

HOLISTIC HERBALISM ADVANCED CLINICAL PROGRAM MATERIA MEDICA

Common Name	Goldenseal
Latin	Hydrastis canadensis
Family	Ranunculaceae
Other Known Names	Yellow Root, Yellow Puccoon
Energy	Cold, dry
Taste	Bitter
Part Used	Root and leaf
Location	Goldenseal grows in eastern North American deciduous woodlands.
Gathering	In the autumn. It is an endangered species, use only cultivated plants.
Cultivation	It requires rich, humousy soil with good drainage and full shade. It prefers to grow under mixed hardwoods.

HERBAL ACTION	TISSUE AFFINITY	MAJOR CONSTITUENTS
Antibacterial	Liver/Gallbladder	Isoquinoline alkaloids:
Antifungal	Mucous Membranes	Canadine-hypotensive
Antiviral	Large Intestine	β-Hydrastine-mucous membrane tonic
Aperient	Digestion	Canadine-hypotensive
Bitter tonic	Pancreas	Palmatine-antibacterial
Cholagogue	Female Reproductive System	Berberine-antibacterial, antifungal
Stimulant to smooth muscle tissue	Small Intestine	Berberastine-antibacterial, antiviral
Subastringent		Coptisine-anti-inflammatory
		Jatrorrhizine-antifungal
		Flavonoids (leaves):
		Sideroxylin-synergist
		6 & 8-desmethyl-sideroxylin

SPECIFIC INDICATIONS

Clears damp heat/antimicrobial
Mucous membranes that are boggy and atonic, with a tendency toward over-secretion or infection.

PRIMARY USES

- Hydrastis has a long history of use as an antimicrobial by eastern North American native peoples, the Thomsonians, the Physio-medicalists and the Eclectics.
- Goldenseal is indicated for mucous membranes that are boggy and atonic, with a tendency toward over-secretion or infection.
- This includes conditions such as gingivitis, conjunctivitis, uvulitis, gastric and duodenal ulcers, gastritis, laryngitis, esophagitis, aphthous stomatitis, bacterial diarrhea and ulcerative colitis..
- Goldenseal stimulates local immune activity (macrophage activity) and it makes an excellent gargle for strep throat or acute tonsillitis.
- Hydrastis can be used intravaginally for cervicitis and cervical dysplasia as a bolus or in a medicinal diaphragm.
- Goldenseal can be useful in a protocol for a modestly prolapsed uterus with chronic low-grade bleeding and/or menorrhagia.
- Goldenseal can be used as a saline tea nasal douche or bulbous syringe application for bacterial or fungal sinusitis or post-nasal drip.
- The Goldenseal saline tea combined with Rose Petals and carefully strained can be used as an eyewash for conjunctivitis or ophthalmic herpes.
- Goldenseal can be used in a sitz bath combination for healing episiotomy incisions, infections of the Bartholin's glands, rectal fissures and rectal pruritus.
- The finely powdered root of Goldenseal with white sugar can be used directly on bedsores (decubitus ulcers), it increases granulation, tissue regeneration and helps prevent infection.
- Goldenseal can be used topically as a wash for genital or oral herpes.
- Goldenseal can also be used topically for fungal infections, cuts, staph infections and cracked nipples.
- In laboratory studies, Hydrastis has been found to inhibit Staphylococcus aureus, Streptococcus sanguis, Escherichia coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa, Streptococcus mutans, Fusobacterium nucleatum and Helicobacter pylori.
- Dr. John Christopher used Goldenseal as part of a formula to lower blood sugar levels. Many herbalists believed this to be an error and that this was not a valid use for this herb. Animal research of the isolated alkaloid Berberine shows that it can enhance the efficacy of hypoglycemic medications. Perhaps Dr. Christopher was right after all!

FORMULA COMBINATIONS

- Goldenseal can be used as a simple or combined with Myrrh, White Sage, Yarrow or in some cases Wild Indigo (if there is infection with pus or sepsis).
- To address strep throat or acute tonsillitis combine Hydrastis with Echinacea, Sage and Wild Indigo).
- Combine Goldenseal with Echinacea, Wild Indigo, Plantain leaf and Calendula for treating CIN1-3 (mild dysplasia to carcinoma in situ) in a medicinal diaphragm application.
- A douche or bolus of the above combination is useful for vaginal candidiasis, bacterial vaginosis and chlamydia infections.
- In a protocol for a modestly prolapsed uterus with chronic low-grade bleeding and/or menorrhagia combine Goldenseal with Lady's Mantle, Raspberry Leaf, Partridge Berry and/or White Pond Lily.
- Combine Goldenseal with Yerba Mansa, Sage, Plantain leaf and/or Echinacea for a saline tea nasal douche application for sinus concerns as listed above.

- A sitz bath of Goldenseal, Calendula and a few drops of essential oil of Lavender is very useful for healing episiotomy incisions, infections of the Bartholin's glands, rectal fissures and rectal pruritus.
- Combine Goldenseal with Licorice, Lemon Balm, and Self Heal as a topical wash for oral or genital herpes infections.

DOSAGE

Tea (Infusion): 2 – 5 gram powdered root, 250 ml. hot water, steep 40 minutes, take 100 ml 3x/day
 Tincture (1:5), 60% ETOH Dose: 1-1.5 mL (20-30 gtt.) TID
 Capsules: 1 (00) capsule 2-3 times per day
 Goldenseal accounts for ½ part in formulation.

PREPARATIONS

Buy the root whole and powder it yourself as needed.
 Stir-fried brown: to reduce its cold nature.

CONTRAINDICATIONS & DRUG INTERACTIONS

Avoid use during pregnancy (theoretical).

This is based on in-vitro research on the isolated alkaloid berberine and it is unknown whether it would have any relevance to human usage.

Avoid use in infants as it may cause neonatal kernicterus (jaundice) and with people with acute hepatitis.

In vitro and in vivo studies indicate that Goldenseal can inhibit CYP3A4 activity.

Use it cautiously with medications metabolized via this pathway.

In animal studies regular intake of large doses of Goldenseal powder for 3 months increased hepatic hypertrophy.

When large doses were taken daily for 2 years it increased incidence of hepatic cellular adenomas, hepatoblastoma and benign tumors.

Hydrastis a powerful medical plant and is traditionally used in small amounts for relatively short periods of time (days to weeks) long-term daily use of this herb should probably be avoided.

SPECIAL NOTES OF CONSIDERATION

Goldenseal leaf was found to enhance the antibacterial activity of the isolated alkaloid Berberine. The leaf also inhibited bacterial efflux pumps and it strongly inhibited MRSA.

Up until recently, adding the leaf to the powdered root was considered adulteration with an inactive part of the plant. Based on this new research and the plants' scarcity and high cost. using the entire herb (leaf and root) makes sense and will actually enhance its activity.

Indigenous use include Cherokee, Iroquois, and Micmac peoples for a variety of conditions including debility, dyspepsia, cancer, earaches, sore eyes, tuberculosis, chapped and cut lips, heart trouble and an array of digestive concerns.

RESOURCES & REFERENCES

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