

Garlic

MEDICINAL: Garlic is a powerful natural antibiotic. It can stimulate cell growth and activity. It reduces blood pressure in hypertensive conditions. A main advantage to using garlic for its antibiotic properties is that it does not destroy the body's natural flora. It is excellent for use in all colds and infections of the body. When ingesting the raw cloves, a sprig of parsley chewed immediately after will freshen the breath.

GROWING: Garlic is a perennial herb that likes moderate soil and lots of sun and warmth. The plant grows to 2 feet tall. The bulb is the most common used portion, although the greens are often used in salads.

Ginger

MEDICINAL: Ginger is an excellent herb to use for strengthening and healing the respiratory system, as well as for fighting off colds and flu. It removes congestion, soothes sore throats, and relieves headaches and body aches. Combined with other herbs, it enhances their effectiveness. It is also very effective in combatting motion sickness. Recommended during pregnancy for treating morning sickness and digestive problems, as well as safe to use during pregnancy for colds and sore throats.

GROWING: Ginger grows through most of North America. It reaches to 6 inches high, and is a perennial. The ground root is the part used for healing.

Ginger appears to be effective for preventing motion sickness and as a digestive aid. Any antiemetic effects of ginger are due to its local action on the stomach. There are no reports of severe toxicity in humans from eating ginger, but pharmacological studies of ginger's constituents suggest that very large overdoses may potentially depress the central nervous system and cause cardiac arrhythmias (2). The internal dose is 2 to 4 grams of ginger root or equivalent preparations (1). If an individual has gallstones, ginger should only be used after consultation with a physician.

Ginseng

MEDICINAL: Ginseng stimulates the body to overcome all forms of illness, physical and mental. It is used to lower blood pressure, increase endurance, aid in relieving depression, and is a sexual stimulant. The dried root is used for healing purposes. It has been used throughout ancient times to the present day for use in conjunction with most herbs in treating all sorts of illnesses, including cancers, digestive troubles, and memory. It is used to tone the body during stress and to overcome fatigue. During menopause it aids in rejuvenating the system and balances hormones, as well as aids in regulating hot flashes.

GROWING: Ginseng can be very difficult to grow. Germination of disinfected seeds (to kill mold, which plagues ginseng at all stages of growth) can take up to a year or more. Plant in early autumn in

raised beds of very humus-rich soil. Plants must be shaded at all times. Roots are not harvested until the plants are at least 6 years old. Take care during harvesting and drying not to break off any of the "arms" of the root. Dry for one month before use.

Panax Ginseng (not to be confused with Siberian Ginseng) is used to improve energy, endurance, and to enhance the immune system to increase resistance to stress and disease (an adaptogen). No other drug has all the healthful properties that are attributed to ginseng. However, the existence of a genuine "cure-all" is unlikely. Until proper research has been conducted, claims that ginseng has medicinal value should be considered unproven.

Triterpenoid saponins called ginsenosides are thought to be responsible for whatever pharmacological activity ginseng might possess. The recommended daily internal dose is 1 to 2 grams of root or equivalent preparations for up to three months -- a repeated course of treatment is feasible. The best documented side effects of ginseng are insomnia, and to a lesser degree, diarrhea and skin eruption. The prolonged use of ginseng seems to be relatively safe in healthy, non-pregnant adults.

A recent study found that supplementation with a standardized Panax ginseng preparation at the recommended level (200 milligrams) as well as twice that amount (400 milligrams) per day for eight weeks did not improve aerobic work capacity or oxygen uptake. The standardized dose of 100 milligrams was equivalent to 500 milligrams of Panax Ginseng, so the dosages investigated were equivalent to 1 and 2 grams of Panax Ginseng root.

One myth especially touted among ginseng users is that it is a natural alternative to estrogen and thus would help women going through menopause. Truth be told, ginseng has no estrogen like properties.

Some research has indicated that ginseng might be beneficial for non insulin-dependent diabetes. However, this claim should be considered unproven until sufficient research has been conducted.

