

# dogs **naturally**

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Special Puppy Issue

BUILDING PUPPY  
**IMMUNITY**

**BREAST  
IS BEST**

**TOP 10**  
PUPPY RAISING MISTAKES

**PUPPY  
BITING**

EASE FOOD  
TRANSITIONS  
**WITH HERBS**

WHY FEED  
**RAW**





## Licorice

Botanical Name: *Glycyrrhiza glabra*

Family: Leguminosae

Part Used: Root

Common Name: Sweet Root

**W**hen we think of licorice, we think of the candy but it is also a very useful herb. Some licorice candy may contain an extract from the root of licorice herb but more licorice flavor comes from anise oil or a combination of licorice and anise.

There are about 14 different species of licorice that are native to warmer climates. About ten of them have sweet flavored roots that can be dried and then chewed as a digestive aid. The others are slightly bitter roots. Originally from the Mediterranean and Middle East, licorice today grows in the US as well due to propagation from its clingy orange seeds onto animals in the wild. It's a member of the pea family and resembles the large sweet pea plant with fine foliage and pinnate compound leaves. The roots should be harvested in the fall.

Licorice is classed as an adaptogen. Its properties are: sweet, slightly bitter, expectorant, demulcent, laxative, anti-ulcer, warm, moist, anti-histamine, anti-inflammatory, anti-diuretic, antioxidant, immune amphoteric, gastroprotective, anti-viral, hepatoprotective (by promoting bile production from the liver), anti-spasmodic, reduces the production of stomach acid, anti-depressant, immune amphoteric (meaning it balances the immune system).

Licorice is a versatile and commonly used plant in herbalism all over the world, most

notably in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) dating back over 5,000 years ago, and is known as Gan Cao.

The root is used medicinally, contains antioxidant properties and enhances immunity by boosting levels of interferon, a key immune system chemical that fights attacking viruses. It's useful to suppress the release of cortisol, is an adrenal tonic and decreases stress from the body and is helpful with some auto-immune disorders. Licorice can be a very valuable herb for the treatment or prevention of Addison's disease in dogs, especially when balanced with other adaptogenic herbs such as panax ginseng or ashwagandha as well as several mushrooms.

Licorice is often used best in a compound formula with other herbs. When herbs are compounded into a formula rather than used alone, you can balance the medicine to find synergy for optimal results and safety. Licorice has a myriad of constituents and energies; some are unique to this herb and some may be contraindicated for certain health issues. It's therefore best

used as a balancing herb or with a balancing herb or herbs. For example, if taken in large doses licorice can have a negative effect on potassium levels, so it combines well with a balancing herb like dandelion leaf that supplies potassium. Or it can be combined as a buffering herb with other herbs that are harsher (such as papaya leaf) for treating ulcers in the gastrointestinal tract or stomach; in this case the buffer is the soothing relief and healing aid that comes from the licorice.

Licorice can also be used as a natural cough suppressant, topically for inflammatory skin conditions like hot spots, bruises, lameness from a bump or fall, preventing or treating ulcers or to promote periodontal health by reducing gum inflammation.

**Cautions:** Don't use licorice in pregnant females. Licorice also shouldn't be used long term, and shouldn't be used with drugs like blood thinners or corticosteroids. It's best to consult with your holistic veterinarian or herbalist before using licorice for your dog. 🌿



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