

GENTIAN

(Gentiana lutea)

Clinical Summary

Actions

- Bitter Tonic
- Cholagogue
- Sialogogue

Indications

- Loss of appetite, indigestion, flatulence, dyspepsia, nausea, diarrhoea, to improve digestion during convalescence or fatigue and after mild feverish conditions

Traditional Use

In the 1930s, in her Modern Herbal, Maude Grieve called gentian "one of the best strengtheners of the human system. In ancient Greece and Rome it was used to relieve common gastrointestinal symptoms, much as it is used today. It was first noted in the Chinese medical literature in 50 BC.

Energetics

Cold, dry.

Constituents

Alkaloids (pyridine-type gentianine, gentianine), bitters (secoiridoid glycoside gentiopicroside (also known as gentiamarin and gentiopicrotin)), xanthones (gentisein, gentisin (gentianin), isogentisin), carbohydrates (gentiobiose, sucrose), pectins, tannins, triperpenes, volatile oil (trace).

Use in Pregnancy

Should not be administered during pregnancy due to its traditional use as an emmenagogue.

Contraindications and Cautions

Contraindicated in gastric or duodenal ulcer, hyperacidity and high blood pressure.

Drug Interactions

Monitor with antihypertensive drugs.

Administration and Dosage

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