

Gymnema or Gurmar

Latin Name(s): *Gymnema sylvestre*

English Name(s): *Gymnema*

Sanskrit / Indian Name (s): Gurmar, Meshashringi



Cure for: The Hindi word gur-mar literally means sugar destroyer and the plant has been used as a naturopathic treatment for diabetes for nearly two millennia.

The leaves and roots of the Gurmar contain an active ingredient, gymnemic acid that helps to lower and balance blood sugar levels. Gurmar also alters the taste of sugar when it is placed in the mouth, thus it is also used to fight sugar cravings.

This effect, however, is short-lived, lasting a mere fifteen minutes. It is also claimed that the herb actually reduces cravings for sugar by blocking sugar receptors in the tongue, but no scientific studies have supported this hypothesis. Extracts of *Gymnema* is not only claimed to curb sweet tooth but also for treatment of as varied problems as hyperglycemia, obesity, high cholesterol levels, anemia and digestion. It is currently being used in an all natural medication for diabetes with other ingredients such as cinnamon, chromium, zinc, biotin, banaba, huckleberry and bitter melon.