



Burdock

Stock #140-2 (100 capsules)

Burdock is an herbal remedy that has been used for hundreds of years throughout Asia, Europe and North America. According to traditional Chinese medicine (TCM), burdock root contains active compounds that detoxify the blood and lymphatic system and promote circulation, especially to the surface of the skin. Burdock also promotes perspiration and the release of toxins from the body. Hence, burdock is used to improve the health of the skin and treat various skin conditions such as acne, eczema and psoriasis.¹⁻¹⁰

Burdock is also a popular traditional folk medicine in Brazil, where it is used for the treatment of nearly all infectious diseases. Research has confirmed burdock's antibacterial, anticandidal and antioxidant activity. Burdock root has also been shown to exert antitussive (cough-suppressing) activity in animal studies, with cough suppressant action that was equally effective as some non-narcotic, synthetic preparations.^{1,10-16}

Well-known for its anti-inflammatory and diuretic effects, burdock has been used therapeutically for a variety of inflammatory conditions, including arthritis, gout and rheumatism. Burdock may also help prevent and treat kidney stone formation through its ability to stimulate the kidneys to eliminate uric acid and flush the urinary tract. Burdock appears to exert a moderate solvent action on uric stones, resulting from an alkalinizing action and possible urinary antiseptic effects. Furthermore, burdock's anti-inflammatory properties may be useful in the treatment of allergies and allergy-related inflammation.^{2-4,6-8,10,11,15,17-19}

Burdock also provides gastroprotective (stomach-protecting) and hepatoprotective (liver-protecting) effects. Animal studies have shown that burdock root helps prevent gastric ulceration and acetaminophen (Tylenol)-induced liver damage. Burdock is also regarded as a digestive stimulant useful for improving digestion and treating loss of appetite. Burdock contains bitter constituents that strengthen digestive function and stimulate appetite by promoting the secretion of digestive fluids.^{6-8,10,13,17,18,20,21}

Animal studies have confirmed that burdock root can also protect the colon from the gut-damaging effects of ulcerative colitis. Burdock root contains mucilage, which helps soothe mucous membranes of the gastrointestinal tract. Thus, burdock root may be a useful anti-inflammatory agent for chronic inflammatory bowel disease (IBD), including ulcerative colitis and Crohn's disease. In addition, burdock is a rich source of inulin (up to 50% of the total plant mass), a non-digestible carbohydrate or "functional fiber" that selectively stimulates the growth and activity of beneficial intestinal bacteria. Inulin has been shown to stabilize the colonic mucosal barrier and protect against intestinal disorders, as well as improve the immune response, lower triglyceride levels, and reduce the risk of colon cancer. In animal studies, burdock root fiber was shown to significantly reduce a colorectal cancer risk marker.^{2,3,13,15,22-26}

In addition, burdock root contains antidiabetic compounds that may help reduce blood sugar levels. Animal research has shown that burdock extracts exert strong hypoglycemic (blood sugar-lowering) activity. In fact, a survey of nearly 700 herbalists found that burdock was listed among the top 10 herbal remedies recommended to diabetic patients as a "natural" treatment to control blood sugar.^{1-3,10,27}

Furthermore, burdock has been used in the treatment of chronic illnesses, including cancer and AIDS/HIV infection. In vitro studies have confirmed the inhibitory activity of burdock against HIV. Burdock is also an ingredient in the Essiac herbal formula, a popular and widely used herbal remedy for cancer treatment.^{1-3,5,8,28-30}

Burdock should not be used in combination with antidiabetic agents, due to a possible additive effect in hypoglycemic action. Burdock is not recommended during pregnancy as uterine stimulant activity has been observed in animal studies.^{2,7,13}

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