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## ***Ficus exasperate* Stimulate the Frequency of Rhythmic Spontaneous Uterine Contractions**

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Herbal plants acquire a significant importance in the medical field especially in African countries where 90% of the population is using the herbal plants for therapeutic purpose (Hostettmann *et al.*, 2000). In Nigeria, *Ficus exasperata* Vahl Enum. Pl. vahl is a herbal plant which belongs to Moraceae family (Umerie *et al.*, 2004). Its leaves are rough and have scabrous surface therefore it is known as sand plant in Nigeria (Irene and Iheanacho, 2007). The extract of bark is used to hasten the ejection of placenta in cows after calf delivery. It is also used in different methods to ease the childbirth (Irene and Iheanacho, 2007). Its leaves are also used as abortifacient (Baerts and Lehmann, 1991). Herbal practitioner used its leaves for the uterus relaxation and enhancing contractions of the uterus (Ake, 1990).

A report has been published in the Research Journal of Medicinal Plant 3 (2): 34-40, 2009 with a purpose to investigate the effects of higher concentrations of the *F. exasperata* extract on the isolated uterus to determine if the reported dual uterine actions of the extract are concentration-dependent. The researchers focused on the uterotonic activity of the aqueous leaf extract of *F. exasperata* (AET) *in vitro*. They concluded that the higher concentrations of the extract showed good potential as an oxytocic agent. This study has shown that higher concentrations of the aqueous leaf extract of *F. exasperate* stimulate contractions of the isolated rat uterus in a manner similar to acetylcholine and also increase the frequency of rhythmic spontaneous uterine contractions but have no effect on the amplitude. The research team ultimately concluded that the aqueous leaf extract of *F. exasperata* at the concentrations used in study stimulates uterine contractility which verified its use in easing childbirth in Africa.

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