



## PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Irvingia gabonensis

This information describes the common uses of *Irvingia gabonensis*, 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?

The seed extract of African mango may support weight loss, but high-quality studies are needed.

The bark of African mango has been used in traditional medicine for stomach and intestinal ailments, pain, and infections. The seed extract is promoted as a weight loss supplement due to its potential to reduce sugar and cholesterol absorption, but this has not been adequately studied. In addition, side effects have been reported and it may interfere with the absorption of other medications.

More studies are needed to ensure that this product is safe and effective in humans.

## What are the potential uses and benefits?

- **Weight loss**

Most studies are small and of poor quality. High-quality studies are needed.

- **Lower cholesterol and blood sugar levels**

Data are limited and high-quality studies are needed.

- **Diarrhea, colic, dysentery**

Although used traditionally in Africa, data are lacking to support these claims.

- **Pain**

Data are lacking to support this use.

- **Infection**

Lab studies suggest antimicrobial effects, but this has not been studied in humans.

## What are the side effects?

- Gas
- Headaches
- Difficulty sleeping

## Case report

**Kidney failure:** In a 42-year-old patient who became

dependent on dialysis following 2.5 months of using an African mango herbal medicine.

## What else do I need to know?

### Do Not Take if:

- You are taking antidiabetic medications: Rat studies suggest African mango may further lower blood glucose levels. Clinical relevance has yet to be determined.

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.

*Irvingia gabonensis* - Last updated on June 30, 2022

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