or by topical application to chest, throat, and under the nose. Eucalyptus tea is also good for indigestion and fever. Hill-Tribes use eucalyptus tea internally as an analgesic and a cold remedy, and the inhalation to stop nosebleeds.**Preparation:** Bruise leaves with mortar and pestle; add to sauna or steam bath, or apply to chest and back with hot herbal compress (See *Chapter IV*) Essential oil of eucalyptus may be used as a substitute in most cases, but only if pure. Tea can be made by infusing 1 fresh or 4 dried eucalyptus leaves.**Topical Application:** The eucalyptus is one of the most useful herbs. Leaves are used topically on ulcers, infections, and are safely applied to burns. A poultice may also be used on burns. A few fresh leaves or a small amount of pure eucalyptus oil may be used and used as a gargle for sore throats, cough, and mouth sores.**Preparation:** Mash leaves with mortar and pestle; apply to affected area. Essential oil of eucalyptus can be used on burns. Apply a small amount directly to the skin with a hot cloth.**Caution:** Taken internally in large doses, eucalyptus may irritate the stomach using essential oils to adjust dosage.**False Daisy, Eclipta prostrata**

Kameng

Action: Alterative, Antiparasitic, Antipyretic, Carminative, Vulnerary**Taste:** Bitter**Part Used:** Root**Internal Application:** The whole plant of the false daisy is used for asthma, and bronchitis. It is a carminative used to expel gas, and is also considered to be a longevity tonic and a tonic for the liver. The root is used to treat cirrhosis, hepatitis, and anemia. The leafy root is used for cases of flatulence, temporary indigestion, and exhaustion post-partum. The juice of the stem is prepared for cough.**Preparation:** Decoction**Topical Application:** A poultice of the false daisy root is used for ringworm and ringworm. The decoction may be added to olive oil and applied to the scalp as a hair tonic to prevent hair loss and early graying. It is also used as a topical anti-inflammatory.**Finger Root***Boesenbergia pandurata, Boesenbergia*

Krachai

Action: Anthelmintic, Antiallergic, Carminative, Digestive**Taste:** Hot**Part Used:** Root**Internal Application:** Finger root is a common ingredient in Thai medicine. It is traditionally included in the diet to aid in digestion. The rhizome is also used for tooth and gum pain, and as a general diuretic. Tea made from the finger root is used for food poisoning and allergic reactions to food.**Preparation:** Mash fresh root with mortar and pestle; apply to affected area. From dried or fire-roasted root.

Foetid Cassia, *Cassia tora*
Nha lap meun

Action: Anthelmintic, Antipruritic, Antipyretic, Diuretic, Laxative, Purgative, Sedative

Taste: Bitter **Part Used:** Seed, Stem, Root

Internal Application: Decoction of foetid cassia seeds is preferred in cases of acute constipation and intestinal worms for its purging action on the bowels. It is also used to calm fevers, to lessen inflammation of the eyes, to lower high blood pressure and cholesterol, as a diuretic, and as a sedative. Decoction of the stem and/or root is also diuretic and may be used topically to stop itching.

Preparation: Roast dried seeds in pan. Make decoction by boiling seeds in 1 pint (500 ml) water. Use 10–13 g seeds for laxative; 5–10 g for diuretic. Fresh leaves may be boiled or steamed, and eaten with chili sauce for milder effect.

Galangal, *Ginza*, *Siamese Ginger*, *Alpinia galanga*,
Alpinia officinarum, *Alpinia nigra*
Khaa

Action: Antiemetic, Antiparasitic, Antiseptic, Aphrodisiac, Carminative, Diaphoretic, Digestive, Expectorant, Stimulant, Stomachic, Tonic

Taste: Hot **Part Used:** Rhizome

Internal Application: Galangal is used in Thai medicine in a very similar way to ginger. Ginger is considered to be a superior herb, but galangal is more common in Thailand. Its flavor is distinctive, and galangal is an indispensable ingredient in Thai soups and curries. It is the key ingredient in the Thai national dish, *Tom Yam* soup (See *Chapter III* for recipe). As a hot herb, the galangal rhizome has a stimulating effect on the digestion, and is therefore useful in cases of indigestion, flatulence, and stomachache. It is also recommended for diarrhea, nausea, and seasickness. Galangal is reputed to be an aphrodisiac, although this is probably due to its general stimulating effect on the Fire element.

Preparation: Decoction from one “thumb-length” (or about 5 grams) fresh galangal, finely chopped, grated, or mashed with mortar and pestle. Boil 10–15 minutes; drink after meals.

Topical Application: Galangal has an antiseptic action similar to ginger and may be used topically for bacterial and fungal skin infections, acne, mosquito bites, bee stings, other insect bites, and as a gargle for mouth sores. *A. nigra* is used for treatment of ringworm and other skin parasites.

Preparation: Mash fresh galangal with mortar and pestle. Add a bit of water to make a paste; apply topically to skin. For treatment of skin parasites, add 1 part galangal to 3 parts alcohol and let sit overnight before applying. For sores within the mouth, gargle with galangal tea.

Gandaria, *Plum Mango*,
Maprang

Action: Antipyretic, Blood Tonic, Expectorant, Laxative

Taste: Sour **Part Used:** Fruit

Internal Application: Gandaria is a small fruit with the appearance of a plum. It is used traditionally as a laxative, to soothe the bronchi, mouth sores, and constipation. It is also used for fever.

Preparation: Eat raw fruit.

Garden Balsam, *Impatiens*
Thian baan

Action: Antipruritic **Part Used:** Leaves

Topical Application: Garden balsam leaves are applied to insect bites, allergic reactions, hives, sores, wounds, and nail fungus. The Hill-Tribes use the garden balsam topically and internally as a general tonic and as an aid in the treatment of fever.

Preparation: Pound leaves with mortar and pestle. Apply to affected area.

Garcinia, *Garcinia indica*,
Som kak

Action: Alterative, Anthelmintic, Antitumor, Digestive

Taste: Bitter **Part Used:** Fruit

Internal Application: Garcinia aids in weight loss and is rich in fiber and carbohydrates. It is safe for long-term use and has been used in the U.S. and Europe as a natural alternative to cholesterol-lowering drugs. In Thailand as a dietary supplement for suppressing the appetite, and for constipation, edema, intestinal parasites, sluggishness, and heat. It is being researched for antitumor and anticancer activity.

Preparation: Decoction from dried fruit. Or grind dried fruit and take with water.

Garlic, *Allium sativum*
Krathiam

Action: Alterative, Anthelmintic, Antipyretic, Antitumor, Antitussive, Aphrodisiac, Blood Tonic, Carcinostatic, Digestive, Diuretic, Expectorant, Refrigerant

Taste: Hot **Part Used:** Bulb

Internal Application: Along with ginger, garlic is one of the most important herbs in both Thai and Western traditions alike. Garlic is one of the most powerful natural antitumor agents and is a key ingredient in many Thai dishes. (See *Chapter III* for recipe.)

most hot herbs, garlic is a digestive with carminative action of particular use in cases of flatulence and indigestion. Hot herbs are also effective expectorants successfully used to fight colds, congestion, asthma, bronchitis, and cough. Garlic is a potent detoxifying agent and is therefore beneficial in fighting liver disease, toxic colon, and in general detoxification of the blood and organs. In large doses, garlic has a purgative effect on intestinal worms and other parasites, and is used to prevent malaria and dengue (it is said that mosquitoes won't bite one who eats garlic frequently). Other diseases benefited by garlic include arthritis, heart disease, gall bladder disease, fever, and cystitis. Garlic reputedly lowers blood cholesterol, lowers high blood pressure, raises low blood pressure, and is recognized in many cultures the world over as a stimulating aphrodisiac.

Preparation: Eat 2–4 cloves daily raw or cooked in food.

Topical Application: As a powerful antiseptic, garlic may be applied topically to bacterial and fungal skin infections, superficial wounds, dermatitis, and swelling. A few drops of garlic in the ears fights ear infections, and in the nose, fights sinusitis. Rubbing the temples with garlic cloves is a classic remedy for relieving headache.

Preparation: Mash raw cloves with mortar and pestle; mix with warm water to make a paste, and apply directly to affected areas.

Ginger, *Zingiber officinale* Khing

Action: Adjuvant, Analgesic, Antiemetic, Anti-inflammatory, Antirheumatic, Antiseptic, Antitussive, Aphrodisiac, Carminative, Diaphoretic, Digestive, Emmenagogue, Expectorant, Galactagogue, Stimulant, Stomachic, Tonic

Taste: Hot

Part Used: Rhizome

Internal Application: Ginger is the quintessential panacea in the Thai herbal pharmacopoeia. As a hot herb, ginger is a powerful stimulant, especially of the digestive tract. It is the herb of choice for stimulation of digestion, and is used to combat flatulence, indigestion, gastritis, peptic ulcer, diarrhea, sluggish digestion, nausea, and vomiting. Ginger tea is also used for colds, congestion, sore throat, fevers, nausea, seasickness, mouth sores, insomnia, heart disease, arthritis, irregular or blocked menstruation, chronic back pain, hemorrhoids, and beri-beri (vitamin B1 deficiency), earning it the reputation as a cure-all. Hill-Tribe healers give ginger tea to mothers immediately following birth to promote health and rapid recovery. Ginger also acts as a galactagogue, encouraging production of breast milk. Ginger is used as an adjuvant in many herbal preparations in order to lessen side effects and increase the potency of other herbs, and is the most frequently used herb in this collection.

Preparation: Decoction from one "thumb-length" (or about 5 grams) fresh ginger, finely chopped, grated, or mashed with mortar and pestle. Boil 10–15 minutes; drink after meals. A gargle for mouth sores may be made by adding salt to ginger tea. For cough and cold, add lemon juice. (See also *Zingiber Tea* in *Special Medicinal Recipes, Chapter V*.)

Topical Application: Ginger has a powerful antiseptic action and may be used topically for bacterial and fungal skin infections, parasites, and acne.

Preparation: Mash fresh ginger with mortar and pestle and apply topically to skin. For sores within the mouth, g
in Cosmetics in *Chapter III* for skin-care recipes using

Ginkgo, *Ginkgo* Ginkgo

Action: Antioxidant, Antitussive, Astringent, Expect
Part U

Internal Application: Ginkgo improves blood circula
commonly prescribed to older individuals to maintain
counter or prevent Alzheimer's disease. It may also
enhance memory and mental clarity, and as a rich sou
has also been shown to have a beneficial effect on
arteriosclerosis, stress, anxiety, bronchitis, and can be
disorders due to chronic circulatory deficiency.

Preparation: Ginkgo tea should be taken 2–3 times d
It is often mixed with Gotu Kola in a 1 to 1 ratio.

Ginseng, *Panax* Soam

Action: Alterative, Antiallergic, Antiemetic, Aphro
Tonic, Nervine, Nutritive Tonic, Stimulant, T

Taste: Hot and Sweet

Part U

Internal Application: Ginseng is an example of an
has made its way into the Thai tradition. Almost ever
a well-stocked shelf of ginseng extracts and produc
extract of the ginseng rhizome is said to be the m
frequently taken by men over 50 on a daily basis. It is
a sure cure for impotence, premature ejaculation, an
both sexes, it is a cardiac tonic which helps streng
while reducing cholesterol and blood sugar. Ginseng
system and to counter low immunity, low energy,
emaciation. As a demulcent, ginseng is also useful i
hay fever, and other allergies. It is also used to treat
colds, and bronchial infections.

