

BUCKTHORN

(Rhamnus frangula)

Clinical Summary

Actions

- Laxative
- Digestive Stimulant
- Cathartic

Indications

- Constipation (short to medium term use)

Traditional Use

Buckthorn has been used in traditional European medicine as a laxative and cathartic, and also as a general tonic.

Energetics

Cold, Bitter.

Constituents

Anthraquinone aglycones (alizarin, emodin, franguloside), monoglucosides (frangulin A and B), physcion and chrysophanol (glycosidic and aglycone forms), resin, tannin.

Use in Pregnancy

Contraindicated due to its action on the bowel and potential to trigger uterine contractions.

Contraindications and Cautions

Long term use or large doses should be avoided. Laxatives in large doses may trigger griping pain and diarrhoea, leading to fluid loss. It should be avoided in cases of intestinal obstruction, dehydration or inflammatory bowel disease. The bark contains active constituents that, when metabolised, can turn the urine red or orange which is considered transitory and harmless.

Drug Interactions

None known.

Administration and Dosage

Liquid extract 1:1 in 25% alcohol
40 to 100mL weekly