

From: "Gerard"  
Subject: protection against infections - Elderberry  
Date: Sunday, February 08, 2009 4:39 AM

Elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*)

Posted in Botanical Agents  
<[http://www.worldhealth.net/list/news/botanical\\_agents](http://www.worldhealth.net/list/news/botanical_agents)> on Sat December 31, 2005  
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GENERAL DESCRIPTION:

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Every part of the elder tree has a food or medicinal purpose. For centuries, the elderberry has been used to treat colds and flu. Scientists believe that antioxidant flavonoids found in the elderberry fight viral infection. Elderberry is most commonly used to treat the runny nose and sore throat of the common cold and to help to reduce the fever, muscle pain, and other symptoms of the flu. Elderberry \*induces sweating \*and \*stimulates circulation; \*it also has \*slight laxative and cough-suppressant effects. \*The berries are rich in vitamin C, flavonoids such as anthocyanins, substances called tannins, and other phyto- (or "plant") nutrients. Certain compounds may help counter the effects of some strains of influenza by binding to the virus and preventing it from attacking cells. (Recently, scientists who tested a standardized extract of the berry found that it caused a complete cure or at least a significant improvement in symptoms of the flu within two to three days.) The flowers contain flavonoids, an essential oil, mucilage, tannins, and other compounds, whose main effects appear to be reducing fever and promoting sweating.

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ROLE FOR ANTI-AGING:

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An animal study carried out in 1987 reported that elder flowers had moderately strong anti-inflammatory properties, however, no further research to back this claim has been carried out. Recent research carried out at Tufts University has revealed that elderberry contains four anthocyanins that work to protect endothelial cells, which line artery walls, from oxidative damage caused by free radicals.

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THERAPEUTIC DAILY AMOUNT:

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Elderberry comes in tinctures, liquid extracts, lozenges, syrups, standardized extract capsules, and throat sprays. Follow dosage directions on labels.

/MAXIMUM SAFE LEVEL: Not established/

/SIDE EFFECTS/CONTRAINDICATIONS:/

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No adverse reactions to elderberry are known to exist. Raw berries are edible but may cause nausea and vomiting. Herbal products made from the leaves, stems or bark of the elderberry tree should NOT be taken internally as they contain the potentially fatal poison cyanide.

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