

Senna is a small shrub of the family leguminosae or Fabacea. Senna was used as a potent cathartic or laxative. Several scientists and researchers conclude that senna has this property because of the apparent existence of elements and compounds such as glycosides of dianthrone (1.5 to 2%), Main A and B nennosides, small quantities of C and D sennosides, and other closely related amalgams. It is traditionally cultivated in semi-arid zones of the Tirunelveli, Ramnathapuram and Madurai coastal zones in Tamil Nadu on 10 000 hectares. Although the first variety of senna is found in Egypt and Sudan along the Nile, the second variety is widespread in South and East Indians. Dried leaflets belonging to the Cassia species are the senna leaves used for the medicines.