

# Magnolia

## Magnolia officinalis



### Magnolia Benefits

*Magnolia bark (Magnolia officinalis) is a traditional Chinese medicine used since 100 A.D. to support the body and nurture wellbeing and to treat a plethora of ailments.*

#### Medicinal uses

Magnolia bark has been used to treat menstrual cramps, abdominal pain, abdominal bloating and gas, nausea, and indigestion. The bark is also an ingredient in formulas used for treating coughs and asthma. The bark is used internally in the treatment of abdominal distension, loss of appetite, gastro-enteritis, vomiting, diarrhoea, asthma and coughs with acute phlegm. The bark and flower buds of *Magnolia officinalis* have been used to treat coughs and colds and intestinal problems.

#### Active ingredients

Japanese researchers have determined that "honokiol" and "magnolol", two chemicals found in Magnolia Bark, are up to 1000 times more potent than **Vitamin E** in antioxidant activity. These two active compounds are thought to contribute to the primary anti-stress and cortisol-balancing effects of the plant. Numerous animal studies have demonstrated honokiol to act as an anti-stress agent at lower doses. Magnolol, a compound isolated from the cortex of magnolia, has been found to possess anti-allergic and anti-asthmatic activity.

## Weight loss

Magnolia bark is getting much press as a "cortisol", the stress hormone-lowering supplement. Cortisol has also been associated with weight gain (particularly fat in the abdominal area), sugar control problems, memory problems, and a host of other stress induced disorders.

## Anxiety

In **studies**, honokiol was compared with diazepam (Valium), a well known pharmaceutical anxiolytic. Honokiol was found to be five times stronger than diazepam in reducing anxiety without the side effects of diazepam. While diazepam does reduce anxiety, it also induces muscle relaxation, an effect not shared by honokiol. It would seem that honokiol is less likely than diazepam to induce physical dependence, central nervous system depression, motor nerve disruption, or amnesia at doses eliciting the anxiolytic effect. Because honokiol reduces anxiety without disruption of motor activity, it is postulated that the mechanism of the anxiolytic effect of honokiol is at least partially different from that of diazepam.

## Alzheimers Disease

Magnolia has several powerful effects on acetylcholine levels in the brain, offering potential benefits for victims of Alzheimer's Disease. Alzheimer's Disease is characterised by insufficient levels of acetylcholine, accompanied by the buildup of amyloid plaque in the brain, disrupting normal brain functioning. Two biphenolic compounds found in Magnolia, Honokiol and magnolol, increase choline acetyltransferase activity, inhibit acetylcholinesterase, promote **potassium**-induced acetylcholine release and exhibit neurotrophic function in in vitro studies. Choline acetyltransferase is an enzyme involved in the cellular synthesis of acetylcholine, an increase of which can up-regulate the production of acetylcholine necessary for proper brain function. Acetylcholinesterase is an enzyme that breaks down acetylcholine, the inhibition of which preserves available acetylcholine. Honokiol and Magnolol also exhibited neurotropic effects in vitro, which could translate into enhanced brain cell growth and reduced brain cell death in vivo.

## Asthma

Magnolol was found in studies to support the body's natural production of adrenal steroids (corticosteroids) which suppress inflammation. This **anti-inflammatory** effect is thought responsible for alleviating the allergic inflammatory response in cases

of asthma. Increases in corticosteroids may be a concern for those wishing to use magnolia as a weight loss product, but in a patented product combining the herb with phellodendron this effect was reversed, resulting in corticosteroid reduction, and reduced cortisol-induced food cravings.

#### **Magnolia Herb Notes / Side Effects**

Magnolia is generally regarded as safe when taken in the recommended doses. It should not be used by pregnant women, or for those suffering from dehydration. Safety in young children, nursing women, or those with severe liver or kidney disease is not known.

Large doses (many times the recommended dosage) may cause vertigo.

Magnolia officinalis bark contains turbocurarine and related substances which are known to cause respiratory paralysis in animals and may be toxic to infants and small children, even when used as directed.

#### **Latin Name**

Magnolia officinalis

#### **Common Names**

Ch'Uan Pu, Chinese Magnolia, Choon Pok, Magnolia, Hou Pu, Magnolier Officinal

#### **Properties**

Anti-allergic, anti-asthmatic, anti-bacterial, anti-fungal, anti-septic, anti-spasmodic, anti-stress, anxiolytic, aphrodisiac, appetiser, digestive, diuretic, emmenagogue, expectorant, ophthalmic, stomachic, tonic, warming.

#### **Indicated for**

Abdominal pain, bloating and gas, anxiety, Alzheimers disease, amoebic dysentery, asthma and coughs with acute phlegm, bronchitis, colds, colic, diarrhoea, digestive disorders, dysentery, gas, gastro-enteritis, indigestion, intestinal problems, weight loss, loss of appetite, malaria, menstrual cramps, nausea, rheumatism, typhoid, ulcers, vomiting.