

Bloodroot and Powder Profile

Also known as

Also known as- Sanguinaria Canadensis, Indian paint, and Paucon.

Introduction

Bloodroot is a low-growing woodland herb that grows in the north central United States and the prairie provinces plus British Columbia in Canada. The red juice pressed from the fresh root is poisonous when taken internally, but when used externally it has a unique ability to dissolve abnormal growth without disturbing normal tissue.

Constituents

Alkaloids, berberine and coptisine (antibacterial chemicals also found in barberry and coptis), various forms of sanguinarine.

Parts Used

Root

Typical Preparations

Powder or paste from ground dried root. Can also be administered in extract form.

Summary

Although bloodroot is used to make commercial toothpastes and mouthwashes, the main use of the herb in herbal medicine is treating skin tags. Skin tags, known in the medical literature as acrochordons, are soft, rubbery, skin-colored growths that typically grow into a droplet shape and hang from the skin by a stalk. They do not become malignant and, except for getting caught in zippers and being irritated by rough clothing, do not cause pain or inflammation and are not a medical concern. Skin tags are, however, a cosmetic problem, and for this reason insurance usually does not pay the doctors bills for removing them. A dermatologist can snip them off in seconds with a scalpel or scissors. A family practitioner is more likely to burn them off with an electric spark or freeze them off with liquid nitrogen. All of these procedures are at least unpleasant and sometimes painful, and if you're susceptible to skin tags, you may get rid of one crop only to develop another. Bloodroot is a far less expensive way to handle the problem. Do not apply Bloodroot to your eyelids, lips, nose, or genitals. Bloodroot can damage normal and healthy skin tissue, so make sure you only apply the herb to the damaged areas you want to treat. Recent studies have also found it to be extremely effective in treating warts as well.

Precautions

Bloodroot is for external use only and it is recommended to be avoided during pregnancy. Not to be applied to broken or abraded skin.

Bloodroot

POISON!

Botanical: *Sanguinaria Canadensis* (LINN.)

Family: N.O. Papaveraceae

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---**Synonyms**---Indian Paint. Tetterwort. Red Pucoon. Red Root. Paucon. Coon Root. Snakebite. Sweet Slumber.

---**Parts Used**---Root, whole plant.

---**Habitat**---United States of America and Canada, found in rich open woods from Canada, south to Florida and west to Arkansas. and

Nebraska.

---Description---A perennial plant, one of the earliest and most beautiful spring flowers. In England it will grow freely if cultivated carefully, it has even grown in the open in gravelly dry soil in the author's garden. It has a lovely white flower and produces only a single leaf and a flowering scape about 6 inches high. When the leaf first appears it is wrapped round the flower bud and is a greyish-green colour covered with a downy bloom - Leaves palmate five to nine lobed, 6 to 10 inches long. After flowering the leaves increase in size, the underside paler showing prominent veins. The white flower is wax-like with golden stamens. The seed is an oblong narrow pod about 1 inch long. The rootstock is thick, round and fleshy, slightly curved at ends, and contains an orange-red juice, and is about 1 to 4 inches long, with orange-red rootlets. When dried it breaks with a short sharp fracture, little smell, taste bitter acrid and persistent, powdered root causes sneezing and irritation of the nose. The root is collected in the autumn, after leaves die down; it must be stored in a dry place or it quickly deteriorates.

---Constituents---Alkaloids Sanguinarine, Chelerythrine, Protopine and B. homochelidonine; Sanguinarine forms colourless crystals. Chelerythrine is also colourless and crystalline. Protopine (also found in opium) is one of the most widely diffused of the opium alkaloids. The rhizome also contains red resin and an abundance of starch.

---Medicinal Action and Uses---Emetic cathartic expectorant and emmenagogue, and of great value in atonic dyspepsia, asthma, bronchitis and croup. (The taste is so nauseating, that it may cause expectorant action.) Of value in pulmonary consumption, nervous irritation and helpful in lowering high pulse, and in heart disease and weakness and palpitation of heart of great use. For ringworm apply the fluid extract. Also good for torpid liver, scrofula, dysentery. It is applied to fungoid growths, ulcers fleshy excrescences, cancerous affections and as an escharotic. Sanguinaria root is chiefly used as an expectorant for chronic bronchitis and as a local application in chronic eczema, specially when secondary to varicose ulcers. In *toxic doses*, it causes burning in the stomach, intense thirst, vomiting, faintness vertigo, intense prostration with dimness of eyesight.

The root has long been used by the American Indians as a dye for their bodies and clothes and has been used successfully by American and French dyers.

---Preparations and Dosages---Fluid extract of Sanguinaria, U.S.P., dose 1 1/2 minims. Tincture of Sanguinaria, U.S.P., 15 minims. Powdered root, 10 to 30 grains. Sanguinarin, 1/4 to 1 grain. Fluid extract, 10 to 30 drops .