

UMCKALOABO, SOUTH AFRICAN GERANIUM



By Er. We

Scientific name

Pelargonium sidoides

Common names

Umckaloabo, South African Geranium

Where found

South Africa

Therapeutic ingredient

Pelargonium sidoides
root extract.

Used to treat

Acute bronchitis

In 1897, an Englishman named Charles Stevens went to South Africa hoping to cure himself of tuberculosis. He consulted with a tribal healer who gave him a concoction made from a local plant. Among the Zulu, this concoction was described as umKhulkane (denoting respiratory infection) + uHlabo (roughly meaning 'chest pain').

Fully recovered, Charles Stevens returned to England with his mysterious remedy, which he popularised throughout Europe as 'Steven's Consumption Cure,' 'consumption being an old name for tuberculosis (TB).

In 1920, Dr Adrien Secheyaye – formerly a mission doctor – heard of the use of *Pelargonium sidoides* extract, and over the next nine years he treated more than 800 patients in Switzerland with a homeopathic preparation of the medicine.

In 1929 Secheyaye published the results of his trial. However with the introduction of synthetic tuberculosis drugs, this remedy became largely forgotten in Western medicine, until Schwabe Pharmaceuticals researched and developed an extract (EPs® 7630) into a clinically and pharmacologically well-documented medicine (Umckaloabo®) for upper respiratory tract infections. It has been widely available in Europe since the 1980s.