



Egyptian Herbal Monograph

Egyptian Herbal Monograph

Volume 2

Medicinal plants used in Egypt

Egyptian Drug Authority (EDA)

2026





Egyptian Herbal Monograph

Medicinal Plants Used in Egypt

***Aloe vera* and *Aloe* (various species, mainly *Aloe ferox* and its hybrids) صبار**

1. Names & Synonyms (1)

***Aloe vera* L.**

Syns.: *Aloe barbadensis* Mill., *Aloe perfoliata* var. *vera* L., *Aloe barbadensis* var. *chinensis* Haw., *Aloe chinensis* Loudon, *Aloe elongata* Murray, *Aloe flava* Pers., *Aloe indica* Royle, *Aloe lanzae* Tod., *Aloe maculata* Forssk., *Aloe perfoliata* var. *barbadensis* (Mill.) Aiton, *Aloe rubescens* DC.

Family: Asphodelaceae

Arabic: Sabbara صباره, Sabر صبر (2,3), Sabbar صبار (4,5).

English name: Aloes, Barbados aloe (6, 7), True Aloe, West Indian Aloe (8), Curaçao aloe (2).

***Aloe ferox* Mill.**

Syns.: *Aloe perfoliata* var. *ferox* (Mill.) Aiton, *Busipho ferox* (Mill.) Salisb., *Pachidendron ferox* (Mill.) Haw.

Family: Asphodelaceae

English name: Aloes (6), Cape Aloe (8).



2. Parts used for medicinal purpose

Leaves (2,6,9,10)

3. Major chemical constituents

Leaves: (11-14)

- **Polysaccharides:** as acetylated mannan (acemannan), glucomannan, arabinogalactan, galactogalacturan, and glucogalactomannan.
- **Phenolics:** anthraquinones: mainly barbaloin (aloin A & aloin B), emodin, aloe-emodin and their glycosides/ anthrones; chromones (as aloesin & aloeresin A) and flavonoids.
- **Others:** proteins, lectins, minerals, amino acids and vitamins.

Gel: (15)

- Polysaccharides (acemannan), vitamins (water- and fat-soluble vitamins), minerals, enzymes and amino acids.

4. Medicinal Uses (Indications)

- A) Stimulant laxative for short-term relief of occasional constipation (2,6,8,16).
- B) Demulcent; helps soothe irritation/inflammation of the gastrointestinal tract (8).
- C) Emollient; relieves minor wounds, inflammatory skin disorders and minor skin irritations including abrasions, burns, radiation dermatitis, eczema and psoriasis (2,8,16,17).

5. Herbal preparations correlated to medicinal use

- 1) Dried juice (Latex) (2,8).
- 2) Dry juice (Latex) extract, extraction solvent water (6,8).
- 3) Gel (2,8,17).



Herbal preparations (1-3) are in pharmaceutical dosage forms. The pharmaceutical form should be described by the pharmacopoeia full standard term.

6. Posology and method of administration correlated to medicinal use

Oral

Preparation 1

Indication A

Adolescents, adults and elderly (2):

Single dose: Herbal preparation equivalent to 10 – 30mg hydroxyanthracene derivatives, calculated as aloin, once daily at night.

Preparation 2

Indication A

Adolescents, adults and elderly (6,8):

Single dose: Herbal preparation equivalent to 10 – 30mg hydroxyanthracene derivatives, calculated as aloin, once daily at night.

Preparation 3 (8,17)

Indication B

Adolescents, adults and elderly

7.5 – 200 ml or 7.5 – 200 g fresh leaf gel, per day (8).

Duration of use:

- Not to be used for more than one week. Usually, it is sufficient to take this medicinal product up to 2-3 times during that week. Use beyond this duration should be under medical supervision (6).
- Allow at least 6 to 12 hours for laxative effect to occur (6,8).

Method of administration: Oral use.



Direction(s) for use:

- Powder dosage forms: Mix with liquid before use (8).
- The correct individual dose is the smallest required producing a comfortable soft-formed motion (6,8).
- Take a few hours before or after taking other medications (8).

