

KACIP FATIMAH

Scientific name : *Labisia pumila* Benth.
Common name : Selusuh Fatimah
Local name : Kacip fatimah, Kacip siti fatimah
Family : Myrsinaceae



Introduction

Kacip fatimah is one of the most popular and potent ingredient used in traditional herbal preparation or 'jamus' for afterbirth care. Kacip Fatimah is traditionally used to maintain a healthy female reproductive system, to help tighten and lubricate, and to enhance sexual function. Kacip Fatimah is rich in phytoestrogen and isoflavones, that may ease menopausal symptoms. In Malaysia, *Labisia pumila* is popularly known locally as "Selusuh Fatimah" (literally Fatimah's childbirth medicine) and "Kacip Fatimah" (Fatimah's betel scissors). The *Labisia pumila* roots were found to contain a benzoquinone derivative and mixture of resorcinol derivatives.

Plant Description

Kacip fatimah is a herbaceous shrub with creeping rhizomes. Their leaves are more or less upright and dark green with lighter shade of green at its margin. The petioles are relatively short and slightly flattened. The stem erect, dark brown in color with distinct scars of fallen leaves. The nodes of the stem are capable of rooting and roots can be seen protruding out of the older nodes.

Plant habit

Plant thrives in shady places. Open sunlight or even partial shade can be harmful to the establishment and growth of this plant. This is a relatively slow growing herb. It is normally propagated through seeds in the nursery under high humidity and shade .

Plants parts used : Whole herb

Uses in traditional medicine

Paste prepared from the leaves and coconut oil is rubbed on baby's abdomen to relieve stomach discomfort. Kacip Fatimah has been traditionally used by the Malay women for many generations in childbirth in inducing and easing delivery, as a post partum medication to help the birth channel, to regain body strength, regulate menstrual cycle and avoid painful and to alleviate menopausal symptoms. The plant is traditionally boiled and the water extraction is taken as a drink. Other traditional uses include treating dysentery, rheumatism, and gonorrhoea. This plant will also help to firm the abdominal muscles. Scientific studies found that the medicinal properties and biological activities of Kacip Fatimah are due to the presence of phytoestrogen (plant estrogen) that is naturally found in this plant.