

BAICAL SCULLCAP

(*Scutellaria baicalensis*)

Clinical Summary

Actions

- Anti-inflammatory
- Antioxidant
- Antiallergic
- Hepatoprotective
- Neuroprotective
- Hypotensive
- Anxiolytic
- Hypnotic
- Antimicrobial
- Immunostimulant
- Antiemetic

Indications

- Chronic inflammatory conditions such as asthma, arthritis and allergies
- Liver disease and infections such as hepatitis
- Hypertension, vascular disorders
- Common infections such as the common cold and bronchitis
- Nausea and vomiting especially as adjunctive therapy during cancer treatment

Traditional Use

Baical scullcap is used in Chinese medicine to clear 'heat and dry dampness'. Diseases with heat are associated with symptoms such as fever, irritability, thirst, cough and expectoration of thick, yellow sputum. Damp diseases may be associated with diarrhoea, a feeling of heaviness of the chest and painful urination. From a modern perspective this suggests that baical scullcap may be useful for infection and inflammation of the respiratory, digestive and urinary systems.

Energetics

Bitter, cold.

Constituents

Resin, tannins, numerous flavonoids and their glycosides (baicalin, baicalein).

Use in Pregnancy

Baical scullcap is used in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) for restless foetus (threatened abortion) and toxemia of pregnancy however safety in pregnancy is still unknown.

Contraindications and Cautions

Baical scullcap is contraindicated in cold conditions in TCM.

Drug Interactions

Baical scullcap is contraindicated during interferon therapy for cancer treatment. Avoid using with cyclosporin (immunosuppressant medication) and rosuvastatin (a statin medication). Until more data becomes available caution is advised with benzodiazepines (nervous system depressants commonly prescribed to treat stress, anxiety or insomnia), lithium (psychiatric medication), anticoagulant/antiplatelet (such as warfarin), antidiabetic and central nervous system depressant drugs.

Administration and Dosage

Liquid extract 1:1 in 60% alcohol
15 to 30mL weekly