

DONG QUAI

(Angelica polymorpha)

Clinical Summary

Actions

- Anti-inflammatory
- Antispasmodic
- Blood Tonic
- Cardiotonic
- Antiarrhythmic
- Circulatory Stimulant
- Hepatoprotective
- Immunomodulator
- Uterine Tonic
- Mild Laxative

Indications

- Gynaecological conditions and menstrual disorders including endometriosis, amenorrhoea, dysmenorrhoea, irregular menstruation, premenstrual syndrome, infertility, recovery from childbirth and menopausal symptoms (especially hot flushes)
- Liver disease
- Heart conditions including hypertension, angina pectoris, palpitations, arrhythmia
- Anaemia
- Chronic constipation

Traditional Use

Dong quai is known as the best Chinese tonic herb for women, although it can be used for men. It is also called 'female ginseng' because it is an important herb for the uterus.

Energetics

Warming, moistening.

Constituents

Essential oil (ligustilide), ferulic acid, coumarins, phytosterols.

Use in Pregnancy

Contraindicated in the first trimester.

Contraindications and Cautions

Case reports suggest that concomitant use of dong quai with warfarin can increase the anticoagulant effects of warfarin and increase the risk of bleeding. Women with breast cancer, uterine cancer and ovarian cancer should avoid using dong quai.

Drug Interactions

None known.

Administration and Dosage

Liquid extract 1:1 in 45% alcohol
30 to 120mL weekly