

## Abstract

Medicinal herbs are an important part of modern medicine. They serve for extracting of healing substances that are used in therapy and as a support of medicamental treatment. They contain complex sums of effective substances, whose effects mutually combine and supplement, which results in their greater effectivity in comparison with isolated substances. In the treatment of respiratory diseases, the use is made mostly of substances from *Adhatoda vasica*, *Ephedra sinica* or codein.

Vasicine is a substance extracted from an Indian plant called *Adhatoda vasica*. It has a broad range of indications. It is mainly used for the therapy of air passages diseases – cold, cough, bronchitis, asthma. Scientific studies show that besides having bronchodilatory, expectoratory or antithusic effects, it also has an antiinflammatory effect that equals to the effect of hydrocortisone, and it protects mice against the ionizing radiation. Its use is contraindicated during pregnancy. Substances with a similar structure (vasicinone, AA, RLX or bromhexine) have a brochodilatory, mucolytic or antiallergic effect on the air passages.

Ephedrine, extracted from *Ephedra sinica* was often used in the past; today it is obsolente and is used only exceptionally, combined with xantines, for asthma therapy.

In therapy, codeine is used especially as an antithusicum or as an analgesic combined with acetylsalicyl acid or paracetamol.