Preparation: Ginseng extract is the most commonly a
fresh rhizome is used in some tonic food recipes. Ext
and should not be taken with tea or coffee. Dosage c
but the average dose is 10ml. Ginger may be used as
effect. (See *Zingiber Tea* in *Special Medicinal Recip*

Golden Shower, Purging Cassia, Cassia fistula
Khuun

Action: Antipyretic, Expectorant, Laxative, Purgative, Stimulant, Tonic

Taste: Astringent

Part Used: Seed Pod, Flower

Internal Application: The black, sticky pulp surrounding the seeds of the golden shower is used traditionally as a laxative and expectorant. In larger doses, it is a purgative. Tea from the flower is also a laxative and an antipyretic. Hill-Tribes use the flowers in the steam bath or sauna to treat vertigo, low energy, and fainting, and as a general tonic for health and longevity.

Preparation: Boil 4 g of the pulp of the seed pod with salt. Strain; drink at bedtime. Alternatively, boil seeds in water with salt until soft; eat seeds at bedtime. (For more information on steam bath and sauna, see *Chapter IV*.)

Gotu Kola, Brahmi, Asiatic Pennywort,
Centella asiatica (synonym: *Hydrocotyle asiatica*)
Bua Bok

Action: Alterative, Antioxidant, Antipyretic, Antirheumatic, Astringent, Bitter Tonic, Blood Tonic, Diuretic, Emmolient, Expectorant, Nervine, Vulnerary

Taste: Bitter

Part Used: Leaf, Stem

Internal Application: Gotu kola is primarily a tonic for the nervous system, promoting clarity of thinking, mental calmness, and emotional balance. It is used to treat psychological disorders, chemical imbalances of the brain, memory loss, Alzheimer's, and epilepsy. It is high in vitamin A and is considered to be an excellent daily tonic for old age. It has an especially beneficial effect on the immune system, veins, liver, spleen, and gall bladder. As a blood purifier, it is also used to counter colds, fever, arthritis, all types of skin diseases, urinary tract infections, sexually transmitted diseases, hepatitis, and uterine cancer. Tea made from the fresh leaf is used to treat sore throat, fevers, and diarrhea.

Preparation: Drink tea made from dried leaves and stem once daily for 1 month. Use honey as an adjuvant. Or extract juice from fresh leaves, dilute, and bring to a boil. Sweeten with honey before drinking. Gotu Kola is often taken with Gingko (see *Gingko*).

Topical Application: Gotu kola is applied topically to soothe burns and to help in healing wounds. The leaf has antifungal and antibacterial properties, and is used to treat staphylococcus infections.

Preparation: Mash a handful of leaves with mortar and pestle, adding just enough water to make a paste. Apply to affected areas as needed.

Caution: Excessive doses of gotu kola may cause nausea and/or vomiting.

Green Tea, Camellia
Cha-keay

Action: Anti-inflammatory, Antioxidant, Astringent, Diuretic, Stomachic

Taste: Bitter

Part Used:

Internal Application: Green tea is possibly the most widely consumed beverage in Thailand's consumption is somewhat less than China. Its beneficial properties are due to tannins, antibiotic alkaloids, and polyphenols. In modern times, green tea has been shown to be able to confirm its long-standing reputation as a general tonic for maintaining a healthy immune system, protecting against infectious diseases, and digestive systems. Green tea has a regulating and astringent effect and helps both constipation and diarrhea. In general, different processing and roasting methods produce different effects. Green tea is beneficial for blood circulation, aids in disinfecting, and protects against tooth and gum disease.

Preparation: Tea

Topical Application: Applied topically, green tea soothes skin irritations.

Preparation: Soak leaves in hot water; apply lukewarm water.

Note: Black tea is made from the oxidized leaves of the tea plant. Green tea's therapeutic qualities.

Guava, Psidium
Farang

Action: Antiseptic, Astringent, Emmenagogue, Laxative

Taste: Astringent

Part Used:

Internal Application: Guava is most commonly used as a laxative because of the astringent qualities of the leaves and fruit. It is used to treat cases of blocked or irregular menstruation, and constipation.

Preparation: Flame-roast 10–15 leaves until yellow. Take 1/2 cup (125ml) decoction every 3 hours as needed. For a gentler effect, the unripe fruit may also be eaten fresh with salt and chili powder. Or unripe guava may be juiced and

Schefflera leucantha, *Schefflera venulosa*
Hanuman Prasan Kai

Action: Antitussive, Astringent, Hemostatic

Taste: Astringent

Part Used: Fresh Leaf

Internal Application: The leaf of this plant is astringent and drying, and is used to treat colds, respiratory tract infections, cough, asthma, and difficulty breathing. It is also employed in cases of cough; blood in the vomit, stool, or vaginal discharge; and internal bleeding for its hemostatic effect.

Preparation: Decoction from 7–8 clusters of leaves. Take twice daily, before breakfast and dinner.

Topical Application: Poultice may be applied topically as a hemostatic to contusions, cuts, and bleeding wounds.

Preparation: Apply topically with poultice or cold compress.

Henna, *Lawsonia inermis*
Thian King

Action: Alterative, Antiparasitic, Antipyretic, Antiseptic

Taste: Bitter

Part Used: Leaf

Topical Application: Powdered henna leaf is widely used in India to dye hair. The fresh leaf may be applied as a topical antiseptic to fungal and/or bacterial infections of the skin and nails. It is also used to treat ringworm and may be used orally as a gargle for mouth and gum disease or infections.

Preparation: Mash fresh leaf with mortar and pestle, mixing with equal quantity of turmeric and a pinch of salt. Make poultice.

Hibiscus, *Roselle*, *Hibiscus sabdariffa*
Krachiap Daeng

Action: Antitussive, Carminative, Diuretic, Expectorant, Refrigerant, Tonic

Taste: Astringent

Part Used: Flower

Internal Application: Hibiscus tea or juice is primarily prescribed as a diuretic for cases of gallstones, kidney stones, and urinary tract infections. It is additionally used to treat indigestion, flatulence, peptic ulcer, fever, cough, hypertension, kidney cramps, and back pain. It is high in calcium and therefore is added to the daily diet to treat and prevent tooth and bone deterioration. Hibiscus flower is held to lower blood cholesterol. The seed is also a diuretic, and is a tonic for the four elements.

Preparation: Tea from dried flowers. Drink 3 times daily. Or take 3 g seed daily in powdered form.

Holy Basil, *Sacred Basil*,
Kaphrao Daeng

Action: Antipyretic, Antirheumatic, Antispasmodic, Laxative, Nervine, Stomachic

Taste: Hot

Part Used:

Internal Application: Holy basil is so called because of its spiritual purity and to strengthen the mind. While in Thailand, this herb is indispensable in cooking and in soups and curries. (See *Chapter III* for some recipe ideas.)

Holy basil is a common ingredient in treatments for colds and is a simple remedy for gastritis, irritable bowel syndrome, and vomiting. As an antispasmodic, it is useful for any stomach cramps those caused by irritable bowel syndrome, peptic ulcers, and in treatments for easing headaches, cough, sinusitis, and constipation. To combat constipation, the seeds are more effective. Holy basil in the steam bath or sauna for eye infections and fungal infections.

Preparation: Make tea from fresh leaves, flowers, and seeds for relief. For laxative, soak 2 tpsps seeds in water for several hours in a glass when fully bloated. Take before bed.

Note: Where *O. sanctum* is unavailable, *O. basilicum* may be used.

Honey
Nam Pueng

Action: Adjuvant, Antitussive, Demulcent, Emollient

Taste: Sweet

Internal Application: Honey has a soothing effect and is used in traditional Thai herbalism as an adjuvant, or helping agent, in treatments of colds, cough, sore throat, and asthma. It is used for general well-being, and is therefore used in nutritional supplements for convalescence, as well as in general tonics. In the case of cough, taken by the spoonful as necessary to soothe symptoms.

Preparation: Honey is typically administered with powdered herbs in herbal tea. (See *Special Medicinal Recipes, Chapter IV*.)

Horseradish Tree, Moringo, Moringa oleifera
Mahum

Action: Antirheumatic, Antiseptic, Astringent, Carminative, Digestive, Hemostatic, Stomachic, Vulnerary

Taset: Hot **Part Used:** Bark, Root, Seed

Internal Application: Decoction of the bark of the horseradish tree is a digestion stimulant used traditionally for combating flatulence, indigestion, and bloated stomach.

Preparation: Decoction. The young shoots and flowers may alternatively be steamed and eaten with chili sauce or in soups.

Topical Application: Decoction of the root is a disinfectant and may be used as an astringent to stop bleeding and help promote the healing of wounds. The seeds, when roasted and ground, are made into a poultice for arthritis.

Indian Marsh Fleabane, Pluchea indica
Khlu

Action: Diuretic, Tonic **Part Used:** Leaf

Internal Application: Indian marsh fleabane is considered to be an excellent longevity tonic. It is used therapeutically for its diuretic action, especially in cases of hemorrhoids, diabetes, and hypoglycemia.

Preparation: Flame-roast 15–20 leaves until yellow. Make decoction. Drink 3 times daily before meals.

Ironweed, Vernonia cinerea
Seua Saam Khaa

Action: Antirheumatic, Antitussive, Bitter Tonic, Digestive, Emmenagogue, Stomachic

Taste: Bitter **Part Used:** Leaf, Flower, Rhizome

Internal Application: Ironweed is a Thai cure-all and is often used as a detoxifying bitter tonic for daily consumption. It is prescribed in cases of diabetes and hypoglycemia to reduce blood sugar and to prevent sores and skin ulcers. It is successfully used as well for colds and respiratory disorders such as cough and asthma, arthritis, urinary tract infections, blocked or irregular menstruation, jaundice, back pain, and beri-beri (or vitamin B1 deficiency). Thais trying to quit smoking drink ironweed tea daily to help overcome the side effects associated with nicotine withdrawal. Ironweed is also a digestive which promotes the natural processes of the digestive system, offering relief from stomachaches and peptic ulcers.

Preparation: Make tea with 1 tsp rhizome or with equivalent amount of leaves and/or flowers. Drink 2 times daily, before meals.

Ironwood, Mesua
Boun Nark

Action: Antipyretic, Astringent, Cardiac, Stimulant, Tonic

Taste: Aromatic **Part Used:** Bark, Root, Seed

Internal Application: Tea made from the dried ironwood is used traditionally as a tonic for the four elements. It has astringent action on the heart, and is used in cases of low energy, chronic fatigue, and fever. Ironwood may also be used in the steam bath for rheumatism, and is beneficial to the eyes.

Preparation: Make tea from dried flowers, or add to soups.

Ivy Gourd, Coccinia indica
Tam Loeng

Action: Antipruritic, Antipyretic, Purgative, Tonic

Taste: Bland **Part Used:** Leaf, Fruit

Internal Application: Ivy gourd leaves are taken in decoction for poisoning. It lowers fevers and is used by some Hill-tribe people in strength.

Preparation: Decoction.

Topical Application: Ivy gourd is applied topically for itching, inflamed wounds, and rashes from poisonous plants.

Preparation: Mash leaves with mortar and pestle. Mix with water to make a paste. Apply to affected area.

