

Rhodiola

(*Rhodiola rosea* (Golden root, Arctic root))

Plant Part Used

Root

Introduction

Rhodiola has been used in traditional folk medicine in China, Serbia and The Ukraine. In the former Soviet Union, it has been used to decrease fatigue and increase the body's natural resistance to various stresses. In Siberia, it is said that, "those who drink rhodiola tea regularly will live more than 100 years."

Some modern experts think rhodiola may indeed be able to enhance health in a wide variety of ways. More specifically, it may strengthen the nervous system, fight depression, enhance immunity, elevate the capacity for exercise, enhance memorization and improve energy levels. In keeping with Siberian folklore, some experts add that rhodiola may even prolong the life span.

Dosage Info

Dosage Range

50-100mg (standardized extract), 3 times a day.

Most Common Dosage

50mg (standardized extract), 2 times a day.

Standardization*

The most current available medical and scientific literature indicates that this dietary supplement should be standardized to 1% salidroside and/or 40-50% phenylpropenoids.

*Standardization represents the complete body of information and controls that serve to enhance the batch to batch consistency of a botanical product, including but not limited to the presence of a marker compound at a defined level or within a defined range.(7)

Interactions & Depletions

Drug/Herb Interactions

- [Adrenergic-blocking agents](#)
- [Antiarrhythmic medications](#)

Reported Uses

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There are some studies that have attempted to validate the numerous claims made about this supplement. One such study in rats suggests that rhodiola may indeed enhance learning capacity and memory.(1)

Informal studies have suggested that rhodiola may enhance athletic performance by improving the ratio of muscle to fat in the body. Others suggest that rhodiola may also enhance our moods and fight depression by stimulating the activity of neurotransmitters that are crucial to mental well-being.(2) Russian scientists have used rhodiola, often in combination with conventional antidepressants, to decrease the symptoms of seasonal affective disorder (SAD) common to Northern European countries.

Rhodiola may also support the overall health of the heart by helping to maintain a regular heart beat. What's more, rhodiola may help reduce the often damaging side effects of chemotherapy programs.(3, 4) It may also protect the liver during such treatment.

Finally, rhodiola extracts may help normalize blood sugar levels while functioning as an antioxidant.(5, 6)

Toxicities & Precautions

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Be sure to tell your pharmacist, doctor or other health care providers about any dietary supplements you are taking. There may be a potential for interactions or side effects.

General

This dietary supplement is considered safe when used in accordance with proper dosing guidelines.

Pregnancy/Breast-Feeding

To date, the medical literature has not reported any adverse effects related to fetal development during pregnancy or to infants who are breast-fed. Yet little is known about the use of this dietary supplement while pregnant or breast-feeding. Therefore, it is recommended that you inform your healthcare practitioner of any dietary supplements you are using while pregnant or breast-feeding.

Age Limitations

To date, the medical literature has not reported any adverse effects specifically related to the use of this dietary supplement in children. Since young children may have undiagnosed allergies or medical conditions, this dietary supplement should not be used in children under 10 years of age unless recommended by a physician.

References

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- ¹ Petkov VD, et al. Effects of Alcohol Aqueous Extract From *Rhodiola rosea* L. Roots On Learning and Memory. *Acta Physiol Pharmacol Bulg.* 1986;12(1):3-16.
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- ² Maslov LN, et al. Mechanism of The Anti-arrhythmic Effect of *Rhodiola rosea* Extract. *Biull Eksp Biol Med.* Apr1998;125(4):424-26.
- ³ Udintsev SN, Shakhov VP. Changes in clonogenic properties of bone marrow and transplantable mice tumor cells during combined use of cyclophosphane and biological response modifiers of adaptogenic origin. *Eksp Onkol.* 1990;12(6):55-6.
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- ⁴ Udinstev SN, et al. The Enhancement of The Efficacy of Adriamycin by Using Hepatoprotectors of Plant Origin In Metastases of Ehrlich's Adenocarcinoma to the Liver In Mice. *Vopr Onkol.* 1992;38(10):1217-22.
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- ⁵ Molokovskii DS, et al. The Action of Adaptogenic Plant Preparations in Experimental Alloxan Diabetes. *Probl Endokrinol. (Mosk).* Nov1989;35(6):82-87.
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- ⁶ Bol'shakova IV, et al. Antioxidant Properties of a Series of Extracts From Medicinal Plants. *Biofizika.* Mar1997;42(2):480-83.
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- ⁷ American Herbal Products Association. *Use of Marker Compounds in Manufacturing and Labeling Botanically Derived Dietary Supplements.* Silver Spring, MD: American Herbal Products Association; 2001.