

Colombians drink the leaf decoction for venereal disease.<sup>42</sup> Bahamians drink the decoction for heartburn. Costa Ricans poultice leaves onto erysipelas and splenosis. Guatemalans place heated leaves on the breast as a lactagogue. Cubans apply the latex to toothache. Colombians and Costa Ricans apply the latex to burns, hemorrhoids, ringworm, and ulcers. Barbadians use the leaf tea for marasmus, Panamanians for jaundice. Venezuelans take the root decoction for dysentery.<sup>42</sup> Seeds are used also for dropsy, gout, paralysis, and skin ailments.<sup>3</sup> Leaves are regarded as antiparasitic, applied to scabies; rubefacient for paralysis, rheumatism; also, applied to hard tumors.<sup>4</sup> Latex used to dress sores and ulcers and inflamed tongues.<sup>16</sup> Seed is viewed as aperient; the seed oil emetic, laxative, purgative, for skin ailments. Root is used in decoction as a mouthwash for bleeding gums and toothache. Otherwise used for eczema, ringworm, and scabies.<sup>16,41</sup> I received a letter from the Medical Research Center of the University of the West Indies shortly after the death of Jamaican singer Robert Marley, "I just want you to know that this is not because of Bob Marley's illness, why I revealing this . . . my dream was: this old lady came to see me in my sleep with a dish in her hands; she handed the dish to me filled with some nuts. I said to her, 'What were those?' She did not answer. I said to her, 'PHYSIC NUTS.' She said to me, 'This is the cure for cancer.'" This Jamaican dream is rather interesting. Four antitumor compounds, including jatropham and jatrophone, are reported from other species of *Jatropha*.<sup>41</sup> Homeopathically used for cold sweats, colic, collapse, cramps, cyanosis, diarrhea, leg cramps.<sup>33</sup>

Per 100 g, the seed is reported to contain 6.6 g H<sub>2</sub>O, 18.2 g protein, 38.0 g fat, 33.5 total carbohydrate, 15.5 g fiber, and 4.5 g ash.<sup>21</sup> Leaves, which show antileukemic activity, contain alpha-amyrin, beta-sitosterol, stigmasterol, and campesterol, 7-keto-beta-sitosterol, stigmast-5-ene-3 beta, 7-alpha-diol, and stigmast-5-ene-3 beta, 7-beta-diol.<sup>42</sup> Leaves contain isovitexin and vitexin. From the drug (nut?) saccharose, raffinose, stachyose, glucose, fructose, galactose, protein, and an oil, largely of oleic- and linoleic-acids;<sup>33</sup> Curcasin, arachidic-, linoleic-, myristic-, oleic-, palmitic-, and stearic-acids.<sup>16</sup>

**Toxicity** — Poisonous seeds can cause death due to the toxalbumin, curcin. The poisoning is irritant, with acute abdominal pain and nausea about 1/2 hr following ingestion. Diarrhea and nausea continue but are not usually serious. Depression and collapse may occur, especially in children. Two seeds are strong purgative. Four to five seed are said to have caused death, but the roasted seed is said to be nearly innocuous. One frequent and deserved criticism of herbal medication is that one has no way to gauge dosage. It has been concluded in Florida that there are two strains of this species, one with toxic seeds and the other with seeds that are not poisonous. The two strains cannot be distinguished by sight.<sup>14</sup> Bark, fruit, leaf, root, and wood are all reported to contain HCN.<sup>3</sup>