

HAWTHORN

(*Crataegus monogyna*)

Clinical Summary

Actions

- Cardiotonic
- Cardioprotective
- Hypotensive
- Antioxidant

Indications

- Congestive heart failure or heart weakness, palpitations, high blood pressure, arteriosclerosis, angina, hyperlipidaemia
- Connective tissue disorders to strengthen connective tissue, decrease capillary fragility and prevent collagen destruction of joints

Traditional Use

Dioscorides and Paracelsus praised hawthorn for its heart-strengthening properties and it is also known in traditional Chinese medicine. It has since been shown to have many different positive effects on the heart and is a popular prescription medicine in Germany for heart failure.

Energetics

Cooling, drying.

Constituents

Flavonoids, particularly the oligomeric proanthocyanidins (OPCs) such as procyanidin B2, catechin and epicatechin; flavonoids such as rutin, hyperoside and vitexin rhamnoside, and flavone C-glycosides such as vitexin; caffeic acid, chlorogenic acid, tocopherols, ascorbic acid, tannins, saponins and triterpenes.

Use in Pregnancy

Should not be used in pregnancy until safety is established.

Contraindications and Cautions

Heart disease can be a very serious medical condition, with a rapidly changing course, and should not be treated without close medical supervision. In particular, chest pain and shortness of breath are extremely serious symptoms that require immediate medical attention.

Drug Interactions

Avoid with nitrates and phosphodiesterase-5 inhibitors (such as sildenafil). Caution with antihypertensive drugs. Theoretical beneficial interaction with digoxin and cardiac glycosides, diuretics, doxorubicin (chemotherapy medication) and lipid lowering drugs.

Administration and Dosage

Liquid extract 1:1 in 30% alcohol
10 to 20mL weekly