

ST MARY'S THISTLE

(Silybum marianum)

Clinical Summary

Actions

- Hepatoprotective
- Hepatorestorative
- Choleric
- Cholagogue
- Chelates iron
- Antioxidant
- Anti-inflammatory
- Antifibrotic
- Hypoglycaemic
- Galactagogue

Indications

- Liver disease including toxic liver damage, chronic liver diseases, alcoholic liver disease, acute viral hepatitis, hepatitis C infection
- Preventing gallstones, gallbladder support
- Hypercholesterolemia (high cholesterol)
- Chemotherapy support, exposure to conventional drugs and chemical pollutants
- Digestive disorders, dyspepsia, hangover
- Skin conditions involving liver dysfunction
- Support breast milk production during breast feeding

Traditional Use

St Mary's thistle has a long history of traditional use since ancient times. Over the centuries it has been touted as a remedy for snakebite, melancholy, liver conditions and promoting lactation.

Energetics

Bitter, warm and dry.

Constituents

Silymarin, a complex of flavonolignans (silybin A, silybin B, isosilybin A, isosilybin B, silychristin A, silychristin B and silydianin), a flavonoid taxifolin and a bioflavonoid quercetin. The principal component of silymarin is silybin (commonly referred to as silibinin) and is identified as a major biologically active component. The oil fraction contains linoleic, oleic and palmitic acids, sterols, tocopherol (vitamin E) and phospholipids.

Use in Pregnancy

No known restrictions.

Contraindications and Cautions

Contraindicated in individuals with an allergy to the Asteraceae or Compositae (daisy) family.

Drug Interactions

Caution with risperidone (antipsychotic agent), sirolimus (selective immune-suppressing drug) and tamoxifen (hormonal therapy used to treat breast cancer). Monitor with metronidazole (antibiotic). The combination may be beneficial with doxorubicin and cisplatin (chemotherapy medications) and hepatotoxic substances.

Administration and Dosage

Liquid extract 1:1 in 45% alcohol
20 to 80mL weekly