

SALSAPARRILHA

Scientific name: *Smilax sp*^(1,2).

Family: *Liliaceae*^(1,2).

Popular names: salsaparrilha⁽¹⁾.

Used parts: the dried roots^(1,2).

Botanical characteristics: The species are evergreen shrubs or semi shrubs with climbing branches and tendrils. They have a short, gnarled, perennial, creeping or ascending rhizome with numerous long roots stretching over many meters. The branched, thorny, nodular stem has the thickness of an arm and is yellowish-green. The leaves are in 2 rows. They are alternate, simple and often hardy, with 3, occasionally 5, reticulately joined main ribs. The leaf sheaths are ovate and cordate, sagittate and petiolate, or often stipulelike. They turn into climbing tendrils above and break off at this point when they die. The flowers are white to pale green, yellow or brown. They are dioecious, usually in axillary cymes or racemes, and contain 6 petals in 2 circles. The ovate to lanceolate tepals are curved outward. The male flowers have 6 stamens with thick filaments and anthers, which are fused at the base of the petals. The female flowers have 6, sometimes only 3, staminoids. The ovate ovary has 3 carpels, each with 1 to 2 atropic ovules and with an almost sessile, bent-back, 3-lobed stigma. The fruit is a globular, red, blue or berry with 1 to 6 seeds⁽²⁾.

Habitat: Mexico, Peru, Brazil⁽¹⁾.

Chemical composition: parrilin, similasaponin, sarsaponin, starch, resin, sitosterol, stigmasterol, essential oil, calcium oxalate⁽¹⁾.

Indications: irritating effect on the skin and the strong diuretic and diaphoretic effect in high doses, as well as its effect as an emulsifier and foam stabilizer⁽²⁾. In homeopathy is used for itching skin rashes, rheumatism and inflammation of the urinary organs⁽²⁾.

Dose:

- Powder: 0,3 to 1,5 g drug⁽²⁾;
- Tea: 3 cups daily with meals⁽²⁾;
- Cold water extract: 500 ml mornings and evenings⁽²⁾;
- Decoction: 1 to 5 g 3 times daily⁽²⁾;
- Tincture: 5 to 15 g per day⁽²⁾;
- Liquid extract: 8 to 15 ml⁽²⁾.

Others informations:

- The extract of *Smilax china* were demonstrated to inhibit the mutagenicity of benzo[a]pyrene completely⁽³⁾.
- The aqueous extract from *Rhizoma Smilacis Glabrae* (RSG) may act as a therapeutic agent on immunoinflammatory diseases thought selectively suppressing and modulating cellular immune response involved in inflammation. These characteristics of RSG in addition to its low toxicity to organs may be highly advantageous o the long-term treatment of chronic immunoinflammatory diseases including adjuvant arthritis⁽⁴⁾.

References:

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