

Acacia catechu Willd.

Family : Fabaceae

Group : 6. Star trees, Anti hypertensive, Anti-arthritic/anti-rheumatic/anti-inflammatory

Parts Used : Bark, Heart wood

Vernacular Names

English : Cutch tree

Malayalam : Karingali

Hindi : Khair, Khaira

Sanskrit : Khadirah

Bengali : Kuth

Kannada : Kaggali

Tamil : Karumkali

Telugu : Sandra, Khandiramamu



Botany: Moderate sized deciduous tree, 9-12 m in height with dark greyish or brown rough bark and hooked short spines.

• **Leaves:** Bipinnately compound, leaflets 30-50 pairs, main rachis pubescent with a large conspicuous gland near the middle of the rachis.

• **Flowers:** Pale yellow, sessile in peduncled axillary spikes.

• **Fruits:** Flat brown pods, shiny and with a triangular beak at the apex and narrowed at the base. Seeds are 3-10 per pod

Properties: Heart wood is bitter, astringent, acrid, cooling, depurative, antidysentric, appetiser, haemostatic, antihypertensive, aphrodisiac, anthelmintic, antidermatic, antidiabetic, anti-inflammatory and expectorant. The bark is anthelmintic, antipyretic, anti-inflammatory and antileprotic. The flowers are antigonorrhoeic

Chemical constituents: The main constituent of heartwood is catechin and catechu tannic acid. It also contains kaempferol, dihydro kaempferol, taxifolin, iso rhamnetin, (+)- afzelchin, quercetin, (-)epi-catechin, (-)catechin, fisetin, quercetagenin and (+)- cyanidanol.

Uses:

- Blood purifier and against leprosy and leucoderma.
- Flowers useful for the treatment of catarrh, cough, pruritus, skin diseases, foul ulcers and wounds.
- Tree bark is useful in melancholia, conjunctivitis and haemoptysis.
- The gummy extract of the wood is used for skin diseases.

Formulations: Khadinarishtam

Agrotechnology

Soil and climate: Hot tropical climate. It is suited for hilly areas and rocky places up to an elevation of 2000 m aMSL. It grows in all types of soils except waterlogged situations.

Propagation: By seeds. 6 hours of water soaking and sown and it takes 1 month for germination. At four-leaf stage, seedlings are planted in polybags. Two months old seedlings from the polybags are used for transplanting.

Transplanting: Pits of size 50 cm³ are taken at a distance of 5 m between plants. Planting out is done in July-August.

Aftercare: Pruning of branches and tender shoots developing from the base of the plant can be done from second year onwards. Tree is to be grown as single stemmed one.

Pests and diseases: Ganoderma root rot due to *Ganoderma lucidum* causes serious root rot mortality. Polyporus root rot caused by *Polyporus gilous*, a wound parasite attacking roots and tree bases causing white spongy rot is also common.

Harvesting: Flowering and fruiting commence from the fourth year onwards. At the end of the tenth year, the tree can be cut and heartwood collected.