Jackfruit, Artocarpus
Artocarpus heterophyllus
Kanoon

Action: Demulcent, Nutritive Tonic

Taste: Oily **Part Used:** Fruit, Seed

Internal Application: The jackfruit is an enormous tree with a length of up to 100 feet. The heartwood of the jackfruit tree is used by the “Forest Tradition” monasteries to dye their robes. The heartwood, producing a rich earth-tone dye called “gaen-kanun,” has medicinal qualities. In fact, monks of this tradition never dye their robes are re-boiled in jackfruit dye, and are hung to dry. This manner are said to never smell bad, and monks swear that it imparts to the skin—such as immunity from fungus and a disagreeable body odor.

All over Thailand, the fleshy tulip-shaped segments of the jackfruit are and are cooked in curries when unripe. The seed is also eaten.

and invigoration of energy. The seeds are boiled or roasted, and are eaten in curry. As it is a nutritive tonic high in caloric energy, jackfruit seed is especially useful in convalescence, in cases of low immunity, low energy, chronic fatigue, or chronic illness, and in old age. Decoction of the root is used to treat diarrhea.

Jasmine, *Jasminum officinale*
Mali

Action: Alterative, Antipyretic, Antiseptic, Astringent, Cardiac, Emmenagogue, Nervine, Sedative

Taste: Aromatic **Part Used:** Flower

Internal Application: Jasmine flowers are considered by Buddhists to be sacred, and they play a part in any temple ceremony in Thailand. Strung into garlands, they are often hung from the rear-view mirrors of cars as a talisman against misfortune and are placed by devotees at the foot of Buddha statues as an offering.

Jasmine flowers are common ingredients in the herbal steam baths or saunas. The Wat Po texts prescribes many different species of jasmine for snake bite, smallpox, diarrhea, dysentery, chest pain, fever, convulsions, poisoning, and tetanus. The vapor of *Jasminum officinale* is a calmative for stress, anxiety, nervousness, and panic attacks. Jasmine inhalations and tea are both beneficial for disorders, diseases, and infections of the eyes, and for heart disease, fever, and chronic thirst. Jasmine is being researched for its anticancerous properties.

Preparation: Tea may be made with fresh or dried flowers. For steam-bath and sauna preparations, see *Chapter IV*.

Note: There are many species of jasmine that may be used medicinally. See also Arabian Jasmine and Night Jasmine in this collection.

Jewel Vine, *Derris scandens*
Tao Wan Prieng

Action: Analgesic, Antispasmodic, Diuretic, Purgative

Part Used: Stem

Internal Application: The stem of the jewel vine is a diuretic and a detoxifying purgative with no laxative action. It is best used for mucous congestion, internal infections, severe colds, and dysentery, where antimicrobial action is desired without agitation of the gastrointestinal tract.

Preparation: Decoction from roasted stem.

Topical Application: A poultice from the jewel vine is applied topically to soothe muscular pain or spasms, pulled ligaments, and tendinitis.

Preparation: Mash with mortar and pestle. Apply topically to affected areas.

Caution: Jewel vine contains estrogen-like substances, and long-term use should be avoided. Those with hormone imbalances should not use this herb.

Kaffir Lime, *Citrus hirtellifolia*
Ma Krut

Action: Antioxidant, Antitussive, Astringent, Blood Purifier, Expectorant, Stomachic

Taste: Sour (fruit, leaf), bitter (rind) **Part Used:** Fruit, Leaf, Rind

Internal Application: Kaffir lime leaves are frequently used as a flavoring agent in soups and curries. The leaf is considered a tonic, although the juice and rind can also be used. Kaffir lime leaves are frequently used as ingredients in the traditional Thai herbal compresses. When used topically or ingested, kaffir lime is useful for treatment of indigestion. Internally, it is a digestion stimulant which alleviates constipation. It is also used to promote regularity in the case of blocked or infrequent bowel movements. It is a blood purifier, as an antioxidant with cancer-preventive properties, and high blood pressure.

Preparation: Make decoction from rind and/or leaves in water or tea. (See *Special Medicinal Recipes, Chapter V* for herb tea. See also *Chapter V* for information on herbal compresses.)

Note: Kaffir lime is a fruit local to Thailand. Where it is not available, it may be substituted. (See *Lime*.)

Lacquer Tree, *Rhus toxicaria*
Rac

Action: Analgesic, Antirheumatic, Astringent

Taste: Astringent **Part Used:** Bark, Leaves

Internal Application: The lacquer tree is the source of the resin used in dyeing robes and for ink. Tea from the leaves of the lacquer tree is used to treat diarrhea and intestinal parasites such as dysentery.

Preparation: Make tea.

Topical Application: A poultice can be made to apply to the affected area.

Preparation: Mash leaves with mortar and pestle. Apply to the affected area.

Lemon, *Citrus limonum* (syn. *C. aurantium*)
Manow

Action: Adjuvant, Antiseptic, Antitussive, Astringent, Blood Purifier, Refrigerant

Taste: Sour (fruit), Bitter (rind) **Part Used:** Fruit, Juice, Rind

Internal Application: Lemon juice is a common ingredient in many traditional Thai herbal teas frequently added to teas to complement other herbs. It is used to treat cough, headaches, fever, arthritis, and jaundice.

Preparation: Drink a half cup (125 ml) juice diluted in water, or add to hot herbal tea. Decoction may also be made by steeping rind in boiling water.

Topical Application: Lemon is also used topically and orally as an astringent and antibacterial wash for treatment of sores. It may also be used immediately on burns as a refrigerant.

Preparation: For topical use, apply juice directly to the skin. (See *Herbs in Cosmetics, Chapter III*, for more information on lemon juice as an astringent.)

Note: It is said that lemon is also useful in repelling snakes. Some rural Thais keep lemon wedges by the door at night to ward off these intruders.

Lemongrass, *Cymbopogon citratus*
Ta khrai

Action: Antiemetic, Anti-inflammatory, Antitussive, Carminative, Diaphoretic, Digestive, Diuretic, Expectorant, Refrigerant, Stomachic, Tonic

Taste: Hot and Aromatic **Part Used:** Stem

Internal Application: The lower part of the lemongrass stalk (technically the rhizome) is white in color and possesses the strongest flavor. This part of the lemongrass is a common ingredient in Thai soups and curries. (See *Chapter III* for recipe ideas.) Lemongrass tea is used as a therapy for colds, congestion, fever, cough, sore throat and laryngitis. As a hot herb, lemongrass is also useful as a digestion stimulant in cases of flatulence, indigestion, and constipation. Lemongrass is also used to counter stomach pains, nausea, vomiting, and back pain. Lemongrass is used by Hill-Tribes as a general tonic, for bone and joint pain, and topically for sprains, bruises, and sore muscles.

Preparation: Finely chop or pound with mortar and pestle 3–4 fresh stalks; make tea. Take 3 times daily before meals.

Licorice, *Glycyrrhiza glabra*
Cha Aim Tead

Action: Antitussive, Demulcent, Diuretic, Expectorant, Laxative, Stimulant

Taste: Sweet **Part Used:** Root

Internal Application: Licorice root is most commonly used in the Thai tradition in cold remedies, as well as for flu, cough, congestion, and fever. It is useful for soothing mucous membranes and may be used in cases of stomach pain, peptic ulcers, sore throat, laryngitis, lung disease, and bronchial infections. In the Western traditions, licorice is used as a laxative to counter flatulence and constipation and is gentle enough to be safe for children and infants. As a diuretic, it is also useful against infections and disorders of the bladder and kidneys, kidney stones, diabetes, and hypoglycemia. Licorice is a general stimulant, with a particular effect on the circulatory system and the heart. It increases blood pressure and stimulates the heart muscle.

Preparation: Tea from 1 tsp dried powdered root in 1

Caution: Licorice is a hypertensive and may not be used in high blood pressure.

Lime, *Citrus aurantifolia*
Ma Nao

Action: Antitussive, Appetizer, Astringent, Blood Tonic, Emmenagogue, Expectorant, Refrigerant, Stimulant

Taste: Sour (fruit), Bitter (rind), Bland (root) **Part Used:** Fruit

Internal Application: In traditional Thai herbalism, lime is preferred because of its stronger medicinal effects. The common lime may be used. Like the kaffir, the common lime is used for congestion, and cough. It is a digestion stimulant which is useful for blocked or infrequent menstruation. The Wat Po text mentions lime for asthma, epilepsy, parasites, blood diseases, fevers, congestion, sore throat, and mouth sores. The juice is used for indigestion and as an appetizer. The root is mentioned as a cure for

Preparation: For stomach discomfort and indigestion, (See *Special Medicinal Recipes, Chapter V*, for special recipes.) For cough and cold, steep in hot tea or warm water, with honey and a pinch of salt. The root may be sucked as a lozenge.

Long Pepper, *Piper retrofractum*,
Dee Plee

Action: Antitussive, Carminative, Demulcent, Digestive, Stomachic, Tonic

Taste: Hot **Part Used:** Fruit

Internal Application: The dried unripe fruit of the long pepper commonly used as a spice in pickles. It is used to treat colds, cough, and congestion, as well as for indigestion or flatulence. It is used to treat any type of diarrhea, and is effective against diarrhea. The fruit is a tonic for the uterus after childbirth by encouraging uterine contraction.

Preparation: Soak 1 fresh fruit in water with lemon juice. For indigestion, boil 10–12 dried fruits 10–15 minutes in water. Take 3 times daily after meals.

Caution: Long pepper may be an abortifacient and should not be used by women.

Longan, *Euphoria longana*
Lamyai

Action: Blood Tonic, Female Tonic, Nervine, Nutritive Tonic, Sedative

Taste: Sweet

Part Used: Fruit

Internal Application: Related to the lychee, the longan berry is one of the most celebrated fruits of Northern Thailand, and a yearly festival is held in its honor every August in the town of Lumphun. The longan is a refreshing summer fruit, and iced longan juice helps to take the edge off an over-heated day. The longan is a nutritive tonic familiar to Chinese herbalism, and a powerful tonic for the brain, senses, memory, and blood. It is especially beneficial for women post-partum, as it is beneficial for the female reproductive system. In both sexes, it is a calmativ recommended for insomnia, heart palpitations, stress, anxiety, and vertigo.

Preparation: Eat fruit raw or dried, or make juice with fresh fruits.

Phyllanthus amarus, *Phyllanthus niruri*
Loog Thai Bai, Bahupatra

Action: Antipyretic, Antiseptic, Appetizer, Bitter Tonic, Blood Tonic, Diuretic, Sedative, Stomachic, Vulnerary

Taste: Bitter

Part Used: Whole plant

Internal Application: Loog thai bai (pronounced "look tai bai") is one of the most useful bitter plants in the Thai pharmacopoeia. It is very beneficial for the kidneys and liver, and is held to be an excellent daily tonic for diabetes and hypoglycemia. It has a calming effect on the circulatory system, lowering blood pressure in the case of hypertension, and relieves stress, nervousness, insomnia, and anxiety. As a bitter tonic, loog thai bai is prescribed for any type of liver disease such as hepatitis and cirrhosis, and for cases of jaundice. As an effective diuretic, it is used to treat inflamed kidneys, gall stones, prostate disease, gout, diseases of the pancreas, gonorrhoea, venereal disease, excessive or frequent menstruation, as well as cases of infrequent or painful urination. Loog thai bai is also a tonic for the stomach, easing stomach pains and increasing the appetite. It is frequently prescribed in cases of fever and back pain, and has been shown to be of use as a daily tonic for blood detoxification in cases of AIDS and other blood diseases. The Wat Po texts also mention loog thai bai as a remedy for vomiting in infants, and for malaria and flatulence.

