

**Magnolia obovata Thunb.**

Japanese big-leaf  
magnolia



#### OVERVIEW

Magnolia is a plant. People use the bark and flower buds to make medicine.

Magnolia is used for weight loss, problems with digestion, constipation, inflammation, anxiety, stress, depression, fever, headache, stroke, and asthma.

Magnolia flower bud is used for stuffy nose, runny nose, common cold, sinus pain, hay fever, headache, and facial dark spots.

Some people apply magnolia flower bud directly to the gums for toothaches.

In rub-on skin care products, magnolia flower bud extract is used as a skin whitener and to minimize or counteract skin irritation caused by the other ingredients.

In traditional Chinese and Japanese (Kampo) medicine, magnolia bark is an ingredient in Hange-koboku-to, which is composed of 5 plant extracts, and in Saiboku-to, which is composed of 10 plant extracts. These extracts are used to decrease anxiety and nervous tension and to improve sleep. Some researchers believe honokiol, a chemical in

magnolia bark, is what makes these medicines work.

How does it work?

Magnolia seems to have anxiety-reducing activity in animals. It might also increase steroid production by the body to treat asthma. All research on magnolia has been in laboratories.



## USES & EFFECTIVENESS

Insufficient Evidence to Rate Effectiveness for...

Weight loss. So far, there isn't much evidence that magnolia causes weight loss. There is

some research showing that overweight women who take a specific product containing a combination of extracts of magnolia plus phellodendron (Relora, Next Pharmaceuticals) don't gain as much weight as other women. They seem to eat fewer calories, possibly because the magnolia reduces their stress-related eating. However, there is no reliable evidence that taking this product actually causes weight loss.

Some other weight loss products include magnolia bark with claims that it reduces cortisol levels. However, there is no evidence that magnolia bark causes weight loss or reduces cortisol levels. In fact, it appears to increase levels of corticosterone, a chemical similar to cortisol.

- Anxiety.
- Depression.
- Obesity.
- Digestion problems.
- Inflammation.
- Nasal congestion.
- Runny nose.
- Common cold.

- Headache.
- Facial dark spots.
- Toothaches.
- Other conditions

## SIDE EFFECTS

Magnolia is POSSIBLY SAFE for most people when used short-term. The safety of magnolia use for more than 6 weeks is unknown. In one study, one person experienced heartburn, shaking hands, sexual problems, and thyroid problems. Another person experienced extreme tiredness and headache. But it is not known if these side effects were caused by magnolia or some other factor.

Not enough is known to rate the safety of magnolia when applied to the skin.

## SPECIAL PRECAUTIONS & WARNINGS

Pregnancy and breast-feeding: Taking magnolia flower bud by mouth is UNSAFE during pregnancy. There are reports that magnolia can cause the uterus to contract and that might cause a miscarriage.

Not enough is known about the safety of using magnolia during breast-feeding. Stay on the safe side and avoid use.

**Surgery:** Magnolia can slow down the central nervous system. There is a concern that it might slow down the nervous system too much when combined with anesthesia and other medications used during and after surgery. Magnolia might also slow blood clotting and cause bleeding during and after surgery. Stop using magnolia at least 2 weeks before a scheduled surgery.



## INTERACTIONS

**Alcohol** Interaction Rating: Moderate Be cautious with this combination. Talk with your health provider.

Alcohol can cause sleepiness and drowsiness. Magnolia bark might also cause sleepiness and drowsiness. Taking large amounts of magnolia bark along with alcohol might cause too much sleepiness.

**Medications that slow blood clotting (Anticoagulant / Antiplatelet drugs)** Interaction Rating: Moderate Be cautious with this combination. Talk with your health provider.

Magnolia might slow blood clotting. Taking magnolia along with medications that also slow clotting might increase the chances of bruising and bleeding.

Some medications that slow blood clotting include aspirin, clopidogrel (Plavix), diclofenac (Voltaren, Cataflam, others), ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin, others), naproxen (Anaprox, Naprosyn, others), dalteparin (Fragmin),

enoxaparin (Lovenox), heparin, warfarin (Coumadin), and others.

Sedative medications (Barbiturates) Interaction Rating: Moderate Be cautious with this combination. Talk with your health provider.

Magnolia bark might cause sleepiness and drowsiness. Medications that cause sleepiness are called sedatives. Taking magnolia bark along with sedative medications might cause too much sleepiness.

Some sedative medications include amobarbital (Amytal), butabarbital (Butisol), mephobarbital (Mebaral), pentobarbital (Nembutal), phenobarbital (Luminal), secobarbital (Seconal), and others.

Sedative medications (Benzodiazepines) Interaction Rating: Moderate Be cautious with this combination. Talk with your health provider.

Magnolia bark might cause sleepiness and drowsiness. Drugs that cause sleepiness and



drowsiness are called sedative medications. Taking magnolia bark along with sedative medications might cause too much sleepiness. Do not take magnolia bark if you are taking sedative medications.

Some of these sedative medications include clonazepam (Klonopin), diazepam (Valium), lorazepam (Ativan), and others.