Malaysian Herbs

By Indu Bala Jaganath and Ng Lean Teik, in collaboration with the Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute (MARDI), in the book “Herbs – The Green Pharmacy of Malaysia”

Malaysia has a living heritage of various herbal species. Out of this diversity, many have been scientifically proven to contain medicinal and healing properties.

SWEET FLAG/ CALAMUS ROOT
Local name: Jerangau

Sweet flag has a long history of medicinal use and is widely employed in modern herbal medicine as an aromatic stimulant and a mild tonic.

In Malaysia, it is cultivated in backyard gardens of both the Malays and the Indians, where it is mainly used externally as a poultice or as a lotion. This plant has been used in destroying fleas, lice and white ants.

Decoction of the plant with ginger is used for treating fever and colds. The juice of the plant is used for treating fluxes. Poultice prepared from the plant and vinegar is used to rub over the body after confinement. A decoction prepared from the plant is taken after confinement as a tonic. Lotion prepared from the mixture of the plant and ginger is used for treating rheumatism and sore eyes.

ALOE VERA
Local name: Lidah buaya

Due to its exceptional healing properties, aloe vera is also known as “the miracle plant”. It is also one of the most important crude drugs of history and is still extensively used in modern medicine. It contains the same painkilling and anti-inflammatory compound as in Aspirin, which helps to relieve pain, heal minor burns, cuts, etc.

It is used for treating wounds, fever, swellings and put on the abdomen of women after confinement. The mixture of sugar with sap obtained from heated leaves is taken for asthma. The mucilaginous flesh and the sap of the leaves are used for poulticing burns. The watery extract is used as a hair tonic. It is also used in cosmetics for decreasing wrinkles and other skin problems.

KING OF BITTER
Local name: Hempedu bumi, Pokok cerita

This herb is indigenous to Southeast Asia, China and India. A decoction of the leaves is often taken orally to alleviate diabetes and high blood pressure. A leaf poultice is applied topically to relieve itchy skin and insect bites. It is also used to treat asthma, coronary arteriosclerosis, angina pectoris, malaria and fever. Decoction made from the plant is taken to lower hypertension. Even though it tastes bitter, many people drink it as a tonic, for treating tonsillitis (sore throat), fever, flu and chest pains, and it is also used as a painkiller against snakebites. When boiled with misai kucing, the water is believed to be effective in treating diabetes. The juice of hempedu bumi is either taken or applied to areas of snakebites and stings of insects.
ASIATIC PENNYWORT/GOTU KOLA
Local name: Pegaga

This plant and its preparation have been in use since ancient times especially in the Ayurvedic medical system of India and in the folk medicine of China and Madagascar. It is recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as one of the most important medicinal plant species to be conserved and cultivated.

Pegaga is commonly consumed as a vegetable (ulam) among Malays, as a cooling drink by the Chinese and as a brain tonic by the Indians. Leaves are consumed either raw, as ulam or cooked. The Malays use the decoction of the leaves to treat leprosy and rheumatism. Infusion of the toasted leaves or juice extracted from the leaves, together with food, is used to relieve minor dysentery in children. Some people also use a poultice of the leaves to treat sores, or pound the leaves into a paste to apply it to the body for fever. Juice from the roots is used to clean ulcerous wounds. The leaves are also believed to be good for mothers who have just given birth and for preserving youthfulness. Because of its bitter taste, the paste and juice are always taken along with equal quantities of honey. When fresh leaves are chewed in excess, it is reported to cause dizziness.

CEYLON CINNAMON
Local name: Kayu manis

Cinnamon, one of the most ancient spices, is indigenous to Sri Lanka. The bark is used in domestic culinary on a worldwide basis, especially for its flavouring properties.

The plant possesses antifungal and antibacterial actions. The bark is used for dyspepsia, flatulence, diarrhoea, dysentery, vomiting, bronchitis, gangrene of the lungs and phthisis. The bruised bark is steamed and used externally as a fomentation on boils and abscesses. The oil is a rubefacient and is a useful application for acute and chronic rheumatism. Cinnamon is also given for cramps of the stomach, toothache and paralysis of the tongue and used in massive doses in the treatment of cancer.

TURMERIC
Local name: Kunyit

Turmeric is considered one of the most valuable herbs to mankind. It is an excellent natural antibiotic and is also used to strengthen digestion.

Turmeric prepared with oil is used to smoothen rough skin, and with lime, it is used to treat bruises, sprains and wounds. A decoction made from turmeric is used as a cooling eye-wash. Turmeric boiled with milk and sugar is a popular remedy for colds. When mixed with sesame oil and honey, it is used as a tonic. It is often prescribed for complaints of urinary-genital system and to aid digestion. A poultice of the rhizome is applied to the breast for stimulating milk flow. The underground stem is used to treat irregular menstruation. It is also taken to stimulate the production of red blood cells, dissolve blood clots, arrest bleeding, and treat jaundice, stomach problems, pains in the abdomen, chest and back. The mixture of the plant with garlic or onions is used for treating flatulence in children, diarrhoea and dysentery.

