



Black Cohosh

Stock #80-3 (100 capsules)

Black cohosh has a long history of use among Native Americans. The root was made into a poultice and placed on poisonous snake bites, perhaps explaining the herb's common name, black snakeroot. Other external uses include the healing of puncture wounds and sores. Black cohosh root was used internally in liquid form to help chest problems, coughs, diarrhea, and irregular menstruation.

Black cohosh has a variety of historical uses: angina pectoris, asthma, bronchitis, dyspepsia, gonorrhea, hysteria, intercostal myalgia, measles, pericarditis, rheumatism, scarlet fever, sciatica, scrofula, seminal emission, sexual weakness, smallpox, spermatorrhoea, St. Vitus' dance, tinnitus, and whooping cough.

Perhaps the most widely known use of black cohosh is for female reproductive problems such as amenorrhea, dysmenorrhea, menopausal symptoms such as debility, depression, and hot flashes, and difficult pregnancy or childbirth. Black cohosh is often used to help stimulate uterine contractions during childbirth. The estrogenic effects of black cohosh on the body have been confirmed in research published in the *Journal of the American Pharmaceutical Association*. Scientists also believe black cohosh reduces levels of pituitary luteinizing hormone which helps reduce progesterone production by the ovaries.

Black cohosh acts as an anti-inflammatory for arthritic and rheumatic conditions, especially arthritis associated with menopause. Black cohosh also acts as a mild analgesic (pain-reliever), due to the presence of salicylic acid. The mild hypotensive (reduce blood pressure), sedative and vasodilatory (dilate blood vessels) effects produced by black cohosh have been found helpful for treating high blood pressure, tinnitus, and vertigo. These actions combined with the herb's antispasmodic properties have proven helpful for relieving asthma and chronic coughs, including whooping cough. European researchers believe black cohosh's hypotensive effect is due to the presence of the triterpene glycoside, actein, as well as other resinous substances found in the herb.

Black cohosh contains a variety of "irritants" which are responsible for many of its different properties. The tannins and acids in black cohosh enable it to be used as a diuretic and expectorant, while also helping to promote perspiration to reduce fever and expel toxins, and enhance menstrual flow and uterine contractions.

Preliminary experiments in vitro have shown black cohosh exhibits an antimicrobial action against certain bacteria and yeasts.

Caution should be used if a woman is considering taking black cohosh during pregnancy, since the irritating substances which cause uterine contractions could lead to possible hemorrhage. In most cases, women should avoid using black cohosh during pregnancy and breast-feeding.

Furthermore, individuals taking blood pressure medication to reduce high blood pressure should consult their healthcare practitioner before taking black cohosh concurrently with other medications. At least one source indicates individuals with congestive heart failure or peptic ulcers should avoid using black cohosh.

Excessive intake of black cohosh has been known to cause headache and nausea in some individuals.