

BENEFITS OF GBURE (TALINUM TRIANGULARE) FOR PATIENTS WITH DIABETES MELLITUS TYPE 2: NIGERIAN EXPERIENCE

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Diabetes Mellitus is on the rise and is becoming a global pandemic; the challenge of poor countries includes late disease detection and limited resources for prophylactics and therapeutic measures. The typical Nigerian diet is high in cholesterol and salt with very little to no fiber. Most of the population is also very nonchalant about learning the “western way” of doing things and will rather use local medicine than western medicine (oral hypoglycemic drugs and insulin). This leads to people with very ill managed diabetes and having many complications. *Talinum triangulare* also known as Waterleaf in English and ‘Gbure’ by the Yorubas in Nigeria is a popular plant of the tropical and subtropic regions of the world. Pharmacological research of the plant has determined the plant to possess bile acid sequestrant properties. These compounds take action by serving as ion-exchange resins. They swap anions such as chloride, iodide for bile acids and remove them from normal circulation (enterohepatic circulation). This causes the liver to make more bile acids due to the deficit in the circulation. The body uses cholesterol to make bile acids and this is how there is a reduction in cholesterol circulation in the blood – particularly LDL. The vegetable also has hypoglycemic properties due to high fiber content. Fiber helps to lower blood glucose due to its action on digestion in the gastrointestinal tract. The aim of our research was to analyze the benefits of Gbure (*Talinum Triangulare*) on the lipid profile and blood sugar of patients with diabetes mellitus type 2. 100 patients in St. Nicholas Hospital (Lagos Nigeria) were selected with DM type 2 - 50 males and 50 females; between the age of 37-62. Gbure was introduced into the patient`s diets about 2 – 3 servings per day (2 cups per serving) for 1 month. The patients were tested once a week for one month. The parameters tested were blood sugar (fasting), lipid profile and BMI.

At the end of the study the blood sugar level had the greatest change with a decrease of 22%. The HDL and LDL target goals were met within a month. The target levels at the end of the study were - LDL<100 mg/dl; HDL>40 mg/dl and triglyceride levels<150 mg/dl, fasting glucose level 6.6– 7.2 mmol/L. So, Gbure helped in decreasing levels of blood lipids and controlling blood glucose in these patients with diabetes mellitus. It would definitely serve some benefit if this vegetable were incorporated into the meals of Nigerians, especially those who suffer from diabetes mellitus.