



## Traditional uses, chemistry and pharmacology of *Ruscus* genus (“*Murd esfarm*” in traditional Persian medicine); a review

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**Background and objectives:** *Ruscus* genus from Asparagaceae (popularly called Butcher`s broom) are perennial rhizomatous evergreen herbs and grows in Europe and south western Asia. They are generally used as anti-inflammatory, diaphoretic, diuretic, mildly laxative, and vasoconstrictive agents in many countries. *Ruscus hyrcanus* Woronov is widely distributed in north of Iran. It is known as “*Murd esfarm*” in Persian traditional medicine (TPM). Based on TPM, Iranian physicians applied “*Murd esfarm*” for various disorders such as epilepsy, diarrhea, expulsion of intestinal worms and for increasing milk secretion. This study aimed to identify “*Murd esfarm*” a drug used in TPM and develop its therapeutic aspects and introduce a novel species for treatment of chronic vein disease. **Methods:** This study was conducted using the electronic databases (*e.g.*, Pubmed, Web of science) and important Iranian traditional medicine books such as the Canon of medicine, Makhzan-ol advie, Tuhfat al-Mu`minin. **Results:** Extracts of these plants were effective in increasing venous tone because of their anti-inflammatory and astringent properties, which is attributed to saponin glycosides. Ruscogenin and neoruscogenin are compounds that constrict and strengthen veins and promote circulation from the lower extremities in both species. **Conclusion:** *R. hyrcanus* is a unique species of *Ruscus* in Iran. Due to the similarity of the Butcher`s broom with the plant mentioned in TPM books, this species can be used for the treatment of many diseases related to vascular insufficiency, including varicose veins and hemorrhoids.

**Keywords:** chronic vein disease, Persian traditional medicine, *Ruscus*, saponin