

Scutellaria (*Scutellaria baicalensis*)

Common Names: Skullcap, scute, Chinese skullcap, Baikal skullcap.

Location: Scutellaria is a perennial herb native to the region of Lake Baikal in eastern Siberia and is also found in northern China. It thrives in open grasslands below an elevation of 2,000 feet.

Description: Scutellaria grows to a height of between one and four feet and bears lance-shaped leaves and purple flowers. It has been used in Asian medicine for at least 2,000 years, evidenced by an excavation that took place in northwestern China of a tomb built in the second century, in which ninety-two wooden tablets containing herbal formulas were found. Many listed scutellaria.

Properties: The root is used medicinally, and the plant is also used ornamentally.

Uses: Scutellaria kills bacteria and viruses, and also relieves allergies, asthma, anxiety, and atherosclerosis. It is used in traditional Chinese medicine formulas for the treatment of HIV/AIDS, as well as for fevers, colds, diphtheria, hepatitis, high blood pressure, and shingles. Benefits of Scutellaria for specific health conditions include treatment of allergies, asthma, pneumonia, anxiety, headache, stress, Atherosclerosis, diabetes, heart attack, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, attention deficit disorder (ADD), cancer, chronic fatigue syndrome, mononucleosis, ear infection, gonorrhea, Lyme disease, infected nails, pelvic inflammatory disease, prostatitis, hangovers, influenza, viral infection, vomiting and periodontal disease.

Doses: Scutellaria is available in a wide variety of forms, frequently referred to as skullcap. This herb should not be confused with American Skullcap (*Scutellaria lateriflora*). The two herbs are not interchangeable. The Asian form may be harder to find, but should be obtainable in Chinese herb stores or the Internet.

Warnings: Cases of liver damage have been reported in association with excessive intake of scutellaria. It appears that some scutellaria products also contain germander, and herb known to cause liver damage. You should not use scutellaria if you have diarrhea.