

TRIBULUS

(*Tribulus terrestris*)

Clinical Summary

Actions

- Diuretic
- Demulcent
- Aphrodisiac
- Tonic

Indications

- Urinary disorders including cystitis, kidney stones, oedema
- Reproductive conditions including infertility, sexual impotence, decreased libido, menopausal symptoms
- Coronary heart disease
- Muscle strength
- Gout
- Cough

Traditional Use

The Latin name tribulus originally meant a thorny plant or thistle. There is no well-documented information on the traditional use of tribulus leaf. Traditionally tribulus fruit has been used in the folk medicine of India, China, Bulgaria and South Africa for a variety of reproductive conditions such as infertility and sexual impotence, as well as for muscle strength, oedemas, abdominal distention, cardiovascular diseases and general health.

Energetics

Neutral, moist.

Constituents

The steroidal saponins are considered to be the factor responsible for the biological activity of products derived from tribulus. The steroidal saponin component of tribulus includes constituents such as protodioscin, diosgenin, tribulosin, yamogenin, epismilagenin, tigogenin, neotigogenin, gitogenin and neogitogenin, terrestrinins A (1) and B (2). New saponins continue to be isolated from tribulus fruit however their significance has not yet been determined. Beta-sitosterol, vitamin C, potassium and calcium have been isolated from the fruit. The alkaloids harmaline and norharmaline have been identified and are believed to contribute to causing the staggers in stock that graze on it.

Use in Pregnancy

Not recommended during pregnancy or lactation due to lack of sufficient data.

Contraindications and Cautions

People with androgen-sensitive tumours should avoid use.

Drug Interactions

Caution with lithium, testosterone, antidiabetic, androgenic and erectile dysfunction drugs. Monitor with antihypertensive drugs e.g. ACE-inhibitors.

Administration and Dosage

Liquid extract 1:1 in 60% alcohol
10 to 20mL weekly