Topical

Preparation 3

Indication C

Children 2-11 years, adolescents 12-17 years, adults and elderly:

Preparations containing 10–70% fresh gel (2).

Duration of use:

Apply to affected area, 1–2 times daily or as needed (8,10,16)

Method of administration: Topical use.

7. Contraindications

- Hypersensitivity to the active substance(s) and to other plants of the same family.

For oral use (2,6)

- The use in children under 12 years of age is contraindicated.
- Cases of intestinal obstructions and stenosis, atony, appendicitis, inflammatory bowel diseases (e.g. Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis), abdominal pain of unknown origin, severe dehydration state with water and electrolyte depletion.



8. Special warnings and precautions for use (2,6,8)

- If the symptoms worsen during the use of the medicinal product, a doctor or a pharmacist should be consulted.
- Long-term use of stimulant laxatives should be avoided, as it may lead to impaired function of the intestine and dependence on laxatives. If laxatives are needed every day the cause of the constipation should be investigated. Aloe preparations should only be used if a therapeutic effect cannot be achieved by a change of diet or the administration of bulk forming agents.
- Like all laxatives, aloes should not be taken by patients suffering from fecal impaction and undiagnosed, acute or persistent gastrointestinal complaints, e.g. abdominal pain, nausea and vomiting unless advised by a doctor because these symptoms can be signs of potential or existing intestinal blockage (ileus).
- Patients with kidney disorders should be aware of possible electrolyte imbalance.
- Rectal bleeding or failure to have a bowel movement within 24 hours after use of a laxative may indicate a serious condition.
- A doctor or a pharmacist should be consulted before using preparations containing aloe gel in case of diabetic patients (8).

9. Interactions with other medicinal products and other forms of interaction (2,6,8)

- Hypokalaemia (resulting from long-term laxative abuse) potentiates the action of cardiac glycosides and interacts with antiarrhythmic medicinal products.
- Concomitant use with diuretics, heart medications, adrenal corticosteroids and liquorice preparations may enhance loss of potassium.



10. Fertility, pregnancy and lactation

For oral use (6):

- The use during pregnancy is contraindicated because experimental data concerning a genotoxic risk of several anthranoids, e.g. emodin and aloe-emodin.
- The use during lactation is contraindicated because after administration of other anthranoids, active metabolites, such as rhein, were excreted in breast milk in small amounts.

For topical use (9,16):

- Topical use during pregnancy and lactation is not thought to be of concern.
- No fertility data are available.

11. Effects on ability to drive and use machines

- No studies on the effect on the ability to drive and use machines have been performed (6).

12. Undesirable effects (6)

- Hypersensitivity reactions.
- Gastrointestinal disorders.
- Aloes may produce abdominal pain, spasm and passage of liquid stools, particularly in patients with irritable colon.
- Kidney and urinary tract symptoms.
- Long term use may lead to water and electrolyte imbalance and may result in albuminuria and haematuria.



- Chronic use may cause pigmentation of the intestinal mucosa (*Pseudomelanosis coli*), which usually recedes when the patient stops taking the preparation.
- Yellow or reddish brown (pH dependent) discoloration of urine by metabolites, which is not clinically significant, may occur during the treatment.
- If other adverse reactions not mentioned above occur, a doctor or a pharmacist should be consulted.

13. Overdose (2,6)

- The major symptoms are griping pain and severe diarrhea with consequent losses of fluid and electrolytes. Treatment should be supportive with generous amounts of fluid. Electrolytes, especially potassium, should be monitored. This is especially important in the elderly.
- Chronic ingested overdoses of anthranoid containing medicinal products may lead to toxic hepatitis.
- Abdominal spasms and pain may occur after even a single dose. Overdose can lead to colicky abdominal spasms and pain, as well as the formation of thin, watery stools.

14. Relevant biological activities

-

15. Additional information

-

16. Date of compilation/last revision

11/05/2026.



