



***Cannabis sativa* L.**

**Family:** Canabaceae

**Common names:** Hemp, Bhang



**Description:**

*Canabis sativa* is rough in texture, long and slender annual that grows 6-12 ft in height. The leaves are palmately divided into 3-7 narrow, toothed segments. The stems are rough with fibrous inner bark. The female flowers are in greenish leafy spikes, borne on stem tips, and male flowers are yellowish, tiny, and borne in axillary clusters. The flowers are not clearly visible and without scent; they are pollinated by the wind. The fruit is an achene, which is a hard, one-seeded fruit that remains closed at maturity.

**Utilization:**

The fibre of the plant, cultivated as hemp, has numerous textile uses. Its seed, chiefly used as caged-bird feed, is a valuable source of protein, energy. Historically, tinctures, teas, and ointments were also common preparations. It has sedative properties, used in treating pain and illness, and also has general psychoactive effects (Abel, 1980; Nahas, 1973). India, where Cannabis served a religious function, *The Atharva Veda*, one of the oldest books of Hinduism, includes it as one of the five sacred plants (Andrich, 1977).

Part	Uses
Leaf extract	Antibacterial
cannabinoids	glaucoma, asthma, hyperthermia, muscle spasticity, anxiety, hypertension, pain and inflammation

**References:**

- Abel E. L; (1980) Marijuana: The first twelve thousand years. New York: Plenum Press.  
Aldrich M.R; (1977) Tantric Cannabis use in India. Journal of Psychedelic Drugs, 9, 227 – 233.  
Nahas G.G; (1997) Marijuana – Deceptive weed. New York: Raven Press.  
Appendino G, Gibbons S, Giana A, Pagani A, Grassi G, Stavri M, Smith E and Rahman M.M; (2008)“Antibacterial Cannabinoids from Cannabis sativa: A Structure–Activity Study” J. Nat. Prod.71 (8), pp 1427–1430.