Preparation: Powder made from dried plant, taken dry or in hot water. Dosage: 1 gram. For daily consumption as a bitter tonic, make tea from roots, stalks, and leaves. Drink 3 times daily.

Topical Application: Loog thai bai may also be used topically to as an antibacterial and vulnerary for wounds, sores, inflammations, or skin infections.

Preparation: Mix powder with a small amount of water to make a paste. Apply directly to affected area.

Lotus, *Nelumbo*
Dok Bua

Action: Aphrodisiac, Astringent, Cardiac, Female Tonic, Sedative

Taste: Aromatic (flower), oily (seed) **Part Used:** Flower, Seed

Internal Application: The lotus is revered across Asia and predominate, and it is the most sacred plant in Thailand on the grounds of most temples, universities, and government buildings given to monks by the devout as symbols of reverence and devotion to Buddhist altars across Thailand. The lotus is symbolic of purity through life. Growing in swamps, the plant begins its life by breaking through to the surface, where it blooms. Similarly, in the human system, the soul is reincarnated again and again in order to break through to the surface and blooms in Enlightenment.

The seed of the lotus is used in Thai medicine as a gynecological pregnancy. As part of the daily diet, the seeds are beneficial for joints. Lotus seed is a cardiac tonic recommended in cases of the heart muscle. Inhaled, the vapor of the flower calms the mind and peaceful mind. Lotus stamen may also be used for dizziness and nervousness.

Preparation: Lotus may be eaten in a variety of ways in Thai desserts. The roots are sliced and added to soups and drinks with crushed ice and lotus syrup. For medicinal use, the fresh stamens may be taken by the teaspoon, dry or in water bath for inhalation. (See *Chapter IV*.)

Bridelia burmanica, *Bridelia siamensis*
Makaa

Action: Anthelmintic, Cholagogue, Digestive, Laxative

Taste: Bitter **Part Used:** Leaves, Root

Internal Application: Decoction of the roasted leaves increases production of bile, and therefore is a digestive. Makaa as a detoxifying purgative for intestinal problems, wasting diseases, and chronic illness. It is also considered a laxative.

Preparation: Roast 15 fresh or dried leaves, then brew in water before bed.

Caution: Unroasted leaves may cause stomach pain.

Mandarin Orange, *Citrus reticulata*
Som Khiew Wahn

Action: Adjuvant, Antiemetic, Antioxidant, Carminative, Digestive, Expectorant, Nutritive Tonic, Stimulant, Stomachic

Taste: Bitter

Part Used: Rind

Internal Application: Mandarin orange is an Asian variety, similar to a tangerine, that is green when ripe. Orange rind is a rich source of the antioxidant, vitamin C. It is a tonic for energy and immunity, stimulates the senses, and is useful as an adjuvant herb in treatments for colds, nausea, flu, and digestive problems. Due to its vitamin content, mandarin rind is also a powerful antioxidant beneficial for the eyes, brain, and immune system.

Preparation: Decoction.

Mango, *Mangifera indica*
Mamuang

Action: Antioxidant, Blood Tonic

Taste: Sour

Part Used: Fruit

Internal Application: There are many varieties of mango in Thailand, some of which are eaten ripe, and others of which are considered to be best while still green. The mango fruit is high in vitamin C and is therefore an antioxidant and immunity booster. It is recommended as a blood purifier and as a part of the daily diet for the elderly, anyone with chronic disease, and those who live in polluted areas.

Preparation: Mango is eaten ripe or unripe, dipped in a mixture of salt, sugar, and cracked red chili peppers.

Mangosteen, *Garcinia mangostana*
Mangkhit

Action: Antirheumatic, Antiseptic, Astringent

Taste: Astringent

Part Used: Rind

Internal Application: One of the most popular fruits in Thailand, the mangosteen is a sweet white fleshy fruit encased in a thick purple rind. The rind is mentioned in the Wat Po texts as an astringent used to treat diarrhea, dysentery, and hemorrhoids. Powder from the rind is also traditionally used to counter food poisoning, food allergies, and arthritis.

Preparation: Decoction from dried rind of 1 fruit. Drink every 3 hours while symptoms persist. To make powder, flame-roast skin of 1 fruit; grind finely with mortar and pestle.

Topical Application: A poultice of mangosteen rind may be used topically as an astringent to cleanse cuts, wounds, and other skin infections.

Marijuana, *Cannabis*,
Cannabis indica

Action: Analgesic, Antiemetic, Antispasmodic, Hypotensive

Taste: Toxic

Part Used: Flower

Internal Application: In the Thai tradition, marijuana is used as a sedative to control pain. It is well known in the West for its effects on nausea and glaucoma, and small doses are sometimes used to calm the nervous system, combating severe nausea, and stimulating appetite.

Preparation: Eat in food, or make tea.

Caution: Marijuana has been shown to possess high toxicity and is therefore recommended medicinally only as a last resort. It can disrupt the balance of hormones throughout the body and should be avoided. Marijuana should be avoided completely by those who are pregnant or individuals attempting to conceive.

Mawaeng, *Solanum trilobatum*
Mawaeng Krue (*S. trilobatum*), Maeng

Action: Antitussive, Bitter Tonic, Diuretic, Expectorant

Taste: Bitter

Part Used: Root

Internal Application: The unripe mawaeng fruit is used as an expectorant for treatment of cold, cough and other respiratory properties and is additionally eaten as a treatment for constipation. Decoction of the root is a diuretic and expectorant.

Preparation: Pound 5–10 fresh fruits with mortar and pestle; add salt; strain. Sip as needed throughout the day. Or chop the fruit and drink. Don't swallow solid parts. The ripe or unripe fruit may be eaten.

Milk
Nom Pong

Action: Adjuvant, Demulcent, Emollient, Nutritive Tonic

Taste: Sweet

Part Used: Milk

Internal Application: Milk is mainly used internally as a demulcent in herbal remedies. It is a nutritive tonic and may be used to treat low energy, low immunity, and emaciation, and to build strength in those convalescing from disease or injury. Milk should be avoided in excessive congestion, as it thickens mucous.

Topical Application: Powdered milk is mainly used as a demulcent in treatment for dry or scaly skin.

Preparation: Mix with hot water to make paste; apply to skin before sauna or steam bath (see *Chapter IV*).

Monkey Jack, Barhal, *Artocarpus lakoocha*
Mahaat

Action: Anthelmintic

Taste: Toxic

Part Used: Wood

Internal Application: Monkey jack is a potent anthelmintic used traditionally for the elimination of tapeworms and other intestinal parasites.

Preparation: Boil small pieces of wood, skimming foam that collects on top of the water. Dry foam in the sun, and crush to make a yellowish powder. Take 3 g powder before breakfast with cold water or lemon juice. Follow up 2 hours later with a laxative such as castor oil or other laxative herbs found in this collection.

Note: Use only cold water. If this remedy is taken with hot water, nausea or vomiting may result.

Mulberry, *Morus alba, Morus nigra, Morus indica*
Bai Mon

Action: Anthelmintic, Antipyretic, Antitumor, Antitussive, Aphrodisiac, Carminative, Laxative, Purgative, Sedative

Part Used: Bark of Root, Leaf

Internal Application: As a laxative, mulberry root bark is used to counter constipation, indigestion, and flatulence. It is prescribed for fever, cough, and in cases of anxiety, stress, or nervousness. It is also said to be an aphrodisiac. Mulberry root bark has been shown to have tumor-shrinking properties and is therefore being researched for treatment of cancer. A green tea and mulberry combination is a popular Thai tea with immune-boosting antioxidants and anticancerous alkaloids. In larger doses, it is used as a purgative to expel tapeworms and other intestinal parasites. A decoction of the leaves is diluted and used as eye drops for conjunctivitis, sties, and other eye infections.

Preparation: Decoction of root bark. Or grind dried root bark to make powder. Take 1/2 tsp dry or with hot water.

Caution: The unripe fruit of the mulberry is poisonous.

Musk
Kee Cha Mod

Action: Analgesic, Anti-inflammatory, Antitumor, Aphrodisiac, Emmenagogue, Stimulant, Tonic

Taste: Hot

Part Used: Musk is obtained from the glands of the male musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*).

Internal Application: Musk is a stimulating tonic, particularly for the brain, central nervous system, and circulatory system. It is recognized as an aphrodisiac by many cultures

around the world, and is therefore often used in pe commonly taken medicinally as a stimulant for the r cases of fainting, unconsciousness, or coma. It is als combat tumors, to reduce swelling, and as a general **Preparation:** Musk is dried, powdered, and usually ta to .1 gram.

Caution: Musk is an abortifacient and may cause m by pregnant women.

Neem, *Azadirachta*
Sadao

Action: Alterative, Anthelmintic, Antiemetic, Antih Antiseptic, Astringent, Bitter Tonic, Blood Stomachic, Vulnerary

Taste: Bitter

Part U

Internal Application: The neem tree is a natural p by the Thai system, the Ayurvedic tradition of India essential source of herbal medicine. The bark of the dysentery and diarrhea. The bark of the root is used an antimalarial. The heartwood effectively treats na used to calm chronic anxiety and stress, and deliri astringent anthelmintic which treats intestinal para young shoots, leaves, and flowers are used as a bitt treatment of vomiting, stomach pain, indigestion, f parts is also a general internal antibacterial, antivi dysentery, diarrhea, and parasites. Chewing the ste and the Wat Po texts mention the seed as a mi poisoning.

Preparation: Decoction can be made from any part o Thais make a delicious appetizer by stir-frying the flo

Topical Indication: The young stems of the neem toothbrush. The ends of the stem are chewed until against the teeth and gums to cleanse and stimulate. preparations throughout South Asia and may also be daily basis. It is an antiseptic for mouth sores, gum d (See mouthwash and tooth powder recipes in *Herb antibacterial properties, the oil of the neem tree is a c be dropped into the ear canal to treat infections. Apr oil cures fungal infections, eczema, acne and sca parasites, and may safely be used as a vaginal douc for dermatitis, rash, and warts. Neem oil is often enhance skin tone, elasticity, and youthfulness. It is*

Preparation: Essential neem oil may be added to fragrance-free skin lotion or to olive oil. Use 5%–10% neem oil. Neem tea for use as a mouthwash can be made with fresh stems or pure essential oil, but be sure to dilute well, as the flavor is intensely bitter. The tea may also be used as a hair rinse, vaginal douche, or skin toner. (See *Herbs in Cosmetics, Chapter III*, for additional ideas.)

Night Jasmine, Coral Jasmine,
Nyctanthes arbor-tristis
Kanika

Action: Antipyretic, Appetizer, Cholagogue, Laxative, Tonic

Taste: Aromatic

Part Used: Whole plant

Internal Application: While not properly a species of jasmine, the night jasmine has many of the same medicinal properties as *Jasminum officinale*. The flower is used to treat fever and vertigo, and was used traditionally to make a saffron-colored dye used for monks' robes. Decoction of the stem relieves headache. The leaf is a cholagogue, stimulating appetite and enhancing digestion by increasing the production of bile. The root is a laxative and a tonic which balances the four elements.

