

ANDROGRAPHIS

(Andrographis paniculata)

Clinical Summary

Actions

- Immune Modulator
- Immunostimulant
- Bitter Tonic
- Antiviral
- Antimicrobial
- Anti-inflammatory
- Antioxidant
- Antipyretic
- Choleretic
- Hepatoprotective
- Possible Adaptogen

Indications

- Acute and chronic infections including upper respiratory tract infections, such as the common cold and influenza, asthma, chronic obstructive airways disease, sore throat (especially tonsillitis), hay fever, fever, weakened immunity, general debility, hyperthyroidism associated with viral infection, urinary infections
- Worm infestation
- Cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes
- Ulcerative colitis, diarrhoea, loss of appetite, poor liver function, hepatic conditions, flatulence, dyspepsia, intestinal permeability
- Rheumatoid arthritis, fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, HIV infection, multiple sclerosis, Lyme disease
- Skin infections, inflammatory skin disorders such as atopic eczema and psoriasis, ulcers

Traditional Use

Commonly known as the 'king of bitters' and 'Indian echinacea', andrographis is an Ayurvedic herb that has been used traditionally for centuries as a bitter tonic to support the immune system, as a remedy against intestinal parasites and a general stomach tonic.

Energetics

Bitter, cold, dry.

Constituents

Bitter diterpenoid lactones (andrographolides), diterpene glucosides, flavonoids, diterpene dimers, xanthones.

Use in Pregnancy

Not recommended.

Contraindications and Cautions

Suspend use one week before major surgery. High doses can occasionally lead to gastric discomfort, anorexia and, in extreme cases, vomiting. When prescribing high doses give smaller doses more frequently to mitigate this. While andrographis is usually considered safe concentrated (standardised with andrographolides) andrographis products, particularly ones using methanol as a solvent, have had adverse effects reported to the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) such as taste disturbance and anaphylactic/allergic reactions.

Drug Interactions

Clinical significance of use in combination with immunosuppressive drugs is not clear (theoretical risk) but caution is advised. There is a theoretical risk of increased bleeding with antiplatelet or anticoagulant drugs. The combination may be beneficial with 5-aminosalicylates and anti-rheumatoid arthritis agents due to possible additive effects. Medical supervision is recommended and caution is advised until more safety data becomes available.

Administration and Dosage

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