



## PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Gotu Kola

This information describes the common uses of Gotu Kola, how it works, and its possible side effects.

Tell your healthcare providers about any dietary supplements you're taking, such as herbs, vitamins, minerals, and natural or home remedies. This will help them manage your care and keep you safe.

## What is it?

Only a few studies suggest that gotu kola may be helpful for wound healing or poor circulation. Larger studies that confirm such results are needed.

Gotu kola is a plant that contains many biologically active compounds. Although this botanical is popular in traditional medicines, it has mostly been studied in the lab. A variety of properties have been described, including improved wound healing and anti-inflammatory effects.

Only a few studies have been conducted in humans. Some

data suggest gotu kola can decrease venous pressure in people with venous insufficiency, speed wound healing, relieve anxiety, or improve cognition. However, there is insufficient evidence to support its use for any of these conditions.

## **What are the potential uses and benefits?**

- **To lower high blood pressure**

Several clinical trials suggest that gotu kola can reduce venous hypertension in patients with chronic venous insufficiency, but there is no evidence that this herb can treat typical (arterial) high blood pressure.

- **To treat chronic venous insufficiency**

Several clinical trials suggest benefit.

- **To treat wounds or burns**

Only a few lab and human studies suggest that gotu kola might reduce inflammation and speed wound healing. However, a topical cream did not prevent or delay radiation dermatitis in breast cancer patients undergoing treatment. Additional studies are needed.

- **To improve cognitive function**

A preliminary study suggests benefit, but a meta-analysis did not find strong enough evidence to support the use of gotu kola for cognitive function improvement. Larger well-designed studies are needed.

## What are the side effects?

- Skin rash
- Liver toxicity

## What else do I need to know?

### Do Not Take if:

- You are taking CYP450 substrate drugs: Lab studies suggest gotu kola may increase the risk of side effects of these drugs. Clinical relevance has yet to be determined.

### Special Point:

- Gotu kola should not be confused with kolanut. Gotu kola does not contain caffeine and has not been shown to have stimulant properties.
- Depending on where gotu kola is grown, the amount of active compounds in this herb can vary widely.

If you have questions or concerns, contact your healthcare provider. A member of your care team will answer Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Outside those hours, you can leave a message or talk with another MSK provider. There is always a doctor or nurse on call. If you're not sure how to reach your healthcare provider, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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