



**MINISTRY OF HEALTH,  
WELLNESS AND THE  
ENVIRONMENT**

**Ministerial Building, Kingstown,  
Saint Vincent and the Grenadines**

**PRESS STATEMENT**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Thursday, October 1, 2020

Contact: Permanent Secretary  
*Kingstown, St. Vincent and the Grenadines*

**Statement on the use of Carica Papaya Leaf Extract to treat Dengue Fever**

Following consensus derived from a meeting of pharmacy, medical and nursing professionals on Tuesday (September 29, 2020) evening, the Pharmaceutical Services, Ministry of Health, Wellness and the Environment, is advocating the use of Papaya Leaf Extract in the management of Dengue Fever. This is based on evidence that the plant extract has proven to be effective and therefore useful in the improvement of patient outcomes in persons affected by the Dengue infection.

**History of Papaya Leaf Extract to treat Dengue Fever**

There are multiple studies which show that Papaya Leaf Extract is a valuable treatment option in Dengue Fever, due to its beneficial properties. Papaya leaf extract is now being widely used as a treatment for Dengue fever in many countries, in many cases with the approval of their health authorities e.g. Sri Lanka, India, Pakistan among other Asian countries.

Papaya Leaf Extract is becoming popular as an unlicensed herbal remedy purported to hasten recovery in dengue infection. The remedy is already in use in St Vincent and the Grenadines as a homemade preparation and is becoming an important adjunct treatment in the face of our present Dengue Fever Outbreak

**Mechanism of action**

The mechanisms by which pathophysiologic changes occur in dengue fever are still not fully understood and the outcome of treatment is influenced by intrinsic factors of the individual and the virus itself.

Simply put, the dengue virus can induce a low platelet count by suppressing the bone marrow and the virus complicates the situation by drawing nutrients from certain blood cells. This leads to the destruction of platelets. Platelets, pieces of a very large type of bone marrow cell, are found in the blood and spleen and help form blood clots to slow or stop bleeding. Papaya leaf extract seems to reverse all of these processes and the associated inflammation in quick time. Oral administration of papaya leaf extract was associated with an early rise in platelet count even as soon as 24 hours.

**Benefits:**

Papaya Leaf Extract shortens the duration of fever, illness and hospital stay and causes an elevation of the white cell count (WBC) and platelet counts. The mixture can be used safely in both adults and children. The Government Pharmaceutical Services has proposed two (2) formulations for the preparation of Papaya Leaf Extract as well as dosing guidelines.

The papaya plant grows all year round in St. Vincent making it easily available and accessible to all.



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### **GUIDELINES FOR USING Carica Papaya Leaf Extract**

1. Anyone with fever, headache or body pain suggestive of Dengue Fever, should urgently seek assistance from a health care provider.
2. The usual management of Dengue Fever includes acetaminophen (e.g. paramol, paracetamol, cetamol), liquids/fluids (e.g. juice, coconut water, water, Gatorade, ORS, Pedialyte) and gravol for nausea and vomiting.
3. Papaya leaf extract should be used in addition to the usual Dengue Fever management.
4. Papaya leaf extract could be given at any stage of the disease, but for best results it should be given from the first day of fever.
5. Do not stop the treatment halfway.
6. A few sips of cold water could be taken immediately after consuming the Papaya leaf extract or you may suck on a pinch of sugar/honey, to overcome the bitter taste.
7. Do not consume Papaya leaf extract if you are allergic to Papaya.

### **PREPARATION OF Carica Papaya Leaf Extract**

#### Option #1:

1. Get fresh healthy mature papaya leaves from a fruit-bearing tree.
2. Wash the leaves thoroughly with running tap water and chop them into small pieces excluding the main stem (not necessary to remove the small stems in the leaves).
3. Weigh 50g (2 oz or 6 tablespoons) of papaya leaves and put it into a mortar and pestle.
4. Add 50ml (1/4 cup) of boiled cool water and 25g (1 oz or 3 tablespoons) of sugar (simple syrup).
5. Pound the above mixture well for 15 minutes until a uniform pulp is made.
6. Mix this pulp well and keep for about 30 minutes.
7. Squeeze this pulp by hand and get the papaya leaf extract (do not use a cotton sieve to extract the juice).
8. You can store this preparation for 24 hours in the lower compartment of the refrigerator (+4C)
9. Shake the bottle well before the preparation is given.

#### Option #2:

1. Thoroughly wash some (3-5) medium-sized papaya leaves.
2. Cut them into small pieces.
3. Place leaves in a saucepan with two (2) litres of water.
4. Bring the water & leaves to boil and simmer.
5. Do not cover the saucepan until the water is reduced by half, strain the liquid.
6. Fill glass containers with the extract and allow to cool before drinking.

### **Dosing of Papaya Leaf Extract**

Papaya leaf extracts could be taken as syrup;

- Adult - 30ml (2 Tablespoonful) three (3) times a day before meals.
- Child - 5-10ml (2 Teaspoonful) three (3) times a day
- Studies say use for five (5) consecutive days or until fully recovered from the illness).

Other dosing in literature:

- Adult - 20ml (4 Teaspoonful) twice daily before meals.
- Child - 5-10ml (1-2 Teaspoonful) twice daily



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