

HOPS

(Humulus lupulus)

Clinical Summary

Actions

- Phytoestrogenic
- Hormone Modulator
- Hypnotic
- Nervine
- Sedative
- Anxiolytic
- Antispasmodic
- Bitter Tonic

Indications

- Insomnia
- Anxiety, restlessness, panic attacks
- Anorexia, nervous dyspepsia
- Neuralgia, tension headache
- Menopause
- Dyspepsia, indigestion, irritable bowel syndrome

Traditional Use

Although hops are most famous for producing the bitter flavour in beer it has been used since ancient times in many different cultures (China, India and North America). It is related botanically, though not pharmacologically, to cannabis. The climbing nature of the herb influenced its common name, as this is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word hoppan, which means 'to climb'.

Energetics

Bitter, cold, dry.

Constituents

Resinous bitter principles (mostly alpha-bitter (humulone, cohumulone, adhumulone) and beta-bitter acids (lupulone, colupulone, adlupulone)) and their oxidative degradation products, condensed tannins, volatile oil, polysaccharides, mainly monoterpenes and sesquiterpenes, flavonoids (xanthohumol, isoxanthohumol, kaempferol, quercetin and rutin), phenolic acids and amino acids and catechins (catechin gallate, epicatechin gallate).

Use in Pregnancy

Caution is advised in pregnancy because of the possible hormonal effects.

Contraindications and Cautions

Caution is advised in patients with oestrogen dependent tumours.

Drug Interactions

Caution with central nervous system depressant drugs and alcohol. Monitor with oral contraceptives and hormone replacement therapy or anti-oestrogenic drugs.

Administration and Dosage

Liquid extract 1:2 in 45% alcohol
10 to 40mL weekly