Preparation: Mash fresh flowers, leaf, and/or root with mortar and pestle, adding a bit of water to make a paste. Strain; take liquid 1–3 times daily before meals. Flowers may also be added to sauna or steam bath.

Noni, Indian Mulberry, Morinda citrifolia
Yo Baan

Action: Alterative, Analgesic, Antiemetic, Anti-inflammatory, Antioxidant, Antitumor, Digestive, Emmenagogue, Nutritive Tonic, Stomachic

Part Used: Fruit

Internal Application: In Thailand, the unripe noni fruit is traditionally used as a digestive and to counter nausea and vomiting. This fruit is widely known throughout the Pacific islands, however, as a universal panacea, and its popularity is growing worldwide. Noni has been used successfully for treating colds, tuberculosis, flu, asthma, indigestion, gastritis, chronic constipation, and internal parasites, as well as for bladder, kidney, and urinary tract infections and disease. It is a rich source of vitamin C and other antioxidants, and is used as a nutritive tonic to boost the immune system. The noni fruit is also a tonic for the respiratory system, controls high blood pressure, treats diabetes and hypoglycemia, and has been shown to retard the growth of tumors and cancerous cells. In modern Thailand, it is used as a daily tonic in the treatment of cancer, HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and other severe diseases.

Preparation: Thinly slice unripe fruit and fire roast. Decoction from 2 handfuls of roasted fruit in 1 pint (500 ml) water. Drink as necessary while symptoms persist, or take daily as a tonic. The raw fruit may also be substituted for papaya when making *Som Tam* (see recipe in *Chapter III*). The young leaves and shoots are frequently steamed and eaten with chili or added to soups and curries.

Nutgrass, Sedge Root, Musa
Ya Haew Mo

Action: Alterative, Analgesic, Anthelmintic, Antipyretic, Carminative, Cardiac, Diaphoretic, Digestive, Stomachic, Tonic

Taste: Bitter

Part Used:

Internal Application: Taken daily, nutgrass is a tonic, stimulant, and an aid against hypertension. It is especially useful for infrequent menstruation, menstrual cramps, and PMD. It treats fevers, especially those that occur during menstruation. It also treats diarrhea, dysentery, stomach or intestinal cramps, flatulence, colds, flu, and congestion.

Preparation: Pound 1 handful rhizomes with mortar and pestle, with honey. Use ginger as an adjuvant.

Nutmeg, Myristica
Chan Thet

Action: Antipyretic, Antispasmodic, Aphrodisiac, Antitumor, Carminative, Digestive, Male Tonic, Nervine

Taste: Hot

Part Used:

Internal Application: The seed kernel is properly called mace. The seed covers the kernel is called mace. Nutmeg is used in many ways as an appetizer, digestive, and carminative. It is added as a spice to a variety of food, lessen flatulence, and correct sluggish digestion. It is a tonic for the blood and a sedative with muscle relaxant. In traditional medicine, nutmeg calms the mind and cures insomnia, impotence, and ejaculation. In larger doses, it is strongly hallucinogenic. It is one of the most popular of the world as a psychoactive drug. Mace is not used as a spice, a popular condiment. Decoction of the wood is a lung tonic.

Preparation: Add a pinch of nutmeg to food or tea.

Note: Use only a pinch of nutmeg at a time, and avoid use in children. It is poisonous in large doses.

Nyang Plaam
Acanthus ilicifolius

Action: Antipyretic, Diuretic

Part Used:

Internal Application: This plant is a diuretic used to treat edema and is also an antipyretic for fevers, especially those that occur as measles, chicken-pox, and scarlet fever.

Preparation: Decoction

Topical Application: This plant is also used topically for skin eruptions, boils, leprosy, and fevers.

Preparation: Poultice

Opium Poppy *Papaver somniferum*
(synonym: *Papaveris somniferi*)

Fin

Action: Analgesic, Antispasmodic, Antitussive, Astringent, Diaphoretic, Expectorant, Nervine, Sedative, Stimulant

Taste: Toxic

Part Used: Flower, Seed

Internal Application: While opium addiction and narcotics trafficking are two of Thailand's most pressing social problems, the opium poppy has long been held in esteem by traditional herbalists for its potent effects. Taken internally, opium is one of the most effective natural anesthetics, and it is traditionally employed to these purposes in rural Thailand where modern anesthetics are unavailable. In small doses, opium is a mild stimulant. In larger doses, it is used as a temporary calmative in severe cases of anxiety, stress, or panic attacks. Opium is also mentioned in the Wat Po texts as a very effective remedy for cough, diarrhea, dysentery, rectal bleeding, and hemorrhoids. The seeds of the poppy, commonly available commercially, have an astringent effect and are taken to treat diarrhea and dysentery.

Preparation: The juice of the poppy flower head is extracted by incision. The juice is dried to make resin and is then smoked, eaten, or applied topically. The seeds of the poppy are dry-roasted and ground to a fine powder to be taken by the teaspoon.

Topical Application: A poultice of opium resin is used topically as a local analgesic for management of pain and soothing of muscle spasms. It may be applied to the temples to alleviate headache.

Caution: This herb is presented here in the context of traditional Thai herbalism. The dangers of overdose and addiction are such that the use of opium poppy is not recommended by the author of this collection.

Oroxylum, *Oroxylum indicum*

Phae Kaa

Action: Anti-inflammatory, Antipyretic, Antirheumatic, Antitussive, Astringent, Expectorant, Female Tonic, Stomachic, Vulnerary

Taste: Astringent

Part Used: Whole plant

Internal Application: Oroxylum bark tea is used traditionally as a uterine tonic after childbirth. It is also used in treatment of diarrhea, arthritis, and measles. Oroxylum seeds and bark are prescribed in cases of sore throat and cough, especially when accompanied by chills, fever, or other cold symptoms. The root, stem and bark is an antidiarrheal and a tonic for the four elements. This herb is extremely popular among the Hill-Tribes, who use it for

treatment of indigestion, stomachache, inflammation, disease, malaria, and cancer.

Preparation: Make decoction from 100 grams bark in 1 liter water. Take a 100 ml dose 2 times daily for 7–8 days. Or simmer 2–3 grams in 1 liter water for 1 hour; strain; drink decoction in 1 day separately. The leaves may be eaten raw, and the green pods are used for medicinal purposes.

Topical Application: The Hill-Tribes apply a poultice to treat skin rashes, dermatitis, cuts, wounds, and muscle pain.

Caution: Oroxylum acts as an abortifacient and should be avoided by pregnant women and mothers.

Otaheite Gooseberry,
Phyllanthus acidus

Action: Antipyretic

Taste: Sour

Part Used: Fruit

Internal Application: Otaheite gooseberries are used to treat chronic thirst, and measles.

Preparation: Eat fruit raw, dipped in a mix of salt, sugar, and lime juice, or eaten as well.

Oyster
Huynarom

Action: Carminative, Digestive, Diuretic

Taste: Salty

Part Used: Shell

Internal Application: Ground oyster shells are a traditional remedy for flatulence, and indigestion. Due to the high calcium content, it is recommended as a dietary supplement for those with osteoporosis.

Preparation: Oyster shell is readily available in capsule form at health supplement stores.

Pandanus, *Screw Pine*,
Pandanus odoratissimus
Toey Hawm

Action: Antipyretic, Cardiac, Carminative, Digestive

Taste: Sweet

Part Used: Flower

Internal Application: The male pandanus flower is used as a diuretic used to help expel kidney or bladder stones, relieve congestion, and relieves indigestion and flatulence.

Preparation: Decoction.

Papaya, *Carica papaya*
Malakor

Action: Anthelmintic, Antioxidant, Antirheumatic, Antitumor, Cardiac, Digestive, Diuretic, Emmenagogue, Laxative, Nutritive Tonic, Stomachic, Vulnerary

Taste: Hot (seed), Sweet (fruit) **Part Used:** Seed, Fruit, Leaf, Root

Internal Application: Papaya is a digestion stimulant and aids in assimilating food due to the large amount of the enzyme papain present in the fruit. The enzyme is so effective that, in many parts of the tropics, tough meat is soaked overnight in a marinade that contains papaya pulp or juice as a tenderizer. Papaya also contains large quantities of vitamins A and C, well known antioxidants. The fruit of the papaya is eaten both ripe and unripe (see *Som Tam* recipe in *Chapter III* for a recipe based on unripe papaya). While the unripe fruit is a digestive, the ripe fruit and the seeds are mild laxatives taken medicinally to treat constipation, indigestion, flatulence, and cramping of the intestines. Papaya seed is also used to purge dysentery and other parasites of the gastrointestinal tract. The root is a diuretic used to treat venereal diseases such as gonorrhoea. Papaya is recommended as part of the daily diet for cases of arthritis, allergies, asthma, hypertension, hysteria, influenza, toothaches, and cancerous tumors. Either the seeds or the fruit may be taken as a general tonic for low immunity, low energy, chronic fatigue, and wasting diseases.

Preparation: Eat papaya fruit in the morning on an empty stomach, or take 1 tsp seeds after meals.

Topical Application: The leaf of the papaya is used topically on wounds, skin ulcers, and other sores, as it cleanses and speeds healing.

Preparation: Bruise leaves with mortar and pestle; apply topically to affected areas.

Paracress, *Spilanthes*, *Spilanthes acmella*
Phak Khraat Hua Wan

Action: Analgesic, Antiemetic, Antipyretic, Antirheumatic, Antiseptic, Appetizer, Carminative, Digestive, Stomachic

Part Used: Whole plant

Internal Application: Paracress tea is a digestion stimulant. It is useful in cases of flatulence, nausea, and vomiting, and is also prescribed for fever, arthritis, and gout. Mixed with vinegar, it makes a mild antiseptic for mouth sores and sore throat. The stems are also chewed for toothache and are sometimes given to children with speech disorders such as stuttering. Paracress is said to cure these problems, as well as paralysis of the tongue and general weakness of the mouth.

Preparation: Tea. For toothache, stems and flowers may be pounded with a mortar and pestle, mixed with a pinch of salt, and chewed.

Peppermint, *Mentha piperita*, *Mentha*
Saranae

Action: Analgesic, Antiemetic, Antispasmodic, Antitumor, Cardiac, Digestive, Diuretic, Emmenagogue, Laxative, Nutritive Tonic, Stomachic, Vulnerary

Taste: Hot and Aromatic **Part Used:** Leaf, Root

Internal Application: Peppermint tea is a general digestive stimulant and is used in the treatment for stomach spasms or pains, nausea, abdominal pain, constipation, and bowel syndrome, and gastritis. Tea or inhalation is preferred for its relaxing and calming effect on the nervous system, and the vapors are used for relief of nervousness, insomnia, and stress-related or migrainous headaches.

Preparation: Tea or inhalation 2–3 times daily. Drink 1–2 cups of tea. (For more information on inhalation, see *Chapter IV*.)

Note: *M. piperita* is preferred over the other two varieties.

Oenanthe stolonifera
Phak Chee Lom

Action: Antiemetic, Antipruritic, Antitussive, Carminative, Digestive, Stomachic

Internal Application: Phak chee lom is used in decoction for the treatment of cough, and bronchitis. It is a diaphoretic which detoxifies the body by inducing sweating. It is considered to be a purgative with mild action, and is used to counter nausea and vomiting.

