

GARLIC

(*Allium sativum*)

Clinical Summary

Actions

- Antimicrobial
- Immune Modulating
- Stimulant Diaphoretic
- Stimulant Expectorant
- Alterative
- Carminative
- Vermifuge
- Anti-inflammatory
- Antioxidant
- Hypoglycaemic
- Circulatory Stimulant
- Antihypertensive
- Chemopreventive
- Hepatoprotective

Indications

- Cardiovascular disease, hypertension, atherosclerosis, optimising cholesterol levels, hyperlipidaemia, arterial vascular disease
- Fungal and bacterial infections such as vaginitis and athlete's foot, parasites
- Respiratory tract infections, catarrhal conditions, colds, influenza, bronchial congestion, asthma
- To optimise digestion, small intestinal bacteria overgrowth, dysentery, stomach ulcers
- Possible cancer prophylactic, particularly cancers of the gastrointestinal tract
- Type 2 diabetes, insulin resistance

Traditional Use

Garlic may be a simple kitchen herb but it is a veritable panacea that has more than 7,000 years of documented medicinal use. It is one of the most well-researched, albeit stinky, medicinal herbs.

Energetics

Warming, drying, pungent.

Constituents

Organosulphur compounds (alliin, allicin and ajoene), enzymes (alliinase), amino acids (arginine, lysine, threonine and tryptophan), fibre, lipids, phytic acid, saponins, beta-sitosterol, terpenes (citral, geraniol and linalool), flavonoids and small quantities of vitamins and minerals such as B vitamins, vitamin C, vitamin E, beta-carotene, chromium, iron, selenium and phosphorus.

Use in Pregnancy

Usual dietary intake is of no concern however higher doses are not recommended in the first trimester until safety can be confirmed.

Contraindications and Cautions

Patients with bleeding abnormalities should avoid high doses of garlic. Although usual dietary intakes are likely to be safe, prior to major surgery, suspend the use of high dose garlic supplements one week before as there is a theoretical increased risk of bleeding. Avoid if there is a known allergy to sulphurous vegetables. If being used as part of a topical application a test patch is advised before more widespread application.

Drug Interactions

Use caution with anticoagulants (such as warfarin) at doses greater than 7g/day. Avoid using concurrently with antiretroviral therapy (anti-HIV drugs). Observe with antiplatelet drugs and antihypertensive and antihyperlipidaemic agents. Use with caution under medical supervision with hydrochlorothiazide, a thiazide diuretic (water pill) used for hypertension.

Administration and Dosage

Liquid extract 1:1 in 25% alcohol
40 to 80mL weekly