

A Scoping Review of the Association Between Soursop (*Annona muricata*) Leaf Tea Consumption and Adverse Hepatic Function Markers in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo: An African Contextual Analysis

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B, a, p, t, i, s, t, e, K, a, b, a, s, e, l, e

| Abstract

Soursop (*Annona muricata*) leaf tea is commonly consumed in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo, as a traditional remedy. Concerns exist about its potential to cause liver injury, with reports of abnormal liver function tests in some consumers. Evidence specific to this African context requires synthesis. This scoping review aimed to map and analyse the literature on the association between soursop leaf tea consumption and adverse hepatic function markers in Kinshasa. It sought to describe the extent, range, and nature of the evidence and to identify key knowledge gaps. A scoping review was conducted using established methodological frameworks. A systematic search was performed across relevant electronic databases and grey literature. All study designs reporting on soursop leaf tea consumption and liver function markers in Kinshasa were eligible for inclusion. Data were charted and analysed thematically. The review identified a limited but consistent body of evidence. A prominent finding was the association between prolonged, high-dose consumption and clinically significant elevations in liver enzymes, specifically alanine aminotransferase (ALT) and aspartate aminotransferase (AST). The literature predominantly comprised case reports, with a distinct lack of large-scale epidemiological studies. Available reports indicate a potential hepatotoxic risk from high consumption of soursop leaf tea in this population. The current evidence is constrained by its reliance on

anecdotal and case report data, highlighting a need for more rigorous research. Further primary research, particularly well-designed observational studies, is required to quantify the risk. Public health education regarding the potential risks of excessive consumption should be considered. Clinicians in the region should include herbal tea use in the assessment of patients with unexplained liver injury. Annona muricata, soursop, herbal tea, hepatotoxicity, liver function tests, traditional medicine, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kinshasa. This review consolidates the existing evidence on a significant public health concern in an African setting, clarifying the current state of knowledge and providing clear directives for future research and clinical practice.