Preparation: Decoction

Topical Application: This plant is used in the traditional treatment of skin infections, allergies, and hives.

Preparation: See *Chapter IV* for more information.

Pineapple, *Ananas*
Sapparat

Action: Anti-inflammatory, Antitussive, Blood Tonic, Cardiac, Digestive, Diuretic, Emmenagogue, Laxative, Nutritive Tonic, Stomachic

Taste: Sour **Part Used:** Fruit, Root

Internal Application: The rhizome of the pineapple is used in the treatment of those suffering from kidney diseases, kidney stones, and urinary tract infections. Pineapple fruit juice is recommended for the treatment of diseases of the liver, and cough or cold with chest pain. It is used for convalescence and is said to detoxify the entire system.

of the uterus and for post-partum tonification and strengthening of the female reproductive organs. The fruit juice is used in treatment of depression, and due to the vitamin content, has an especially beneficial effect on the brain and nervous system. The Hill-Tribes take pineapple juice to treat stomachache and use it topically on warts, rashes, and dermatitis.

Preparation: Eat fruit raw, or drink juice. Pineapple shoots and fruit are used in curries, soups, and stir-fries.

Plantain, Plantago major

Phak Kaat Nam

Action: Alterative, Antitussive, Astringent, Demulcent, Digestive, Diuretic, Expectorant, Hemostatic, Stomachic, Vulnerary

Taste: Astringent

Part Used: Whole plant

Internal Application: The fresh juice from the whole plant is drunk as a diuretic to treat bladder or urinary tracts infections and kidney stones. It is an expectorant to help clear up cough, laryngitis, sore throat, and any other respiratory problems. It soothes digestive problems, peptic ulcers, and gastritis. As an astringent, it is used to counter mucous or blood in the stool, sputum, or vaginal discharge.

Preparation: Drink 1–2 cups of fresh plantain juice daily.

Topical Application: Apply fresh juice to dermatitis, sores, wounds, insect bites, and allergic skin eruptions. Hill-Tribes use a poultice of plantain over broken bones, and chew the plant for toothache.

Plumbago, Leadwort, Plumbago zelyanica (white leadwort), *Plumbago rosea* (rose leadwort), *Plumbago indica* (Indian leadwort)

Chettamuun Phloeng Khaao (white leadwort), Chettamuun Phloeng
Daengng (rose leadwort, Indian leadwort)

Action: Blood Tonic, Diaphoretic, Diuretic, Emmenagogue, Female Tonic, Stomachic

Taste: Hot

Part Used: Root, Bark

Internal Application: As it stimulates the Fire element and warms the body, the root of either type of plumbago is used as a carminative to stimulate digestion and as a diaphoretic. The root and/or bark of the plumbago may be used to treat cases of blocked or infrequent menstruation and to increase female fertility, although it is also an abortifacient, and should never be taken during pregnancy. Plumbago is also used to detoxify the blood and is prized by some Hill-Tribes as a general longevity tonic. The root of the rose leadwort is also used to treat hemorrhoids. The aerial parts of either plant are used in treatment of kidney disease, kidney cramps, and accompanying back pain.

Preparation: Decoction.

Caution: Plumbago may cause miscarriage and should be strictly avoided by pregnant women.

Pomegranate, Punica granatum Tubtim

Action: Alterative, Anthelmintic, Antipyretic, Astringent, Stomachic, Tonic

Taste: Astringent (fruit), Toxic (root bark) **Part Used:** Fruit, Root

Internal Application: Fresh pomegranate juice is used to lower the body's temperature in cases of fever. It is a strong astringent used to treat diarrhea, dysentery, and food poisoning. The bark of the root is effective in purging intestinal parasites. The Wat Po texts mention pomegranate flowers to increase flow of breast milk.

Preparation: For diarrhea, prepare decoction by boiling the fruit in boiling water with a pinch of quicklime. Take once or twice daily. The root bark may be taken in the morning for up to 10 days. For fever, use the famous "Five Parts" recipe: young leaves, fruit, cloves with pomegranate as an adjuvant to lessen side effects, headache and/or nausea that occur at proper dosage.

Topical Application: Fresh pomegranate juice may be used as an antifungal, or as a gargle for sore throat or mouth sores.

Preparation: The entire fruit (without the peel) may be used. Apply juice directly to affected areas.

Caution: Large doses of root bark may be toxic.

Pomelo, Citrus maxima Som Oh

Action: Antipruritic

Taste: Sour

Part Used: Fruit

Topical Application: Pomelo fruit looks like a huge grapefruit, and the pulp is much larger, but the flavor is similar to grapefruit. West. Pomelo fruit is eaten by itself or mixed with other fruits to make a tangy and delectable salad. Decoction of the fruit is used for dandruff and dry, brittle hair. It may also be added to soups.

Preparation: Decoction, steam bath, or sauna.

Pumpkin, Cucurbita pepo Fak Thong

Action: Anthelmintic, Aphrodisiac, Diuretic, Tonic

Taste: Bland

Part Used: Fruit

Internal Application: Stewed with coconut milk and sugar, or paste, or stir-fried with Chinese vegetables, pumpkin seeds.

and sweets. The seeds are used traditionally in Eastern and Western herbalism to purge tapeworm and other intestinal parasites from the gastrointestinal tract. The Thai system holds pumpkin root to be an aphrodisiac and tonic.

Preparation: Fire roast 60 grams of seeds. Mash with mortar and pestle. Mix seeds with 500 ml water or milk. Drink $\frac{1}{3}$ of this mixture 3 times at intervals of 2 hours. After final dose, follow up with a laxative such as castor oil or other laxative herbs found in this collection.

Note: This pumpkin is closely related to the jack-o-lantern pumpkin, *C. pepo*, which may be substituted where necessary.

Purple Allamanda, Laurel-Leaved Thunbergia,

Thunbergia laurifolia

Rang Juad

Action: Antiallergic, Antipyretic, Blood Tonic, Carminative, Digestive, Diuretic

Taste: Bland

Part Used: Leaf

Internal Application: Purple allamanda is most commonly used in the Thai tradition as a detoxifying agent. It purifies the blood and is therefore used as an antidote to all kinds of poisonous food or chemicals. Some Hill-Tribes prescribe it for poisonous snake or insect bites. Its detoxifying properties make it the preferred treatment of hangovers, and it is prescribed daily for countering the cirrhosis associated with alcoholism. Purple allamanda is also useful in treating indigestion, flatulence, diarrhea, mucous or blood in the stool, and intestinal parasites. It is also prescribed as a remedy for fever, allergies, and asthma, and is recommended for diabetes and hypoglycemia, as it reputedly lowers blood sugar. This plant is mentioned in the Wat Po texts as a remedy for vomiting in infants, for blocked or irregular menstruation, gonorrhea, sores on the tongue and mouth, as a diuretic, and as a poultice for burns.

Preparation: Decoction.

Queen's Flower, Pride of India,

Lagerstroemia speciosa

Inthanin Nam

Action: Diuretic

Part Used: Leaf

Internal Application: Queen's flower tea reduces blood sugar levels and is therefore good for diabetics. As a diuretic, it is also useful for irregular or painful urination, kidney and bladder stones, and venereal diseases.

Preparation: Tea

Railroad Vine, Goat's Foot Creeper,

Phakbung Tal

Action: Antipruritic

Part Used:

Topical Application: Railroad vine is applied to relieve itching, inflammation, allergic reactions, hives, and rashes from jellyfish.

Preparation: Pound leaves with mortar and pestle. Mix with water to form a paste. (If for jellyfish stings, use distilled vinegar.) Apply to affected areas.

Rangoon Creeper, Quisqualis indica,

Lep Mue Naan

Action: Anthelmintic

Taste: Toxic

Part Used:

Internal Application: Rangoon creeper is a powerful anthelmintic for tapeworms and other intestinal parasites. It is recorded as being very strong.

Preparation: The kernels must be extracted from dried seeds (dosage 5–7 seeds, children 2–3). Strain; drink water with the mixture or mix with fried eggs.

Caution: Take only with cold water. Warm water may irritate the stomach.

Reishi Mushroom, Lingzhi,

Ganoderma lucidum

Hed Lhin-Je

Action: Tonic

Part Used:

Internal Application: Reishi mushroom can be found in many places. It has long been prized in Thai medicine, and is one of the most important herbs traditionally used to tonify *qi* (energy), and to enhance vitality. It is used in rebuilding therapies to strengthen and revitalize the body during the seasons. It has been shown to possess antiviral and immunomodulatory cardiovascular and liver function. In China, it is also used to enhance athletic performance. This herb is also used to treat diabetes, hypoglycemia, hypertension, and chronic heart disease.

Preparation: Decoction

Safflower, *Carthamus tinctorius*
Dawg Kum Foy

Action: Alterative, Antirheumatic, Cardiac, Carminative, Diaphoretic, Diuretic, Emmenagogue, Laxative, Male Tonic, Tonic, Stimulant

Taste: Hot **Part Used:** Flower, Seed

Internal Application: Dried safflower is a tonic, especially for the heart and the circulatory and nervous systems. Because of its beneficial effect on the circulation, it is used to treat cases of male sexual dysfunction and to encourage regularity in cases of blocked, irregular, or painful menstruation. The flower is used as a calmative in cases of stress, anxiety, and panic attacks. It is also an effective therapy for colds, arthritis, and constipation. The seed is a purgative and expectorant, and may also be used to encourage menstruation and to lower cholesterol.

Preparation: Tea from 1 tsp dried flowers. Drink twice daily.

Topical Application: Safflower is used topically as an antibacterial, as well as to ease inflammation, arthritis, pinched nerves, and sciatica.

Preparation: Oil from the seeds is mixed with equal parts vegetable oil and alcohol. Massage affected parts with oil.

Salet Phangphon
Clinacanthus nutans

Action: Antipruritic **Part Used:** Leaf

Topical Application: A tincture of salet phangphon (pronounced "salet pang-pon") is used topically to soothe skin ulcers, herpes, allergic rash, hives, shingles, burns, insect and snake bites.

Preparation: Mash 10–20 fresh leaves with mortar and pestle. Soak in alcohol for 1 week, stirring daily. Strain; apply tincture as needed to affected areas. For snake or poisonous insect bite, use 20–30 leaves, pounded with alcohol. Apply paste immediately to bite for 30 minutes.

Sandalwood Tree, *Adenanthera pavonina*
Maklam Tah Chang

Action: Alterative, Anti-inflammatory, Antipruritic, Antipyretic, Antiseptic, Bitter Tonic, Blood Tonic, Hemostatic, Refrigerant, Sedative

Taste: Bitter **Part Used:** Wood, Essential oil

Internal Application: Sandalwood is taken internally to treat fever and to detoxify the blood. It is used by Hill-Tribes to revive unconscious patients and as a tonic.

Preparation: Decoction of wood.

Topical Application: Sandalwood paste is used by many in South Asia as a topical refrigerant. In many places, a small smudge is applied over the third eye or on the forehead

to cool the entire body and to lessen sweating. The symbolism in India and are used to differentiate different types of sandalwood. Sandalwood is not used in this way in Thailand, although sandalwood shampoos, and fragrances, all of which have the same name. Sandalwood may also be applied to dermatitis, herpes, and other conditions on the skin.

