

Phyllanthus niruri (syn. *Phyllanthus amarus*)



Family: Euphorbiaceae

Common names: Chanca piedra, stone-breaker, dukung anak

Parts used: entire plant

Botanical description

The *Phyllanthus* genus contains over 600 species of shrubs, trees, and annual or biennial herbs distributed throughout the tropics and subtropics.

Phyllanthus niruri is a small erect annual herb growing up to a height of 50 - 70 cm

Leaves: The leaves are bipinnate compound in nature. The leaflets are green, entire and alternately arranged with an elliptical blade, measuring about 6 - 10 mm. The leaflet stalk is absent while the compound leaf petiole is present and is green in colour

Stem: The stem is without hairs, green and erect with spreading branches.

Inflorescence/Flower: Solitary flowers are borne on the underside of the leaves. The bracts are triangular in shape, scaly with each bract holding one flower. There are 2 types of flowers; the male and the female, both of which are very minute, measuring only 1 mm in length. There are 5 corolla lobes, which are cream-green in colour.



This plant tastes very bitter

Active constituents and clinical trials¹

Phyllanthus primarily contains lignans (e.g., phyllanthine and hypophyllanthine), alkaloids, flavonoids (e.g., quercetin), phyllanthin, hypophyllanthin, gallic acid, and ellagic acid. Many of the "active" constituents are attributed to biologically active lignans, glycosides, flavonoids, alkaloids, ellagitannins, and phenylpropanoids found in the leaf, stem, and root



of the plant. Common lipids, sterols, and flavonols also occur in the plant. Securinega-type alkaloids, isobubbialine and epibubbialine, were isolated from the leaves of *Phyllanthus amarus*, as well as the three known alkaloids, phyllanthine, securinine and norsecurinine (Houghton et al., 1996).

Clinical studies have been conducted in Brazil, Germany and China in the 1990s on the use of the herb (and related species) in treating kidney

stones and Hepatitis B infection (HBV). The studies conducted in Brazil by the Paulista School of Medicine in São Paulo in 1990, with humans and rats with kidney stones Nicole Maxwell

¹ The web-site of the International Centre for Science and High Technology, United Nations Industrial Development Organization. http://portal.ics.trieste.it/MAPs/MedicinalPlants_Plant.aspx?id=670

reported in the same year (1990) that Dr. Wolfram Wiemann (of Nuremburg, Germany) treated over 100 kidney stone patients with *Phyllanthus niruri* obtained in Peru and found it to be 94% successful in eliminating stones within a week or two. A Chinese research group in China reported on the positive anti-HBV results using a straight water extract and/or herb powder with human HBV patients in 1994 and 1995. However, more studies are needed to settle the confusing and at time contradicting results from the various studies. It is also pointed by Taylor, 2005, that studies should adopt a standardized format so that the results are comparable and the importance of using the same species for the studies.

Uses

The plant has a wide range of uses².

Main Actions	Other Actions	Standard Dosage
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• expels stones• supports kidneys• increases urination• relieves pain• protects liver• detoxifies liver• reduces spasms• reduces inflammation• kills viruses• clears obstructions• aids digestion• reduces blood sugar• lowers blood pressure• lowers cholesterol	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• kills bacteria• treats malaria• prevents mutation• reduces fever• mildly laxative• expels worms	Whole herb Infusion: 1 cup 2-3 times daily

In Ghana *Phyllanthus niruri* is sold as tea for the treatment of malaria. Dosage as described below.

Dosage (According to Rehema Namyalo in Uganda who uses *phyllanthus* extensively in her herbal clinic)

Make a decoction by boiling one handful of *Phyllanthus niruri* powder in one litre of water for 3 to 5 minutes. An adult patient then takes ½ cup 3 times daily at 8 hourly intervals, and continues for 10 to 14 days, depending on the illness.

Note: depending on the response of patients, for example with kidney problems, this treatment may be continued for up to 28days.