References

1.	www.powo.science.kew.org
2.	WHO Monographs on Selected Medicinal Plants (1999). Monographs on Selected Medicinal Plants, 1 , 33-42.
3.	Provençal, P. (2010). The Arabic Plant Names of Peter Forsskål's Flora Aegyptiaco-Arabica. The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters.
4.	African Traditional Medicine – Medicinal Plants Standards: <i>Aloe vera</i> 956-1:2015. (2015).
5.	African Pharmacopeia (1985). Inter African Committee on Medicinal Plants and African Traditional Medicine. Organization of African Unity, Scientific Technical & Research Commission. ISBN: 9782453080, 9789782453082.
6.	European Union herbal monograph on <i>Aloe barbadensis</i> Mill. and on <i>Aloe</i> (various species, mainly <i>Aloe ferox</i> Mill. and its hybrids), folii succus siccatus (2016). EMA/HMPC/625788/2015. Committee on Herbal Medicinal Products (HMPC).
7.	Braun, L. and Cohen, M. (2009). Herbs and natural Supplements: an Evidence-Based Guide, 3 rd ed., ISBN 9780729539104.
8.	Natural Health Product. <i>Aloe vera</i> Leaf Gel Oral (2025). Health Canada. https://webprod.hcsc.gc.ca/nhpid-bdipsn/atReq?atid=aloe.gel&lang=eng Natural Health Product. Aloe – <i>Aloe vera</i> / <i>Aloe ferox</i> Oral (2025). Health Canada. https://webprod.hc-sc.gc.ca/nhpid-bdipsn/dblimages/mono_aloe--oral_english.pdf Natural Health Product. Aloe – <i>Aloe vera</i> / <i>Aloe</i> Topical (2025). Health Canada. https://webprod.hc-sc.gc.ca/nhpid-bdipsn/dblimages/mono_aloe--topical_english.pdf
9.	Barnes, J., Anderson, L. A. and Phillipson, J. D. (2007). Herbal Medicines, 3 rd edition. Published by the Pharmaceutical Press. ISBN 978 0 85369 623 0.
10.	Kraft, K. and Hobbs, C. (2004). Pocket Guide to Herbal Medicine. Stuttgart; New York: Thieme. ISBN 3-13-126991-X (GTV), ISBN 1-58890-063-0 (TNY).
11.	Dulmini, A.D.T. and Perera, S.D. (2025). Phytochemical constituents and medicinal uses of <i>Aloe vera</i> . <i>Chemistry in Sri Lanka</i> , 42 (1), 11-16.



هَيْئَةُ الدَّوَاءِ الْمَصْرِئِيَّةِ

Egyptian Herbal Monograph

12.	Kim, S.H., Shim, K.S., Song, Y., Kim, K., Park, C.S. and Lee, C.K. (2023). Pharmacological and therapeutic activities of <i>Aloe vera</i> and its major active constituent Acemannan. <i>Food Suppl. Biomater. Health.</i> 3(2):e8. https://doi.org/10.52361/fsbh.2023.3.e8 .
13.	Sharma, P. and Kaur, R. (2026). A comprehensive review of <i>Aloe vera</i> : Composition, properties, processing, and applications. <i>The Natural Products Journal</i> , 16(3), e22103155339416.
14.	Nalimu, F., Oloro, J., Kahwa, I. and Ogwang, P.E. (2021). Review on the phytochemistry and toxicological profiles of <i>Aloe vera</i> and <i>Aloe ferox</i> . <i>Futur J. Pharm. Sci.</i> , 7(1), 145. doi: 10.1186/s43094-021-00296-2.
15.	Hamman, J.H. (2008). Composition and applications of <i>Aloe vera</i> leaf gel. <i>Molecules</i> , 13(8), 1599-1616. doi: 10.3390/molecules13081599.
16.	Edwards, S. E., Rocha, I. D. C., Williamson, E. M. and Heinrich, M. (2015). <i>Phytopharmacy: An Evidence-Based Guide to Herbal Medicinal Products</i> . 1 st edition. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd. 978-1-118-54356-6.
17.	Spiteri, M. (2011). <i>Herbal monographs including herbal medicinal products and food supplements</i> . Department of Pharmacy, University of Malta. Set and printed by Print Right Ltd, Qormi.