Thanks to the DSHEA, there's no way to be sure what is in a ginseng supplement. Since ginseng root is expensive, the commercial preparations (extracts, powders, teas, or paste) may contain little (or even no) ginseng. Consumer Reports magazine measured the amounts of six ginsenosides in 10 different brands of ginseng and found a wide variation in concentration from brand to brand. Most brands didn't have the amount of ginsenosides they claimed to have and some had no ginseng at all.

If you decide to take ginseng, it is best to use a brand made by a company that also makes prescription drugs. Such companies generally have tight quality control standards in place. It is recommended that you have your blood pressure monitored daily and keep a diary of how you feel. You should tell your doctor that you're taking ginseng.

Ginseng is the most famous Chinese herb. It is the most widely recognized plant used in traditional medicine. Various forms of ginseng have been used in medicine for more than 7000 years. Several species grow around the world, and though some are preferred for specific benefits, all are considered to have similar properties as an effective general rejuvenator.

The name panax is derived from the Greek word panacea meaning, "all healing" and the benefits of ginseng are recognized as such. Ginseng

is commonly used as an adaptogen, meaning it normalizes physical functioning depending on what the individual needs (for example, it will lower high blood pressure, but raise low blood pressure). It is also used to reduce the effects of stress, improve performance, boost energy levels, enhance memory, and stimulate the immune system. Oriental medicine has deemed ginseng a necessary element in all their best prescriptions, and regards it as prevention and a cure. It is said to remove both mental and bodily fatigue, cure pulmonary complaints, dissolve tumors and reduce the effects of age.

Ginseng is native to China, Russia, North Korea, Japan, and some areas of North America. It was first cultivated in the United States in the late 1800's. It is difficult to grow and takes 4-6 years to become mature enough to harvest. The roots are called Jin-chen, meaning 'like a man,' in reference to their resemblance to the shape of the human body.

Native North Americans considered it one of their most sacred herbs and add it to many herbal formulas to make them more potent. The roots can live for over 100 years.

Ginseng contains vitamins A, B-6 and the mineral Zinc, which aids in the production of thymic hormones, necessary for the functioning of the defense system. The main active ingredients of ginseng are the more than 25 saponin triterpenoid glycosides called "ginsenosides". These steroid-like ingredients provide the adaptogenic properties that enable ginseng to balance and counter the effects of stress. The glycosides appear to act on the adrenal glands, helping to prevent adrenal hypertrophy and excess corticosteroid production in response to physical, chemical or biological stress.

Studies done in China showed that ginsenosides also increase protein synthesis and activity of neurotransmitters in the brain. Ginseng is used to restore memory, and enhance concentration and cognitive abilities, which may be impaired by improper blood supply to the brain.

Ginseng helps to maintain excellent body functions. Siberian ginseng has been shown to increase energy, stamina, and help the body resist viral infections and environmental toxins. Research has shown specific effects that support the central nervous system, liver function, lung function and circulatory system. Animal studies have shown that ginseng extracts stimulate the production of interferons, increase natural killer cell activity, lower cholesterol and decrease triglyceride levels. Men have used the herb to improve sexual function and remedy impotence. Ginseng is believed to increase estrogen levels in women and is used to treat menopausal symptoms.

It is also used for diabetes, radiation and chemotherapy protection, colds, chest problems, to aid in sleep, and to stimulate the appetite.

Part used: Whole root. Powdered in capsules, as an ingredient in many herbal formulas, and as a tea.

Common Use: Ginseng is one of the most popular healing herbs used today throughout the world. It increases mental and physical efficiency and resistance to stress and disease. Ginseng's adaptogenic qualities help balance the body, depending on the

individual's needs. It is known to normalize blood pressure, increase blood circulation and aid in the prevention of heart disease.

Care: A perennial herb with a large, slow growing root. Requires a loose, rich soil, with a heavy mulch of leaves and only 20% sun.

