

Ephedra (Ephedra sinica, Ephedra equisetina, Ephedra intermedia)
Common Names: Mormon tea, ma huang.

Location: This herb can be found in Mongolia and China.

Description: The entire herb is used for medicinal purposes.

Properties: Ephedra has been used over the centuries to increase sweating, calm breathing and treat colds.

Uses: You can use this herb to help treat asthma, emphysema, hay fever, influenza, colds and obesity.

Doses: This herb is found in many forms.

Warnings: This drug is under heavy limitations imposed by the food and drug administration. You should not take this herb if you have high blood pressure, lupus, diabetes, glaucoma, hyperthyroidism, anxiety, nervous disorders or heart disease. Limit use of this herb

very similar to adrenaline but
with a longer half-life. It acts on exactly the same receptors as adrenaline
does and has exactly the same side effects and dangers.

Ephedra Herb and Powder Profile

Also known as

Ephedra sinica and sinensis, Ma Huang, and Chinese Ephedra.

Introduction

Ephedra herb is one of the fundamentals of traditional Chinese medicine and modern herbal medicine for the treatment of respiratory disorders. It has been used for at least 5000 years in China and Central Asia to treat bronchial complaints, cold and flu, fever, chills, headaches, and aching joints and bones. As a whole herb, the tops of the plant serve as an antidote for excessive consumption of the root, and treat a wide range of respiratory conditions. It is the subject of a German E Commission monograph for treatment of the respiratory system and mild bronchial spasms. NOT TO BE USED AS A STIMULANT!

Constituents

Ephedrine, pseudoephedrine.

Parts Used

The stems

Typical Preparations

Usually teas, but for convenience it may be taken as a capsule or extract.

Summary

The traditional use of ephedra is to stop "leakages" caused by lack of energy and vigor. It stops sweating at night, fluid buildup in the lung, and weak pulse causing "dribbles" of arterial circulation. All of these effects are helpful in colds, flu, and asthma. Most members of this genus contain various medicinally active alkaloids (but notably ephedrine) and they are widely used in preparations for the treatment of asthma and catarrh. The stems are a pungent, bitter, warm herb that dilates the bronchial vessels whilst stimulating the heart and central nervous system. The stems are also antidote, diaphoretic, diuretic, pectoral, vasoconstrictor and vasodilator, and they are used internally in the treatment of asthma, hay fever and allergic complaints.

Precautions

Typically used in herbal combinations, under the supervisions of someone qualified to use this substance. Not to be used as a stimulant, and its long term use is not recommended. Special Warning: SEEK ADVICE FROM HEALTH PRACTITIONER PRIOR TO USE IF PREGNANT, NURSING, HAVE HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE, HEART OR THYROID DISEASE, DIABETES, DIFFICULTY IN URINATION DUE TO PROSTATE ENLARGEMENT, OR IF TAKING MAO INHIBITOR OR OTHER PRESCRIPTION DRUG. REDUCE/DISCONTINUE USE IF NERVOUSNESS, TREMOR, SLEEPLESSNESS, LOSS OF APPETITE OR NAUSEA OCCUR. DO NOT EXCEED RECOMMENDED DOSE. KEEP OUT OF REACH OF CHILDREN:

Botanical: *Ephedra vulgaris* (RICH.)

Family: N.O. Gnetaceae

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---**Synonyms**---Ephedrine. Epitonin. Ma Huang.

---**Habitat**---West Central China, Southern Siberia, Japan.

---**Description**---It is found on sandy seashores and in temperate climates of both hemispheres. The plant has stamens and pistils on separate flowers--staminate flowers in catkins and a membranous perianth, pistillate flowers terminal on axillary stalks, within a two-leaved involucre. Fruit has two carpels with a single seed in each and is a succulent cone, branches slender and erect, small leaves, scale-like, articulated and joined at the base into a sheath.

---**Constituents**---Ephedrine is salt of an alkaloid and is in shining white crystals very soluble in water.

---**Medicinal Action and Uses**---A sympathetic nerve stimulant resembling adrenaline, its effect on the

unstripped muscular fibres is remarkable. It acts promptly in relieving swellings of the mucous membrane. It has valuable antispasmodic properties, acts on the air passages and is of benefit in asthma and hay fever; it is also employed for rheumatism; a 5 to 10 per cent solution has mydriatic properties, prophylactically used for low blood pressure in influenza, pneumonia, etc. Used in tablet form for oral or hypodermic administration and in ampuls for hypodermic, intramuscular and intravenous use. It can advantageously be used in solution with liquid paraffin, either alone or in conjunction with methol camphor and oil of thyme. Dose, 1/2 to 1 grain.