Preparation: The Ayurvedic recipe for sandalwood oil is to mix sandalwood powder in 1 pint (500 ml) water. Let sit overnight, add 1/2 cup coconut oil and cook without boiling over a low flame for 2 hours.

Sarapee

Ochrocarpus siamensis (synonym)

Action: Blood Tonic, Cardiac, Tonic

Taste: Aromatic **Part Used:** Flower

Internal Application: The sarapee flower is used to stimulate the circulatory system. It is especially recommended as a tonic for the elderly.

Preparation: Drink tea, or add to sauna or steam bath.

Satinwood, Orange Jasmine
Murraya paniculata
Kaew

Action: Anti-inflammatory **Part Used:** Leaf

Topical Application: A tincture of satinwood is used to soothe sprains, joint pain, bone pain, contusions, toothache, and snake bites.

Preparation: Mash 15 leaves with mortar and pestle. Apply tincture to affected areas on skin or mouth.

Sea Holly, *Acanthus*
Ngueak pleam

Action: Diuretic, Tonic **Part Used:** Leaf

Internal Application: The leaf of the sea holly is considered as a longevity tonic. The seed is anthelmintic. The juice of the plant is a diuretic used to treat kidney and bladder stones.

Preparation: Decoction

Topical Application: The whole plant is used as a poultice.

Preparation: Poultice

Sea Salt
Glaur Talay

Action: Antiseptic, Laxative, Purgative

Taste: Salty

Internal Application: Sea salt is used in Thai medicine as a gargle for mouth sores and infections. A sea salt solution may be drunk twice daily as a laxative, to purge the digestive system of excessive mucous, and to encourage drainage of lymph. The same solution may be used as a disinfectant eyewash, gargle, nasal wash, or enema, and may be swallowed and vomited up to remove mucous or foreign matter from the stomach.

Preparation: Drink 3 tbs sea salt in 1 pint (500 ml) lukewarm water.

Sensitive Plant. *Mimosa pudica*, *Mimosa hispida*
Naiyaraap (*M. pudica*), Rangap (*M. hispida*)

Action: Analgesic, Diuretic

Part Used: Whole plant

Internal Application: The whole plant is decocted and taken internally by many Hill-Tribes as a diuretic for kidney dysfunction and/or stones. Sensitive plant also is used in the Thai tradition to treat anemia, jaundice, and emaciation. The root is a remedy for dysentery. A tincture in alcohol is used to lower high blood sugar levels.

Preparation: Decoction

Topical Application: Sensitive plant is used topically for aching muscles.

Preparation: Poultice or hot compress.

Sesame Seeds, *Sesamum indicum*
Nga

Action: Antirheumatic, Demulcent, Emmenagogue, Emollient, Laxative, Nutritive Tonic

Taste: Oily

Part Used: Seed, Oil

Internal Application: In Thai medicine, sesame seeds are recommended dietary supplements for sufferers of joint problems, tooth decay, and bone weakness. Sesame promotes strength and increases body warmth and is therefore a nutritive tonic as part of the daily diet. As a demulcent, sesame seed is also taken in cases of cough, constipation, hemorrhoids, and painful or blocked menstruation.

Preparation: Eat seeds raw or dry-roasted, or use sesame oil. Seeds or oil may be added to salads, vegetables, and other dishes as an alternative to less-beneficial oils such as peanut or vegetable-based oils frequently used in Asian cuisine. (See also *Sesame Leaf Snack* recipe in *Chapter III*.)

Shorea, *Shorea rostrata*
Phayom

Action: Astringent

Part Used:

Internal Application: Shorea flowers are used to treat excessive discharge.

Preparation: Flowers can be eaten raw or steamed or eaten with fried eggs or in the hot and sour soup. It is a typical ingredient in betel-nut preparations, which are common in many areas of South Asia.

Soap Nut, Soap Berry,
Makham Dee Klai

Action: Antiparasitic, Antipruritic, Antipyretic, Antitumor

Taste: Bitter

Part Used:

Internal Application: The seed of the soap nut tree is used to treat fever and food poisoning, and is considered to be a natural antiseptic. The pulp of the soap nut fruit as an antibacterial used to treat skin diseases.

Topical Application: The soap nut fruit was at one time used to make soap and still is an ingredient in natural herbal soap. The seed is used medicinally to counter itching of the skin such as hives, rashes, and dandruff. It is also used as a skin disinfectant.

Preparation: Make decoction from 4–5 de-pitted and dried seeds or scalp twice daily.

Aganonerion polymorphum
Somlom

Action: Digestive, Laxative, Stomachic

Taste: Sour

Part Used:

Internal Application: Decoction of the root is used to treat stomach pain, stomachache, indigestion, irritable bowel, and diarrhea, as well as has a tangy lemon-like flavor that tastes like lemons.

Preparation: Decoction of root. Eat leaves raw or cooked. A delicious laxative soup calls for somlom leaves and hot peppers.

Star Anise, Chinese Anise, *Illicium verum*
Poy kak

Action: Analgesic, Antispasmodic, Antitussive, Carminative, Digestive, Emmenagogue, Expectorant, Sedative, Stomachic

Taste: Hot and Sweet **Part Used:** Seed pod

Internal Application: Anise is mainly a digestive used to counter flatulence, indigestion, irritable bowel, gastritis, and other stomach or intestinal cramping. It is gentle enough to use safely with children and infants. Star anise is a useful cold remedy for cases of dry cough, congestion, flu, and sore throat. As an expectorant, it is especially useful in cases of bronchitis, asthma, and other respiratory infections. It is an excellent remedy for insomnia and promotes regular menstruation.

Preparation: Make tea with 3–4 star-shaped pods, or 1 tsp dried seeds. Drink after meals.

Stevia, Sweet Leaf, *Stevia rebaudiana*
Yaa Wann

Action: Adjuvant

Taste: Sweet **Part Used:** Leaf

Internal Application: This leaf is a native of Brazil and Paraguay but is currently used widely in South East Asia and China as a sugar substitute for diabetics, hypoglycemics, and weight-conscious individuals. By weight, it is up to 300 times sweeter than sugar but has virtually no calories. Diabetics and hypoglycemics should always use stevia as a sweetener in herbal teas rather than honey or sugar.

Preparation: Use the dried and powdered leaf as you would use sugar. Alternatively, you may make a sweetening syrup by boiling stevia in a small amount of water. Use up to 1 gram per day.

Sting-Ray
Pla Kraben

Action: Female Tonic, Nutritive Tonic

Taste: Salty **Part Used:** Tail of *Dasyatis bleekeri*

Internal Application: The meat of the sting-ray's tail is prized for its tonic properties in a way similar to the horseshoe crab. It is typically eaten by children to prevent a host of childhood illnesses and by new mothers for tonification of uterus and other female reproductive organs after pregnancy.

Preparation: Eat steamed.

Sugar Apple, Sweet Sop, *Custaria*
Noinae

Action: Antiparasitic

Taste: Toxic (leaf, seed), Sweet (fruit) **Part U**

Internal Application: A popular fruit in northern medicinal for treatment of lice.

Preparation: Grind 8–12 seeds or 15 g fresh leaves 2 parts coconut oil. Apply to hair, and wrap with cloth. Repeat once a day for 2–3 days to kill lice and eggs. kill ringworm and other skin parasites.

Caution: This preparation is toxic and is an irritant to membranes. Use with care.

Sugar Cane, *Saccharum*
Oi Daeng

Action: Adjuvant, Antitussive, Demulcent

Taste: Sweet **Part U**

Internal Application: Sugar cane is commonly available in South Asia. Whereas in India, traveling cane-presses produce a squeezed glass of juice, in Thailand, iced sugar cane is chewed, and the woody pulp is spat out when the cane is eaten, there are few things more pleasurable on a hot day. Traditionally, sugar is typically added as an adjuvant to make the taste more palatable. Different types of sugar are used for different symptoms. Fresh sugar cane juice is added to treat bladder infections, urinary tract infections, low energy, chronic fatigue, and emaciation. Raw, unrefined sugar is used for fever and lymph problems. Rock sugar is added to soothe the throat. Juice of the black sugar cane (*Saccharum sinense*) is used for kidney disorders and venereal diseases.

Preparation: Sugar cane juice can be extracted with a press for any purpose or can be bought in cans or bottles at Asian markets. Only use raw, unrefined sugar (such as Turbinado or "raw" sugar). Only white or brown sugar, which have no medicinal qualities. To make sugar cane juice, take juice of 70–90 g fresh cane or 30–40 g dried cane.

Sugar Palm, Jaggen, Arenga spp.
Dtao

Action: Adjuvant, Demulcent

Taste: Sweet

Part Used: Sap

Internal Application: Palm sugar is added as an adjuvant to herbal teas that treat colds, sore throat, and congestion.

Sulfur
Gum Matun

Action: Antiparasitic

Taste: Toxic

Topical Application: Sulfur paste is applied topically to fungal infections, acne, ringworm, scabies, and other skin parasites. It is also commonly used in Thailand to treat mange on dogs.

Preparation: Apply paste topically on affected areas. Powder may be applied dry or with petroleum jelly.

Tako Naa
Diospyros rhodocalyx

Action: Antiseptic, Tonic

Part Used: Stem

Internal Application: A relative of the ebony tree, tako naa is used to balance the four elements, as a longevity tonic, a mouthwash for toothache and gum disease, and a treatment for vaginal discharge.

Preparation: Decoction, with a pinch of salt.

Tamarind, Tamaridus indica
Ma Khaam

Action: Anthelmintic, Antipyretic, Antiseptic, Astringent, Blood Tonic, Carminative, Digestive, Expectorant, Female Tonic, Laxative, Nutritive Tonic, Purgative, Refrigerant, Stimulant, Vulnerary

Taste: Sour (fruit, leaf, bark), Oily (seed) **Part Used:** Whole plant

Internal Application: Tamarind is a common ingredient in Thai cuisine. The pulp of the fruit is cooked and added to soups and curries for flavor. The flowers, fruit, and young leaves are eaten in soups and curries. Unripe fruit is also candied and sold by street vendors coated with sugar, salt, and red chili flakes.

The fresh juice of the tamarind is the Thai equivalent of our prune juice and is a favorite remedy for constipation and fever. It is considered to be a blood purifier and is recommended for pregnancy and post-partum. Tea made from the young leaves and pods of the tamarind is a laxative and is used to treat colds and fevers. The flowers are held to lower blood pressure, and the bark is an astringent remedy for diarrhea and fever. The seeds of the

tamarind are used as a purgative to expel tapeworms and are also recommended as a tonic for health, strength, and energy.

Preparation: Eat 70–150 grams of fruit-pulp raw, or with a pinch of salt for 10–20 minutes. May be drunk for a laxative effect, dry-roast 30 seeds; soak in water until soft; eat steeping leaves.

Topical Application: The leaves of the tamarind are used to treat skin ulcers and sores. The juice and decoction of the leaves are used for general antiseptic treatment of the skin and are frequently used on the skin before sauna or steam bath. (See *Chapter IV* for more information.)

Preparation: Mash leaves with mortar and pestle. Apply to affected areas.

