



Ethnopharmacological Note

A novel formulation for use of *Tamarindus indica* fruits to treat blood dysentery

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Tamarindus indica L. is a leguminous plant belonging to the Fabaceae family and is indigenous to tropical Africa but found in abundance in Bangladesh. The fruits are consumed orally in both the ripe and unripe forms. In English, the plant is known as tamarind and in Bengali as tetul. The tree is considered to possess medicinal value, particularly its fruits, which are used traditionally in India and Bangladesh to treat abdominal pains, diarrhea, and dysentery (Kuru 2014). Ripe fruits are reportedly used in Narayanganj district, Bangladesh, to treat constipation, diarrhea, dysentery, loss of appetite, and chronic fever (Karim et al., 2011). In Dhamrai sub-district of Dhaka district, Bangladesh, leaves are used to treat dysentery and burning sensations during urination (Rahmatullah et al., 2009). The use of *Tamarindus indica* ripe fruits for treatment of dysentery is not new but the formulation as documented in the present survey appears to be novel. Our informant was Nasrin Begum, female, and practicing in Dhaka City, Bangladesh. In her formulation, she used ripe fruits of the plant (the plant has to be at least 15 years old), which fruits have been maintained in a cold place (preferentially refrigerated) for at least 7-8 years. After discarding the seeds, pulp of the fruit was made into a paste with ripe fruits of *Musa sapientum* (banana) in equal amounts and some butter. The paste was orally taken for three days in the morning on an empty stomach. The practitioner claimed full cure following the treatment. Dysentery (occasionally described as diarrhea with blood) is extremely common in Bangladesh and may be due to bacterial or amoebic infections. As such, a simple cure can be an effective means to control the disease.

Key words: *Tamarindus indica*, dysentery

Declaration of conflict of interest

We have no conflict of interest to declare.

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Figure 1. *Tamarindus indica*