

Herbal Supplements and Their Interactions with Medications

This list of commonly used herbal supplements shows the potential problems that could occur if you take the supplement at the same time that you are taking other medicines.

| Herbal Supplement | Common Uses | Possible Problems | May Interact With |
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| Dong Quai (Angelica) | To treat menopausal symptoms, PMS, irregular menstruation cycles. | Enhances bleeding | Drugs that hinder the clotting of blood. |
| Echinacea | To treat colds, flu, and mild infections, especially upper respiratory infections (chest colds). | May cause injury to the liver; may cause intestinal / stomach upset. | Drugs that may cause injury to the liver; synthetic hormones; some anti-cancer drugs. |
| Ephedra (MaHuang, Ephedrine, Pseudo-ephedrine) | To treat asthma and coughs; to stimulate weight loss | May cause seizures; may cause adverse cardiac events, such as irregular heartbeat, high blood pressure, stroke, or heart attack | Some heart medications; general anesthesia; some antidepressants; medicines that increase blood pressure; decongestants; stimulants. |
| Garlic | To decrease cholesterol and blood clot formation. | Enhances bleeding. | Drugs that hinder clotting of blood. |
| Ginger | To relieve nausea. | Enhances bleeding; may affect the central nervous system; may lower blood pressure; may cause irregular heartbeat; may lower blood glucose levels. | Drugs that hinder the clotting of blood; medicines that increase blood pressure; cardiac drugs; that lower blood sugar level; may increase the effects of sedatives. |
| Ginkgo Biloba | To improve circulation, especially to brain; also, for memory loss, dizziness, and headache. | Enhances bleeding; may cause cramps and/or muscle spasms. | Drugs that hinder the clotting of blood. |
| Ginseng | To increase energy and reduce stress. | Enhances bleeding; may cause irregular heartbeat and/or increase blood pressure; may cause mania | Drugs that hinder clotting of blood; stimulants; medicines that lower blood pressure; some antidepressants; digoxin (a heart drug); may increase the effects of steroids and estrogens. |
| Goldenseal | Used as a mild antibiotic to treat sore throats and upper respiratory infections. | Increase fluid retention; may increase blood pressure; may cause nausea or nervousness. | Drugs that increase urination; medicines that lower blood pressure. |
| Kava Kava | To treat anxiety, nervousness, insomnia. | May cause upset stomach; may cause liver damage and/or stimulate an allergic skin reaction that causes a yellow discoloration of skin. | May increase the effects of sedatives, muscle relaxants, anesthetics and anti-depressants. |
| Licorice | To treat hepatitis and peptic ulcers. | May increase blood pressure; may lower levels of potassium in the blood; may cause swelling. | Medicines that lower blood pressure; may increase the effects of steroids. |
| SAM-e(S-adenosyl-L-methionine) | To treat depression or osteoarthritis | May induce drowsiness; may cause nausea and/or upset stomach. | May increase the effects of some anti-depressants. |
| St. John's Wort | To treat mild depression, anxiety, or seasonal affective disorder. | Enhances bleeding. | May increase the effects of anti-depressants; decreases the effectiveness of medications given to organ-transplant patients. |
| Valerian | To treat insomnia or anxiety. | May induce drowsiness; may cause digestion problems. | Enhances the effects of sedatives. |