Thai Caper, Capparis
Ching-chee

Action: Antipyretic, Bronchodilator, Carminative, Stimulant

Taste: Bitter

Part Used: Root

Internal Application: The root of the Thai caper is used as a bronchodilator. The root and leaf are used to treat chicken pox, measles, and other fevers with symptoms of fever. The Thai caper is also mentioned in the Thai caper as a remedy for smallpox, dengue fever, and malaria.

Preparation: Decoction

Topical Application: Decoction of the root may be used to treat muscle cramps. Leaf relieves muscle cramps.

Preparation: Poultice

Thao Yaanaa
Tiliacora trianandra

Action: Analgesic, Antipyretic

Part Used: Root

Internal Application: This herb is used in the Thai Hill-Tribes for sprains, bruises, sore muscles, and post-traumatic healing.

Preparation: Decoction. Drink 3 times daily

Thong Phan Chang
Rhinacanthus nasutus

Action: Anthelmintic, Antiparasitic, Antipyretic, Antitumor, Laxative

Taste: Toxic

Part Used: Root

Internal Application: Thong phan chang (pronounced 'thong phan chang') is used to treat fevers, sore throat, colds, and lung diseases such as pneumonia.

blood pressure and is therefore effective treatment for hypertension. Tea made from this herb has a laxative effect, is held to help back pain, and is useful to encourage passing of gallstones. The Wat Po texts recommend the leaf as a diuretic, laxative, and anthelmintic, and as a detoxifying remedy for fever, blood poisoning, skin disease, and cancer. It is said that thong phan chang must be collected between sunset and sunrise because sunlight destroys the potency of the plant.

Preparation: Tea or decoction.

Topical Application: A tincture made of thong pan chang leaves is used topically as a treatment for bacterial and fungal skin infections, rashes, ringworm, and other skin parasites.

Preparation: Pound leaves with mortar and pestle. Soak in alcohol for 7 days. Apply tincture topically to affected areas 3–4 times daily. Continue application for 1 week after ringworm has disappeared.

Ti Plant, Cordyline, Cordyline fruticosa
Maak phu maak mia

Action: Antirheumatic, Astringent

Taste: Bland

Part Used: Leaf, Bud, Young Shoot

Internal Application: The ti plant is an astringent with a wide range of applications. It is a hemostatic, used traditionally to stop bleeding in cases of bloody vomit, stool, or urine. It is also employed to stop the coughing of blood associated with tuberculosis, to halt excessive menstruation, and to curtail internal bleeding of the organs, bruises, contusions, and hematoma. The ti plant may also be used for treatment of diarrhea, dysentery, arthritis, fever, and measles. As a gargle, it is effective against tooth and gum disease, bleeding gums, and halitosis.

Preparation: Tea

Tongkat Ali, Eurycoma longifolia
Plaa Lai Phueak

Action: Antiparasitic, Antipyretic, Antitussive, Aphrodisiac, Bitter Tonic, Male Tonic, Stimulant

Taste: Bitter

Part Used: Root

Internal Application: Traditionally, tongkat ali is used in Thai herbalism for treatment of colds, cough, fever, and low immunity. In other areas of Southeast Asia, it is used in a manner similar to ginseng as a male potency enhancer and aphrodisiac. The Wat Po texts mention the root as a remedy for poisoning, fever, dysentery, sunstroke, internal infections, tuberculosis, and as a topical application for skin parasites.

Preparation: Decoction. Drink morning and evening.

Toothbrush Tree, Siam
Streblus asper
Khoi

Action: Analgesic, Antiparasitic, Antipyretic, Antispasmodic, Astringent, Carminative, Digestive, Laxative

Taste: Toxic

Part Used:

Internal Application: The toothbrush tree seed is a laxative. It is also a carminative and appetizer, used to stimulate appetite. The bark of the stem has antidiarrheal and antipyretic properties. It is used for dysentery and other cases of diarrhea accompanied by blood. The leaf is a laxative and is also taken to treat all varieties of diarrhea. Traditionally dried, cut into small pieces, wrapped in paper, and used for treatment of inflamed nasal passages.

Preparation: Decoction

Topical Application: The toothbrush tree, as its name implies, is a traditional remedy for tooth and gum disease. It is also used for other skin parasites. Another common usage is to treat hemorrhoids.

Preparation: For application to the mouth, make decoction with water and a pinch of salt; gargle 3–4 times daily. For application to the teeth and gums with powder. For application to the hemorrhoids, mix with mortar and pestle. Mix with hot water to make a paste. For hemorrhoids, mix paste with oil, cook. Let cool, and apply.

Note: This plant has recently been shown to have a cytotoxic effect. Traditionally used to treat this disease, toothbrush tree is also used for treatment of cancer.

Turmeric, Curcuma
Khamin

Action: Alterative, Analgesic, Anthelmintic, Anticancer, Antirheumatic, Antiseptic, Antitussive, Asthmatic, Bitter, Cholagogue, Digestive, Emmenagogue, Stomachic

Taste: Hot

Part Used:

Internal Application: Turmeric is related to ginger and has many of the properties of these plants. Turmeric is used as a digestive and as an adjuvant with preparations for gastrointestinal conditions such as flatulence, peptic ulcers, indigestion, irritable bowel syndrome, sugar and is therefore used for diabetes and hypoglycemia. It is also used for cough, arthritis, chronic back pain, and painful or blocked sinuses. It can be used as an antidote for food poisoning and for its detoxifying effect on the blood, digestive tract, and liver. It is also a source of hormones.

Preparation: Decoction from fresh rhizome or fire-roasted leaves. Drink after meals. The rhizome can also be dried and powdered. Take 500mg powder with honey 4 times daily, with meals and before bed. Juice can also be extracted from the fresh rhizome. Young shoots and flowers are sometimes steamed and eaten with chili sauce.

Topical Application: The turmeric rhizome relieves itching and swelling, and has a slight antiseptic effect. It therefore can be used topically on insect bites, rashes, allergic reactions, hives, and superficial wounds. It is also used as an anti-inflammatory for bruises and sprains.

Preparation: Mash fresh rhizome with mortar and pestle, or use powder. Mix with small amount of water to make paste; apply to affected areas.

Turkish Rhubarb, Chinese Rhubarb,
Rheum palmatum

Action: Alterative, Anthelmintic, Antiemetic, Antipyretic, Antiseptic, Astringent, Cardiac, Carminative, Cholagogue, Emmenagogue, Laxative, Nervine, Purgative, Stimulant, Stomachic

Taste: Astringent **Part Used:** Root, Stem

Internal Application: Turkish rhubarb is well known in Eastern and Western herbalism. In large doses, it is an effective laxative, used traditionally in Thailand for treatment of constipation and flatulence and for detoxification of the colon. In lesser doses, Turkish rhubarb is used as an astringent to treat diarrhea and as a hemostatic to stop internal bleeding, bloody vomit, blood-shot eyes, and hemorrhoids. It is considered to be beneficial for the heart and brain, and is a stimulant for the production of bile. Rhubarb is also used in Western herbalism to treat nausea and blocked or irregular menstruation.

Preparation: Make powder from dried roots, stalks. Take 1 tsp dose for laxative; 1/4 tsp dose for other complaints. Use 1/4 tsp ginger or licorice as adjuvant to prevent stomach cramping.

Caution: While the roots and stalks of most rhubarb are edible, the leaves are poisonous.

Wan Maha Kan
Gynura pseudochina

Action: Anti-inflammatory, Antiparasitic, Antipruritic, Antipyretic

Part Used: Leaf, Root

Internal Application: The root of the wan maha kan is taken as a remedy for fever.

Preparation: Decoction

Topical Application: The fresh leaves are used topically for treatment of eczema, herpes, insect bites, scabies, lice, and skin inflammation.

Preparation: Pound leaves with mortar and pestle, Adding a small amount of water to make a paste. Apply to affected areas 3–4 times daily as needed.

Water Mimosa, Neptunia, Neptunia
Pak Kachad

Action: Antipyretic

Taste: Bland

Part Used:

Internal Application: The water mimosa is a type of salad and soup. It is used medicinally to treat fevers and allergic reactions. It has also been shown to have some anticarcinogenic properties. It has also been researched for its use as an anticarcinogen.

Preparation: The young leaves and stems are eaten with chili sauce.

Wild Pepper Leaf, Piper
Chaa phluu

Action: Analgesic, Antispasmodic, Carminative, Diuretic

Taste: Hot

Part Used:

Internal Application: The wild pepper leaf is a herb used for indigestion, to treat flatulence, indigestion, diarrhea, stomach, abdominal discomfort, and symptoms of indigestion. It is employed as a cold remedy, especially in the case of colds.

Preparation: Tea

Topical Application: The wild pepper leaf is well known for being frequently applied to aches, pains, and sore muscles.

Preparation: Apply as poultice, or use in hot compresses (see also information.)

Woolly Grass, Imperata
Yaa Khaa

Action: Antipyretic, Astringent, Diuretic

Taste: Sweet

Part Used:

Internal Application: Woolly grass is used primarily to treat blood in the vomit, urine, or phlegm. It is also used for fevers, urinary tract infections, kidney disease and vaginal discharge. The Hill-Tribes use this grass for kidney problems, kidney and gallbladder stones, sexually transmitted diseases, acne or skin infections.

Preparation: Decoction from 40–50 grams fresh root with meals.

Ylang-Ylang, Perfume Tree, Canaga odorata
Magrut

Action: Blood Tonic, Cardiac, Diuretic

Taste: Aromatic

Part Used: Flower, Leaf, Wood

Internal Application: Ylang-ylang flower is a tonic for the heart and is used traditionally to treat dizziness and fainting spells. It is a tonic for the blood, and it balances the four elements. The leaf and wood are diuretic.

Preparation: Make tea from fresh or dried flowers, or add flowers to sauna or steam bath. (See *Chapter IV*).

Zedoary, Curcumin zedoaria
Khamin Oi

Action: Antiemetic, Antipyretic, Antiseptic, Astringent, Stomachic

Taste: Hot **Part Used:** Rhizome

Internal Application: Related to turmeric, zedoary is used for similar purposes. It is effective against nausea, vomiting, intestinal cramps, irritable bowel, gastritis, and diarrhea, and is often added as an adjuvant to laxative herbs due to its soothing effect on the stomach. It is also effective against fever and is used by Hill-Tribes for dysentery.

Preparation: Decoction

Topical Application: Zedoary is a topical antiseptic used in the Thai tradition and by Hill-Tribes on cuts, wounds, and insect bites.

Preparation: Mash with mortar and pestle; make poultice.

Zerumbet Ginger Zingiber zerumbet
Ka Thue

Action: Analgesic, Antiemetic, Antirheumatic, Stomachic

Taste: Hot

Part Used: Rhizome

Internal Application: Zerumbet ginger has many of the same properties as common ginger, but to a lesser degree. It is used traditionally to treat stomach pain and cramping, as well as food poisoning or allergy, nausea, and vomiting. It can be used successfully to treat irritable bowel, gastritis, and indigestion.

Preparation: Decoction from fresh fire-roasted rhizome. Young shoots and flowers also may be eaten raw or steamed with chili sauce.

Topical Application: A tincture of Zerumbet ginger is applied topically to soothe arthritis pains. With massage, it is said to give especially good results.

Preparation: Soak 2 handfuls of the chopped rhizome in alcohol. Apply as needed with massage.