



How to remove the poison from garri and cassava flour

WHAT DOES THE POISON IN GARRI AND CASSAVA FLOUR DO?

When you eat garri and flour made from bitter cassava that has not been properly processed, you can get :

- poisoning soon after you eat it, which causes dizziness, headache, stomach ache, diarrhoea, vomiting and sometimes even death
- *konzo*, which is permanent paralysis of the legs so the person cannot walk. It occurs after several weeks of eating too much bad cassava.
- *Tropical ataxic neuropathy (TAN)*, which causes burning in the feet, blurred speech, loss of vision, wobbly walking and deafness. It occurs in older people after years of eating garri and cassava flour.

HOW TO REMOVE THE POISON

1



The poison will not leave the garri unless you mix it with about the same amount of flour, so take the amount of garri and flour you want to cook.

2



Put the garri and flour in a basin, smooth out the surface of the garri and flour, and then mark the height of the flour with the point of a knife.

3



Add clean water little by little, stirring, until the garri and flour is wet and the level is the same as that of the dry flour (already marked inside). The garri and flour must be completely wet.

4



Spread the garri and flour on a sieve, mat, or any clean flat surface using a spoon or your hand, so that the thickness of the garri and flour is no higher than a fingernail. Then leave the garri and flour in the hot sun for at least 2 hours. Longer is better.

5



Put water in the pan, boil it, and add the treated garri and flour until you get the right consistency. You can use less water than usual because the water left in the treated garri and flour also counts.

6



Now you can be sure that you are giving good food to your family, and that it won't cause poisoning or paralysis.