

***Ficus elastica* Roxb. ex Hornem.**

Family: Moraceae

Bengali/tribal name: Rabar gachh

English name: Rubber tree

Ficus elastica, commonly known as the rubber plant or rubber tree, is primarily grown as an ornamental plant but has also been used in traditional medicine for various purposes.

Here are some of its reported medicinal uses:



1. **Air Purification:** While not a direct medicinal use, *Ficus elastica* is known for its ability to purify indoor air by removing toxins such as formaldehyde and benzene. This can contribute to a healthier indoor environment, potentially reducing the risk of respiratory issues and other health problems.
2. **Wound Healing:** In traditional medicine, latex obtained from the rubber tree has been used topically to promote wound healing. The latex contains compounds with antimicrobial properties that help prevent infections and reduce inflammation, facilitating the natural healing process of cuts, burns, and wounds.
3. **Anti-inflammatory Effects:** *Ficus elastica* latex is believed to have anti-inflammatory properties, which may help reduce inflammation associated with conditions such as arthritis, rheumatism, and skin irritations. Topical application of the latex may provide relief from pain and swelling.
4. **Gastrointestinal Health:** The latex of *Ficus elastica* has been used in traditional medicine to address gastrointestinal issues such as diarrhea, dysentery, and stomachaches. It is believed to have astringent properties that help reduce inflammation in the digestive tract, alleviate diarrhea, and promote bowel regularity.
5. **Respiratory Support:** Some traditional medicinal practices involve using *Ficus elastica* latex to alleviate respiratory symptoms such as coughs and bronchial congestion. Its expectorant properties may help loosen phlegm and facilitate easier breathing.

6. **Oral Health:** In certain cultures, latex from the rubber tree has been used as a natural remedy for oral hygiene. It is believed to have antimicrobial properties that help inhibit bacterial growth in the mouth, reducing the risk of dental issues such as gum disease and tooth decay.
7. **Skin Disorders:** *Ficus elastica* latex has been used topically in traditional medicine to treat various skin conditions, including dermatitis, eczema, and fungal infections. Its antimicrobial and anti-inflammatory properties may help soothe skin irritations, reduce itching, and promote skin healing.

While *Ficus elastica* has a history of traditional medicinal use, scientific research on its specific medicinal properties and safety profile is limited. As with any herbal remedy, it's important to consult with a healthcare professional before using *Ficus elastica* for medicinal purposes, especially if you have any underlying health conditions or are taking medications.