

Kudzu (*Pueraria lobata*)

Common Names: *Pueraria* root, *pueraria*.

Location: This herb is located in the southern regions of the United States and Japan.

Descriptions: The root of this herb can be used medicinally.

Properties: This herb has been used to treat headache over the centuries.

Uses: Use this herb to treat alcoholism, colds, headaches, influenza, Bell's palsy, Lyme disease, fibrocystic breasts, cancer and congestive heartfailure.

Doses: Kudzu can be found as a tea or tablet. The tablets should contain a dosage of 10 milligrams of the herbal extract.

Warnings: Do not take this herb in conjunction with antibiotics because they will render it ineffective.

Kudzu Root and Powder Profile

Also known as

Pueraria lobata, *Pueraria montana*, *Peurarium lobata*, and kuzu.

Introduction

The pestiferous, creeping kudzu plant infesting the southeastern United States is an edible vegetable of Asian origin with a medicinal root used in healing for over 2000 years. It was first mentioned in China in the *Shi Jing* in the 5th century B.C.E. which listed it as a remedy for various conditions including cold and flu symptoms, fever, and headache. In the same plant family and beans and peas, kudzu was and is used in Traditional Chinese Medicine to "vent" pathogens and pathogenic influences: the tension in the neck muscles caused by nervous tension or occurring just prior to a cold, the "heat" in the stomach causing unusual thirst, the "toxins" manifesting as rashes and skin inflammation, or the improperly digested food that causes diarrhea. Kudzu starch can be cooked into noodles and pastes, into pastries, and as a thickening agent in sauces. It is often used in Asian soups where it is cut into slices and slowly cooked for many hours, sometimes with tangerine peel, meat, and other various ingredients.

Constituents

Ash, calcium, daidzein, daidzin, genistein (the same compound found in soy), riboflavin.

Parts Used

The washed and dried root. Usually found as a fine powder but dried root pieces work as well.

Typical Preparations

Added to teas. Combined with bupleurum and/or scutellaria (scute) for hives and skin rashes associated with nervous tension. Combined with dioscorea for diarrhea. Combined with chrysanthemum flowers to

make hangover cures. May also be taken as a capsule or extract although rare.

Summary

Naturopathic physicians report an astonishing range of applications for kudzu. In combination with vitamin B therapy, kudzu has been used to treat deafness caused by exposure to loud sounds. There are numerous reports in the Chinese medical literature of the successful use of kudzu in treating the symptoms of high blood pressure such as headache and dizziness (although kudzu has little or no effect on blood pressure itself). Positive cardiovascular effects have been noted in several studies including the dilation of coronary and cerebral vessels, and the increase of coronary and cerebral blood flow. Recent clinical uses have included treatments for hypertension, angina, pectoris, and migraine headaches. Kudzu powder is also taken internally on a regular basis to prevent recurrences of colds sores, shingles, and genital herpes.

Precautions

None.