

## HOLISTIC HERBALISM ADVANCED CLINICAL PROGRAM MATERIA MEDICA

<b>Common Name</b>	Cat's Claw
<b>Latin</b>	Uncaria tomentosa
<b>Family</b>	Rubiaceae
<b>Other Known Names</b>	Una de Gato
<b>Energy</b>	Cool, dry
<b>Taste</b>	Bitter
<b>Part Used</b>	Inner Bark
<b>Location</b>	The two species in commerce are native to Peru, Colombia, Bolivia, Suriname and Venezuela
<b>Gathering</b>	The 10 year old (or older) lianas are cut leaving 3' of the vine to regrow
<b>Cultivation</b>	It grows in tropical upland forests.

HERBAL ACTION	TISSUE AFFINITY	MAJOR CONSTITUENTS
Antifungal	Immune System	<b>Pentacyclic oxindole alkaloids</b>
Antiinflammatory	Mucous Membrane	Pteropodine (uncarine C)-antioxidant
Antileukemic	Blood/Xue	Uncarine E
Antimutagenic	Large Intestine	Speciophylline (Uncarine D)
Antioxidant	Small Intestine	Mitraphylline-antiproliferative
Antiviral	Musculoskeletal System	<b>Tetracyclic oxindole alkaloids</b>
Astringent		Rhynchophylline-antiinflammatory
Immune amphoteric (possible)		Corynoxetine
Immunostimulant		Quinonic acid glycosides-antiinflammatory
		Flavonoids-antiinflammatory
		Anthocyanins-antioxidant
		Proanthocyanidin B2-neuroprotective

### SPECIFIC INDICATIONS

Clears heat/antiinflammatory

Immune stimulant used as an adjunctive therapy for cancer and HIV

Inflammation of the bowel and leaky gut syndrome.

## PRIMARY USES

- Una de Gato is an immune stimulant which can be used as an adjunctive therapy for cancer and HIV. It enhances lymphocyte activity and it reduces the side effects from radiation or chemotherapy as well as AZT therapy for HIV.
- Cat's Claw has been used to treat a number of cancers as part of a larger protocol which included surgery, radiation, and/or chemotherapy.
- There is some evidence which suggests Cat's Claw is an immune amphoteric (it inhibits allergic response and normalizes lymphocyte counts).
- Cat's Claw is very effective for inflammation of the bowel and can be used to treat IBS, IBD (Crohn's disease and ulcerative colitis), gastritis, leaky gut syndrome and gastric ulcers. It helps reduce inflammation, heal the gut mucosa and stop diarrhea and bleeding.
- Cat's Claw is quite effective for treating osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and bursitis and damp/hot arthritic conditions.
- Cat's Claw has been widely promoted as a "cure" for Lyme disease, likely stemming from a study promoted on the internet showing that this herb was vastly superior to antibiotics for treating Lyme Borreliosis. This study, however, has not been published in any peer review journal and its validity are highly questioned.
- Anecdotal reports of Uncaria improving Lyme symptoms abound, but human or animal studies are non-existent and in fact there are many studies proposing that Cat's Claw does not influence Lyme Borreliosis. In clinical practice experience the herb does seem to relieve Lyme arthralgia symptoms.

## FORMULA COMBINATIONS

- Combine Cat's Claw with Turmeric, Sarsaparilla, Goldenseal, Yarrow or Licorice for inflammation of the bowel as detailed above.
- To treat damp heat arthritic conditions combine Cat's Claw with Sarsaparilla, Gotu Kola or Magnolia bark or Honeysuckle stem/Ren Dong Tong.

## DOSAGE

Tea (Decoction): 5 – 10 gram dried bark, 500 ml water, decoct 20 minutes, steep for 40 minutes, take 4 oz. TID  
Tincture (1:4 or 1:5), 50-60% ETOH Dose: 1.5-2.5 mL (30-50 gtt.) QID  
Cat's Claw accounts for 1 – 1.5 parts in formulation.

## PREPARATIONS

Hydroalcoholic preparations have significantly greater antiinflammatory activity than water extracts.

## CONTRAINDICATIONS & DRUG INTERACTIONS

Avoid use during pregnancy.

There is a theoretical possibility of this herb interfering with immunosuppressive therapies, however this is unlikely. In female animals this herb can inhibit follicle maturation. Avoid use if trying to get pregnant.

### SPECIAL NOTES OF CONSIDERATION

*Uncaria guianensis* has greater antioxidant activity than *U. tomentosa*.

Indigenous peoples of Peru, Colombia and Suriname use both species of *Uncaria* as a contraceptive, for treating arthritis and dysentery, as a “blood purifier” and topically as a wound treatment.

### RESOURCES & REFERENCES

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Criollo, Julieta, Medicinal Herbs Quick Reference Guide, Revision 7, Published by Author, 2017

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