

CAYENNE

(Capsicum frutescens)

Clinical Summary

Actions

- Antimicrobial
- Circulatory stimulant
- Metabolic stimulant
- Stimulating diaphoretic
- Stimulating expectorant
- Immunostimulant
- Decongestant
- Antipyretic
- Carminative
- Antispasmodic
- Antimicrobial
- Analgesic
- Styptic
- Antioxidant
- Antihypertensive
- Rubefacient
- Counterirritant
- Antifungal

Indications

- Poor or impaired peripheral circulation including cold hands and feet, chilblains, Reynaud's disease, neuropathy, shingles pain, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoarthritis, carpal tunnel syndrome, cardiovascular health
- Digestive problems
- Debility, fatigue, depression, low libido, cluster headaches, migraine, shingles
- To support healthy immune function, upper respiratory infections, emphysema, to provide relief from mucous congestion, mild fever management
- Modulating inflammation, insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes, gestational diabetes, back pain, psoriasis
- Weight loss (due to increases satiety)
- Topically for toothaches, mouth pain from chemotherapy or radiation, bleeding, fungal infections, chilblains, fibromyalgia, menstrual cramps other joint and muscle pain, postmastectomy pain and as a gargle to relieve sore or inflamed throat, laryngitis

Traditional Use

Not known as a "gentle" remedy cayenne was the key ingredient in the *Materia Medica* of Samuel Thomson (with lobelia) because of its intense ability to bring "vital heat" to the body.

Energetics

Pungent, heating, drying.

Constituents

Capsaicin and other capsaicinoids, steroidal saponins, essential oils and flavonoids, phenolic acids, carotenoids, vitamin A, vitamin C and tocopherols.

Use in Pregnancy

Likely to be safe when used in small amounts and topically.

Contraindications and Cautions

Occasional hypersensitivity may occur. Avoid contact with the eyes. Caution is advised in peptic ulcer and gastrointestinal reflux. Do not apply to broken skin. Contraindicated in children under age two. However, the German Commission E says cayenne may be used externally in older children as an ointment for muscle pain and as a deterrent for thumb sucking.

Drug Interactions

Caution with anticoagulant/antiplatelet drugs. Caution with antidiabetic drugs. Caution with theophylline, monitor with ACE-inhibitors. Monitor with acid-reducing medication. The combination of topical cayenne with analgesics and non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs may be beneficial.

Administration and Dosage

Liquid extract 1:3 in 63% alcohol
1 to 2mL weekly