

Evaluation of phytochemistry and uterotonic activity of root aqueous extract of *Uvariadendron anisatum* verdec. Used in childbirth in Eastern/Central Kenya.

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ABSTRACT

Over 56 % of pregnant women in Kenya deliver at home with the assistance of mainly traditional birth attendants who use herbal remedies to complete the processes of child bearing in both urban and rural communities. The medicines and indigenous knowledge used by traditional birth attendants deserve to be properly validated through scientific scrutiny under conditions mimicking the indigenous methods of use. This work seek to evaluate the phytochemistry and ethnopharmacology of *Uvariadendron anisatum* Verdeck (Annonaceae) which is used in the management of a variety of conditions including root decoction to ease labor or if the after birth is late or retained. This study is to investigate the phytochemical group of compounds and effects of of *Uvariadendron anisatum* aqueous root extract on the uterus of Wistar rats. Phytochemical screening was carried out using the accepted standard procedures and the extract was prepared by maceration. In-vitro pharmacological assay was done using doses of 50 mg, 200 mg, 400 mg and 800 mg. Phytochemical screening revealed the presence of alkaloids, glycosides, tannins, phenols, anthraquinones, steroids, carotenoids, coumarins, tannins, flavonoids, saponins and volatile oils. The extract also demonstrated weak uterine motility which corresponded to the dosage and displayed similar motility as oxytocin at high dose (800 mg).