Goldenseal

MEDICINAL: Goldenseal is another natural, powerful antibiotic. It should not be used by pregnant women. The herb goes straight to the bloodstream and eliminates infection in the body. It enables the liver to recover. When taken in combination with other herbs, it will boost the properties for the accompanying herbs.

GROWING: Goldenseal prefers rich soils in partial shade. It is a perennial herb that grows 6 - 18 inches high. The dried ground root is the part most often used, although the dried leaves are used in teas. It is difficult to grow successfully, and the plants need to be at least 6 years old before harvesting.

Goldenseal is a native American medicinal plant introduced to early settlers by Cherokee Indians who used it as a wash for skin diseases, wounds, and for sore, inflamed eyes. Its roots are bright yellow, thus the name. Goldenseal root has acquired a considerable reputation as a natural antibiotic and as a remedy for various gastric and genitourinary disorders.

Numerous references to Goldenseal began to appear in medical writings as far back as 1820 as a strong tea for indigestion. Today it is used to treat symptoms of the cold and flu and as an astringent, antibacterial remedy for the mucous membranes of the body.

This popular North American herb grows wild in moist mountainous woodland areas. Goldenseal's long history of use among North Americans flourished after the Civil War as it was an ingredient in many patent medicines. It has been collected to the point of near extinction. Goldenseal supplies are diminishing and most is now wildcrafted, making herbal supplements costly.

Goldenseal is used in many combination formulas and is reported to enhance the potency of other herbs. Preparations have been marketed for the treatment of menstrual disorders, urinary infections, rheumatic and muscular pain and as an antispasmodic.

The active ingredients in Goldenseal are the alkaloids hydrastine and berberine. Similar in action, they destroy many types of bacterial and viral infections. These alkaloids can also reduce gastric inflammation and relieve congestion. Berberine is a bitter that aids digestion and that has a sedative action on the central nervous system.

Goldenseal works wonders in combination with Echinacea particularly at the onset of cold and flu symptoms, especially coughs and sore throats. Goldenseal, Echinacea and Zinc lozenges should be in every medicine cabinet.

Goldenseal is a cure-all type of herb that strengthens the immune system, acts as an antibiotic, has anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties, potentiates insulin, and cleanses vital organs. It promotes the functioning capacity of the heart, the lymphatic and respiratory system, the liver, the spleen, the pancreas, and the colon.

Taken internally, Goldenseal increases digestive secretions, astringes the mucous membranes that line the gut, and checks inflammation. It also aids digestion by promoting the production of saliva, bile, and other digestive enzymes. In addition it may control heavy menstrual and postpartum bleeding by means of its astringent action.

As a dilute infusion, Goldenseal can be used as an eyewash and as a mouthwash for gum disease, and canker sores. It is also an effective wash or douche for yeast infections. External applications have been used in the treatment of skin disorders such as psoriasis, eczema, athlete's foot, herpes, and ringworm.

Part Used: Whole root. Available in bulk, capsules, and tincture.

Common Use: Treatment of any infection, inflammation and congestion of lungs, throat and sinuses. Famous for use in treatment of cold and flu. A potent remedy for disorders of the stomach and intestines such as irritable bowel syndrome, colitis, ulcers, and gastritis and internal parasites.

Care: Perennial. Grows best in humid regions with rich humus soil and in shady areas.

Cautions: The use of very large doses or extended use is not suggested. Not for use during pregnancy or by children under two. Children and older adults should take smaller doses.

Gotu Kola

MEDICINAL: Gotu Kola is an excellent mental stimulant. It is often used after mental breakdowns, and used regularly, can prevent nervous breakdown, as it is a brain cell stimulant. It relieves mental fatigue and senility, and aids the body in defending itself against toxins.

Gotu kola is a slender, creeping plant that grows commonly in swampy areas of India, Sri Lanka, Madagascar, South Africa and the tropics. Its fan shaped leaves are about the size of an old British penny - hence its common names Indian pennywort, marsh penny and water pennywort.

