

# IVY LEAF

(*Hedera helix*)

## Clinical Summary

### Actions

- Expectorant
- Antispasmodic
- Secretolytic
- Anticatarrhal
- Bronchodilator
- Anti-inflammatory
- Analgesic
- Antimicrobial
- Diaphoretic
- Antipyretic

### Indications

- Respiratory disorders, including:
  - cough associated with the common cold
  - asthma
  - acute and chronic bronchitis
- Inflammation and pain disorders such as:
  - arthritis
  - gout
  - headache

### Traditional Use

Traditional healers in Europe had more uses for the plant than contemporary herbalists and ivy leaf was held in high esteem among the ancients. They described ivy leaves as cathartic, anthelmintic and useful for lowering fever and inducing perspiration. Its leaves were used to form wreaths including the wreath of Bacchus. The traditional European indications for ivy leaf primarily were for the respiratory tract. Extracts have been used as antispasmodics and as topical treatments for dermal infections and itching, as well as for weight loss. Ivy leaf has also been traditionally used for arthritis, scrofula (a type of tuberculosis infection), fevers, skin parasites, burns and infections.

### Energetics

Drying.

### Constituents

Saponins: 3 to 4% content including hederasaponin C (hederacoside C), hederaginins and oleanolic acid; flavonoids and phenolics including rutin, quercetin and kaempferol, caffeic acid and dihydroxy-benzoic acid; sterols including stigmasterol, sitosterol cholesterol, campesterol and  $\alpha$ -spinasterol; coumarin glycoside scopolin and the polyacetylenes falcariol and falcarinone volatile oil including germacrene D,  $\beta$ -caryophyllene, sabinene and  $\alpha$ - and  $\beta$ -pinene; hamamiletol.

### Use in Pregnancy

Not recommended.

### Contraindications and Cautions

None known.

### Drug Interactions

No serious adverse events with a therapeutic dose of the herbal preparations are reported in literature, or reference sources, with a well-documented history.

### Administration and Dosage

Liquid extract 1:2 in 30% alcohol  
5 to 10mL weekly