



Wild Yam

Stock #745-2 (100 capsules)

Wild yam has been used in Mexico since the time of the Aztecs for treating rheumatic problems and as a natural pain-reliever. In Central America, wild yam has been used to alleviate labor and menstrual pain, as well as arthritis, digestive problems, and muscle cramps. Among early American herbalists, wild yam was one of the best antispasmodic treatments known, especially for all types of colic and paroxysmal pain, ovarian neuralgia, spasmodic dysmenorrhea and indigestion. Wild yam was regularly used for reducing the pain of biliary colic caused by gallstones, and for easing the discomfort of passing of small stones.

In 1942, researchers determined the wild yam contained a steroid-like substance called diosgenin, which imitated the effect of progesterone in the body. By the 1950's, pharmaceutical companies were producing the first contraceptive pills made from diosgenin extracted from wild yams. Diosgenin, which is a breakdown constituent of a steroidal saponin called dioscin, was first identified by Japanese researchers in 1936. Their discovery lead the way for synthesizing progesterone and corticosteroid hormones such as cortisone. Contrary to popular advertising, wild yams neither contain hormones, nor can their steroidal saponins be converted into hormones in the body—hormones made from wild yams can only be synthesized through chemical procedures in a laboratory setting.

The diosgenin in wild yam (approximately 40%) mimics progesterone's effect upon the body and has become increasingly popular in the treatment of PMS symptoms. Progesterone buffers the negative effects of elevated estrogen levels. However, during a woman's cycle, progesterone levels drop drastically, leaving estrogen levels to rise unchecked which can lead to such PMS symptoms as low blood sugar, salt and water retention, increased body fat, and reduced oxygen levels in the cells.

Wild yam also contains phytosterols (beta-sitosterol), alkaloids, tannins, and starch. Wild yam has been shown to dilate blood vessels and stimulate the flow of bile. Wild yam also possesses antispasmodic, anti-inflammatory, and anti-rheumatic properties, as well as promotes perspiration to cool the body and acts as a diuretic to relieve water retention. Dioscin, wild yam's primary active constituent is responsible for the herb's anti-inflammatory action, thus confirming its use for treating rheumatic conditions and gastrointestinal inflammation.

Wild yam has numerous traditional uses among many different peoples around the globe. Also known as colic root and rheumatism root in North America, wild yam has been used for relieving arthritis, asthma, bronchitis, Crohn's, colic, colitis, cramps, diverticulitis, excess mucus, gallbladder inflammation, gastritis (especially in alcoholics), irritable bowel syndrome, labor pain, miscarriage prevention, morning sickness, muscle tension, ovarian neuralgia, rheumatism, spasmodic dysmenorrhea, stiff muscles, and whooping cough. Wild yam dilates blood vessels and stimulates the flow of bile.

Wild yam is also being used for its therapeutic action on general liver health, and has been shown to help reduce blood cholesterol levels and blood pressure, indirectly benefiting the liver by increasing the organ's efficiency and reducing stress.

Wild yam is becoming increasingly popular because of the natural steroid-like compounds this herb provides. These substances are believed to help increase the performance and physique of bodybuilders.