It is regarded as one of the most spiritual and rejuvenating herbs in Ayurveda and is used to improve meditation. It is said to develop the crown chakra, the energy center at the top of the head, and to balance the right and left hemispheres of the brain, which the leaf is said to resemble.

Gotu kola has been widely used for a number of conditions, particularly in traditional Eastern health care. In Ayurveda Gotu kola is one of the chief herbs for revitalizing the nerves and brain

cells. It is said to fortify the immune system, both cleansing and feeding it, and to strengthen the adrenals.

It has been used as a tonic for purification of blood and for promoting healthy skin. It has also been used to aid in restful sleep, treat skin inflammations, as a treatment for high blood pressure and as a mild diuretic. Recent studies (1995) demonstrated that Gotu kola destroyed cultured tumor cells in the laboratory setting (in vitro).

The leaves of this swamp plant have been used around the world for centuries to treat leprosy, cancer, skin disorders, arthritis, hemorrhoids, and tuberculosis. In recent years, Gotu kola has become popular in the West as a nerve tonic to promote relaxation and to enhance memory.

The herbs calming properties make it well suited for overcoming insomnia and making one calm for yoga and meditative practices. It is commonly used to rebuild energy reserves improve memory and treat fatigue, both mental and physical.

Gotu kola has been referred to as "food for the brain". This oriental herb has demonstrated mild tranquilizing, anti-anxiety and anti-stress effects, as well as improving mental functions such as concentration and memory. It has a calming effect on the body and is chiefly used to support the central nervous system. These beneficial qualities make Gotu kola an excellent herb for children with A.D.D. because it has a stimulating effect on the brain that increases one's ability to focus while having a soothing and relaxing effect on an overactive nervous system.

Gotu kola is often confused with kola nut. Due to this confusion, some people assume the rejuvenating properties of Gotu kola are due to the stimulating effects of caffeine contained in kola nut. In fact, Gotu kola is not related to kola nut and contains no caffeine.

There are three main chemical constituents in Gotu kola. The first is asiaticoside, which is a triterpene glycoside and classified as an antibiotic. It aids in wound healing and has been used in the treatment of leprosy and tuberculosis in the Far East. The second constituent is a pair of chemicals, brahmoside and brahminoside, which are saponin glycosides. These are diuretic in nature and have a slightly sedative action in large doses. Finally, there is madecassoside, a glycoside that is a strong anti-inflammatory agent. The plant is also a source of Vitamin K, magnesium, calcium and sodium.

Gotu Kola has been found to have significant results in healing of skin, other connective tissues, lymph tissue, blood vessels, and mucous membranes. Researchers have found that Gotu kola contains several glycosides that exhibit wound healing and anti-inflammatory activities and that asiaticosides stimulate the formation of lipids and proteins necessary for healthy skin.

Gotu kola affects various stages of tissue development, including keratinization (the process of replacing skin after sores or ulcers), the synthesis of collagen (the first step in tissue repair), the stimulation of hair and nail growth, and support for the repair of cartilage. Gotu kola has been effectively used in the treatment of second and third degree burns. It has been shown to decrease healing time and reduce scar tissue formation.

Recent studies show that Gotu kola also has a positive effect on the circulatory system. It seems to improve the flow of blood throughout the body by strengthening the veins and capillaries. Gotu kola has been shown to be particularly useful for people who are inactive or confined to bed due to illness.

The herb has been used successfully to treat phlebitis (inflammation of the veins), varicose veins, as well as leg cramps, swelling of the legs, and "heaviness" or tingling in the legs. In modern health care it has been used for venous insufficiency, localized inflammation and infection, and post-surgery recovery.
Parts Used: Leaves and aerial parts.

Common Use: Prevention of mental fatigue and enhanced concentration and memory. A balancing tonic that both increases energy and relaxes the body. Stimulates the central nervous system, aids circulation especially in the legs, and is a mild diuretic. Aids in many types of wound healing. Used for rheumatism, blood diseases, mental disorders, high blood pressure, congestive heart failure, sore throat, and hepatitis.