Note:
Decoction: Solutions prepared by boiling herbs
Poultice: Soft pulp
Rubefacient: An external skin application
GOUDAIRE NATURAL AIR REVITALISING SYSTEM

How does one improve indoor air quality? An air purifier called the GoodAire Natural Air Revitalising System may be the answer. It claims to kill bacteria that causes lung infection and the legionnaire disease, and helps to eliminate tobacco smoke and other unpleasant odours.

The GoodAire Natural Air Revitalising System works on a simple basis. A concentrate, which contains botanical extracts from lavender, eucalyptus and other plants, is dissolved in water. The concentrated solution is then drawn into the funnel and sprayed for maximum contact with air that is drawn in. This creates a “scrubbing effect” on the air and allows the botanical extracts in the solution to neutralise odour, bacteria and other harmful contaminants in the air.

The air purifier is recommended for those who spend a lot of time in air-conditioned environments where Sick Building Syndrome is a potential hazard.

Contact: 03-77294408

ACTIMO HEXAGONAL WATER SYSTEM

Water is composed of one molecule of oxygen and two hydrogen molecules. When these molecules combine, they make a cluster. This cluster is formed along chains of pentagonal and hexagonal structures depending on their coherence. Hexagonal water, formed by six molecules is said to be the smallest and most stable cluster. It is said to be easy to penetrate into cells and help transport toxins and wastes from cells. Healthy cells contribute to good health. The Actimo hexagonal water system features an electric pitcher which can produce hexagonal water. The pitcher is equipped with strong complex-field magnets and a ring containing tiny mineral cubes at the base of the pitcher. As water is rotated inside the pitcher, it is magnetised, ionised and thereby restructured into hexagonal clusters. This patented hexagonal water system is imported from Korea and sold via multi-level marketing in Malaysia.

Contact: 012-5067002

THE SNORE STOPPER

The Snore Stopper is an innovative healthcare device which could put your snoring problems at rest and allows you to enjoy a good night’s sleep.

The electronic tool is designed to reduce snoring frequency and volume by a biofeedback process. An electronic gentle pulse will be sent automatically to stimulate the snorer’s skin once the device detects snoring. When the brain senses the stimulation, the snorer will reduce his snores by increasing the muscle tones of the throat or altering the sleeping position. The process results in a subconscious reaction without waking the snorer or disturbing the brain that controls his sleep.

The Snore Stopper has energy-saving features and boasts a hi-tech build-in electronic biosensor which enables accurate detection of snoring.

Contact: 03-90587077

NATUREX FOOD PRODUCT

Naturex is a natural food product which provides high-quality nutrients. Invented by Dr. James Hwang, a medical practitioner from Korea, Naturex contains an assortment of 30 natural whole ingredients like cereals, mushrooms, seaweed and vegetables.

The product is prepared using freeze-drying methods, where the ingredients are frozen under pressure to temperature below -40’, and then powdered into a finely milled product and packed in sachets.

Naturex is able to retain the essential nutrients in its ingredients, as they are uncooked. Uncooked foods have 5-6 times the nutritional value of those that are cooked, as cooking destroys the vital elements in foods, such as minerals and amino acids.

Those who may benefit from Naturex include those who frequently skip breakfast and have difficulty losing weight. It can also help adults with various diseases like cancer or diabetes as they need a large intake of nutrients which do not burden their digestive system.

Contact: 03-64117610/1

Health Shop features new and innovative health products. Manufacturers and distributors can send information and brochures on such products to Smile. The information published will be at the discretion of the editor.
Are you looking for ways to live a happier and more fulfilling life? If your answer is 'yes', this book could be of help! The book is written for you to regain more of your inherent wealth and happiness, and also to help you live a simple, healthy and meaningful life – a life that many are longing for but only few believe in its possibility.

The book features many interesting topics on living effectively with yourself, establishing financial freedom, managing your emotions wisely and using your mind to leverage your productivity.

This book expounds the belief that lack of water in the body – chronic dehydration – is the root cause of many painful degenerative diseases, asthma, allergies, hypertension, excess body weight and some emotional problems, including depression. It explains the damaging effects of dehydration in the fourth dimension of time.

The book also educates readers on using water to prevent and reverse premature aging, cure hypertension without diuretics or other medications, and lose weight effortlessly and naturally.

The author captures the 'magic' of a positive mental attitude in an easy to read A – Z list. She inspires her readers to bounce back from the gloom of adversity. Readers who read from cover to cover cannot help but smile and will end up nodding their heads to episodes that touch their hearts.

The book is a classic in that it has proven to be extremely popular not only with practising Buddhists who are born into the religion, but also those who are really interested in knowing what the Buddha taught. Its popularity can be attested by the fact that it has run into four editions and has been translated into Spanish, Dutch, Singhalese, Nepali, Parshi, Burmese, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese and Indonesian.

This revised volume covers almost every aspect of Buddhism, and is written in clear and precise language which will appeal not only to the casual reader but also to the intellectual student of the Dhamma.

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