

RIBWORT

(Plantago lanceolata)

Clinical Summary

Actions

- Anti-inflammatory
- Antimicrobial
- Antioxidant
- Astringent
- Expectorant
- Demulcent
- Anticatarrhal
- Soothing Diuretic
- Antibacterial

Indications

- Upper respiratory catarrh, particularly in children, including chronic mucous membrane discharge, asthma, acute and chronic bronchitis, coughs of all sorts, pertussis (whooping cough), rhinitis, sinusitis, nasal and middle ear catarrhal conditions
- Inflammation of the mouth and throat
- Dysentery and diarrhoea, gastric and peptic ulcer, colitis, haemorrhoids
- Incontinence in children, painful urination, cystitis
- Externally for wounds and inflammation of the skin, as a form of first aid for insect bites and bruises

Traditional Use

Plantago is from the Latin *planta*, the sole of the foot, because it grows on paths and lanceolata refers to the lance shaped leaves. It has long been considered by herbalists to be a useful remedy for coughs, wounds, inflamed skin or dermatitis, and insect bites. Bruised or crushed leaves have been applied topically to treat insect bites and stings, eczema and small wounds or cuts. It was considered to be a gentle, soothing expectorant

with a mild astringent effect said to help remedy haemorrhoids or bladder infections with small amounts of blood in the urine. Traditionally regarded as a mucilage drug.

Energetics

Cooling, moistening.

Constituents

Phenolic acids (gallic, chlorogenic, cinnamic, caffeic acids), mucilage polysaccharides (mainly arabinose and galactose), iridoid glycosides (including aucubin and catalpol), tannins, silica, acteoside, aglycone aucubigenin, five phentylethanoids, cistanosid, coumarins, saponins, flavonoids (apigenin and luteolin) and minerals (zinc and potassium).

Use in Pregnancy

Not advised as there is insufficient evidence for safe administration.

Contraindications and Cautions

None known.

Drug Interactions

None known.

Administration and Dosage

Liquid extract 1:1 in 25% alcohol
20 to 80mL weekly