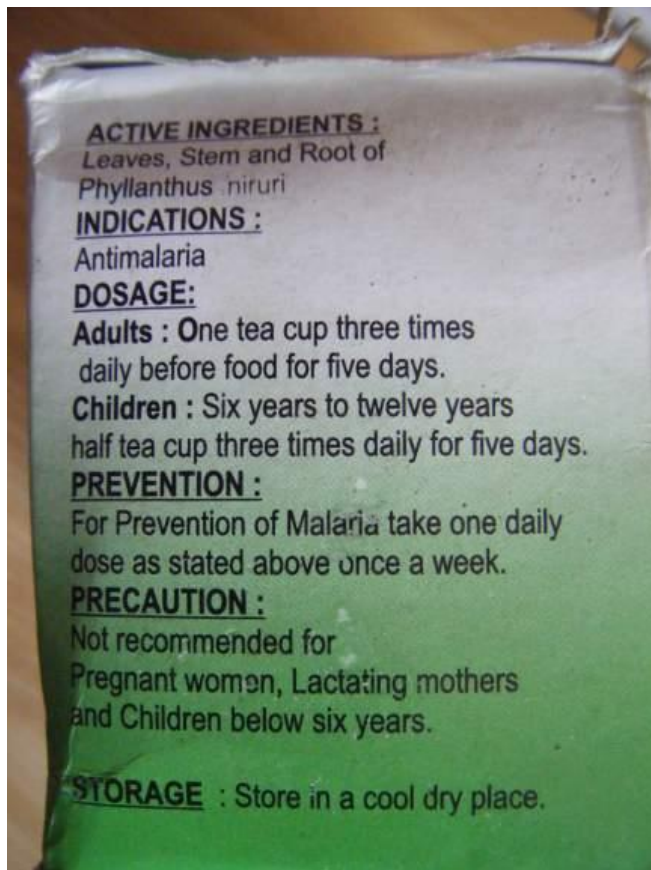
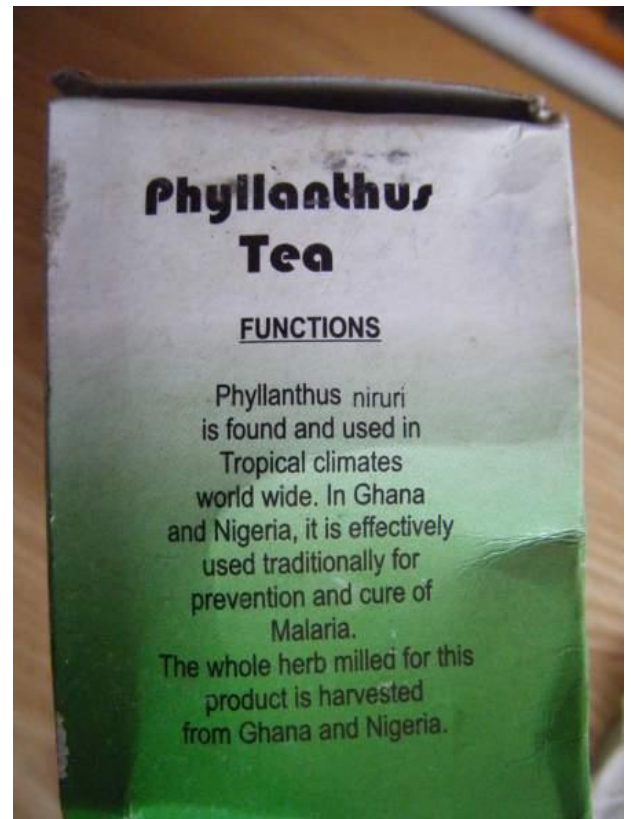
Side effects

When taken in normal dosages the side effects of *Phyllanthus niruri* are said to be minimal. It is, however, recommended that pregnant women should not take this plant, nor people with heart conditions. For more information, see reference 2 below.

Disclaimer: Discover has compiled this information with the best possible interests of its readership at heart. Discover cannot be held responsible for any negative consequence of following any procedure described in this paper.

² The Tropical Plant Database: www.rain-tree.com/chanca.htm

Use of *Phyllanthus niruri* for the treatment of malaria in Ghana



Phyllanthus Tea

ACTIVE INGREDIENTS

Leaves, stem and root of *Phyllanthus niruri*

INDICATIONS: Antimalaria

DOSAGE

Adults: One tea cup three times daily before food for five days.

Children: Six years to twelve years; half tea cup three times daily for five days.

PREVENTION: For prevention of malaria take one daily dose as stated above once a week.

PRECAUTION

Not recommended for pregnant women, lactating mothers and children below six years of age.

STORAGE

Store in a cool dry place.

FUNCTIONS

Phyllanthus niruri is found and used in Tropical climates world wide. In Ghana and Nigeria, it is effectively used traditionally for prevention and cure of Malaria. The whole herb milled for this product is harvested from Ghana and Nigeria.

TO BREW TEA

Boil one sachet in three tea cups of water.

Allow to simmer for ten minutes.

Drink when cooled to desired temperature.

Add honey if desired.

Do not add milk.

Within recommended dose,

Phyllanthus is not toxic and has no known side effects.

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