

## Lymphatic Drainage

Stock #3171-7 (2 fl. oz.)



The lymphatic system is one of the body's important channels of detoxification, managing a significant portion of internal waste and immune protection. The lymphatic system is responsible for keeping the body's fluids flowing cleanly throughout the tissues and preventing these fluids from stagnating. Lymph fluid circulates through the body collecting cellular waste generated as a by-product of metabolism, along with toxins and debris resulting from infection. Lymph fluid is then transported via an extensive network of lymphatic vessels to lymph nodes where it is processed and cleansed by immune cells (white blood cells known as lymphocytes and macrophages) before recirculating into the body. Inflammation, infection and cellular oxidation, combined with dietary or airborne allergens and toxins, increase the amount of debris to be cleared from cells by the lymph system. Therefore, if the lymphatic system is sluggish due to toxic overload or lack of physical movement—the lymph system requires the action of muscles to move lymph fluid through the body—metabolic wastes accumulate, causing fluid stagnation in the tissues and lymphatic channels. Long-term lymphatic stagnation has been linked to a number of health problems in which tissue swelling exists, with the 3 most common conditions being tonsillitis, appendicitis and

fibrocystic breast disease.<sup>1-3</sup>

Fortunately, a number of select herbs can contribute to an optimally functioning lymph system. These herbs, known as alteratives or 'blood cleansers' in folk medicine, help tone and stimulate the entire lymphatic system, encouraging cleansing of the network of lymph vessels and glands located throughout the body. Alteratives primarily assist detoxification, aiding the body's eliminatory and cleansing functions to reduce accumulating metabolic waste products. Alteratives can also aid digestion and improve circulation, both of which contribute to enhanced elimination and thus, an improvement in the 'quality' of the blood. Alteratives are often used for chronic conditions in small amounts as a long-term therapy. The most efficient herbs for lymph cleansing include cleavers, prickly ash and red clover.<sup>1-6</sup>

**Lymphatic Drainage** is an alcohol-free liquid herbal extract designed to assist the detoxification functions of the lymphatic system and encourage the flow of lymph fluid. Lymphatic Drainage contains herbs known for their ability to improve blood flow, relieve fluid retention and lymphatic congestion, and promote elimination. The herbs in Lymphatic Drainage share a long history of use for health problems associated with lymphatic congestion and internal toxicity, including enlarged lymph nodes, joint problems and skin diseases such as acne, eczema and psoriasis. Lymphatic Drainage contains pure extracts of cleavers herb, red clover tops, stillingia herb and prickly ash bark in a vegetable glycerin base.

**Cleavers** is well-known for its eliminative properties and action as a renal (kidney) and lymphatic tonic—cleavers helps drain excessive fluid buildup and provides diuretic and mild astringent effects. Scientists have found that cleavers contains 2 iridoids, asperuloside and monotropein, both of which have demonstrated mild laxative action in mice. Cleavers is also a rich source of mineral salts. Cleavers has traditionally been used as an alterative (blood cleanser) for treating skin diseases typically associated with toxemia (a condition caused by the spread of bacterial products by the bloodstream) or septicemia (blood poisoning), including some types of acne and furunculosis (a *Staphylococcal* skin infection that causes a tender, painful inflammatory nodule in the skin, often referred to as a boil), as well as eczema, psoriasis, urticaria (hives) and skin rashes. Cleavers has also been used for connective tissue diseases, joint problems, rhinitis (inflammation of the mucous membranes in the nose), chronic sinusitis (sinus inflammation), secretory otitis media (inflammation of the middle ear, often accompanied by fluid build-up), lymphadenitis (inflammation of lymph nodes), and specifically for enlarged lymph nodes.<sup>2,4,6-10</sup>

**Red clover** has a long history of use as an alterative or blood and lymph cleanser. Red clover has traditionally been used as a dermatological agent for chronic skin diseases, especially eczema and psoriasis. Like cleavers, red clover has also been used to treat skin diseases typically associated with toxemia or septicemia such as some types of acne, furunculosis, urticaria (hives) and skin rashes. In addition, red clover has been recommended for connective tissue diseases, joint problems, and general detoxification efforts such as spring fasts. Red clover is also noted for its lymphatic, expectorant and mild antispasmodic properties. Red clover contains over 125 chemicals, including tannins that possess astringent properties, and numerous minerals (i.e. calcium, copper, iron, magnesium, manganese and potassium). More recent research has discovered the presence of estrogenic isoflavones in red clover, which demonstrate significant competitive binding to estrogen receptors and thus, may help prevent breast cancer by reducing circulating levels of estrogen. As a point of interest, red clover is one of several herbs in the famous Harry Hoxsey cancer remedy. The Hoxsey formula, which has been used for decades with considerable success in the treatment of breast and other types of cancer, contains herbs with anticancer properties that help eliminate toxins and wastes. Red clover contains some coumarin and coumarin-like compounds that may interact with anticoagulants and antiplatelet agents and may increase risk of bleeding. Red clover is not recommended for pregnant or breast-feeding

women as the effects are unknown. Furthermore, red clover should not be used in patients with estrogen receptor-positive neoplasia (abnormal growth or tumor whether benign or malignant).<sup>4-8,10-16</sup>

**Stillingia** demonstrates diuretic, laxative and tonic properties. Stillingia was commonly used by Native Americans as a purgative (a substance that promotes peristalsis/bowel movement) and as a treatment for skin eruptions. Herbalists have continued to use stillingia for its remarkable alterative influence on lymphatic and secretory functions and its ability to promote general detoxification. Stillingia is still used primarily for the treatment of liver, biliary (gallbladder) and skin diseases. One study found that an alcoholic extract of stillingia reduced tumor growth in mice with breast cancer. In addition, stillingia is one of several herbs used in the Hoxsey cancer remedy. Stillingia is not recommended for nursing women, as the effects are unknown.<sup>5,8,9</sup>

**Prickly ash** stimulates peripheral circulation, promotes perspiration and provides anti-rheumatic properties. Prickly ash has traditionally been used for circulatory problems, including intermittent claudication and Raynaud's syndrome, as well as chronic rheumatic conditions and joint disease involving poor circulation and coldness. Prickly ash is recommended for lymph purification to facilitate cleansing of the lymph vessels and glands. Researchers have only recently identified an alkaloid in prickly ash that exhibits potent activity against strains of methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), which were highly resistant to clinical antibiotics. Prickly ash has also shown anti-cancer activity, possibly due to the presence of certain alkaloids. Furthermore, prickly ash is one of several herbs found in Harry Hoxsey's cancer remedy.<sup>4-7,10,17,18</sup>

#### References:

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