CINNAMON
(Cinnamomum verum)

Clinical Summary

Actions

- Hypoglycaemic
- Hypoinsulinaemic
- Antioxidant
- Anticancer
- Antimicrobial
- Antifungal
- Antiviral
- Immunomodulator
- Astringent
- Antidiarrhoeal
- Carminative
- Hypolipidaemic

Indications

- Digestive disorders including flatulent dyspepsia, nausea and diarrhoea
- Bacterial and viral infections including the common cold and influenza
- Fungal infections including tinea pedis and candida
- Diabetes, obesity and metabolic syndrome
- Hyperlipidaemia
- Possible cancer prophylaxis and treatment adjuvant
- Oxidative stress and inflammatory disorders

Traditional Use

It has a long history of use as a culinary spice in many cultures and additionally, in native Ayurvedic medicine it is considered a remedy for respiratory, digestive and gynaecological ailments. It's history as a medicinal plant goes as far back as the Ancient Egyptians and Chinese. As the availability across Europe increased it was then adopted by herbalists for medicinal uses. It was traditionally used as a flavouring agent and digestive tonic in cases of diarrhoea, anorexia and dyspepsia. It was also used for rheumatism and menstrual disorders. Not to be confused with cassia (*Cinnamomum cassia* (L.) J.Presl or synonym *Cinnamomum aromaticum* Nees) which is cheaper, has a stronger flavour and is often marketed as 'cinnamon'.

Energetics

Pungent, sweet, astringent, heating.

Constituents

In addition to flavour, a critical difference between true cinnamon and cassia is the coumarin content of cassia. The levels of coumarins in cassia appear to be very high and pose health risks if consumed regularly in higher quantities. Three of the main components of the essential oils obtained from cinnamon are trans-cinnamaldehyde, eugenol and linalool, which represent 82.5% of the total composition. Other constituents of true cinnamon are oligopolymeric procyanidins, cinnamic acid, phenolic acids, pentacyclic diterpenes cinnzeylanol and it's acetyl derivative cinnzeylanine and the sugars mannitol, L-arabino-D-xylanose, L-arabinose, D-xylose, α-D-glucan as well as mucilage polysaccharides. Each 100g contains vitamin A: 260IU, thiamine: 0.02mg, riboflavin: 0.14mg, niacin: 1.3mg, ascorbic acid: 28mg, Ca: 1.228mg, P: 61mg, Fe: 38mg, Mg: 56mg, Na: 26mg, K: 500mg, Zn: 2mg.

Use in Pregnancy

There are no known problems with the use of cinnamon during pregnancy and lactation provided that doses do not greatly exceed the amounts used in food.

Contraindications and Cautions

None known.

Drug Interactions

Caution with antidiabetic drugs.

Administration and Dosage

Liquid extract 1:2 in 50% alcohol
20 to 40mL weekly