

Gotu Kola

Botanical Name:

Centella asiatica

Common Names:

Indian pennywort, Brahmi, gotu kola

Parts used:

Fresh and dried aerial parts

Active Components:

The triterpenoid saponins, essential oils, flavonoids, and flavone derivatives

Looks like:

Weedy, creeping, low-growing herb. Has round-lobbed leaves and tiny pink leaves.

Where it's grown:

Gotu kola is indigenous to southeast Asia, India, Sri Lanka, parts of China, the western South Sea Islands, Madagascar, South Africa, southeast U.S., Mexico, Venezuela, Columbia, and eastern South America.



History:

Gotu kola has a long history in the folk medicines of India, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Madagascar. It has been used for generations in India to promote relaxation, improve memory, and aid meditation. In traditional Chinese medicine, the herb is believed to promote longevity. The Chinese name for gotu kola translates to "fountain of youth." A Sri Lankan legend says that elephants have long lives because they eat gotu kola.

Use:

Gotu kola is taken internally as a stimulant; to increase fertility; and to treat hypertension, cancer, hepatic disorders, leprosy, and varicose veins. It reduces stress and fatigue, improves memory and learning ability, reduces anxiety and depression. Gotu kola also may be taken internally to treat chronic interstitial cystitis, cellulite, and periodontal disease. It may be used externally to promote wound healing and to treat skin disorders such as psoriasis, eczema, and keloids.