

Hawthorn

Crataegus monogyna Jacq., *C. laevigata* (Poir.) DC. (syn. *C. oxyacantha* auct.)
[Fam. Rosaceae]

OVERVIEW

Hawthorn fruit has long been used as a food and medicine in Europe; particularly in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, where it ranks as one of the most popularly used botanical medicines, especially for treating declining heart function. Many clinical studies have been conducted on hawthorn over the past 20 years.

USES

NOTE: Patients should not attempt to self-medicate for suspected or properly diagnosed cardiac conditions, but should seek the advice of a healthcare provider for appropriate treatment.

Congestive heart failure, based on the New York Heart Association (NYHA) functional classification for Stage I, no limitation of physical activity, and Stage II, slight limitation of physical activity, causing fatigue or shortness of breath.

DOSAGE

Hawthorn leaf with flower (internal)

INFUSION: Pour about 150 ml boiling water over approximately 1.5 g dried herb, steep for 10–15 minutes, squeeze tea bag over cup, 3–4 times daily, during or after meals.

DRY EXTRACT (STANDARDIZED): 160–900 mg, in 2–3 individual doses, corresponding to 30–168.7 mg procyanidins, calculated as epicatechin, or 3.5–19.8 mg flavonoids, calculated as hyperoside [4–7:1 (w/w) with defined flavonoid or procyanidins content, ethanol 45% (v/v) or methanol 70% (v/v)].

Hawthorn fruit (internal)

NOTE: Hawthorn fruit products have *not* been tested for effectiveness in recent clinical research. Most of the published studies have been conducted on standardized extracts of hawthorn leaf with flowers.

FLUID EXTRACT: 0.5–1.0 ml, 3 times daily [1:1 (w/v) in 25% alcohol (v/v)].

TINCTURE: 5–10 drops, 1–3 times daily [1:10 (w/v)]

Comments

When using a dietary supplement, purchase it from a reliable source. For best results, use the same brand of product throughout the period of use. As with all medications and dietary supplements, please inform your healthcare provider of all herbs and medications you are taking. Interactions may occur between medications and herbs or even among different herbs when taken at the same time. Treat your herbal supplement with care by taking it as directed, storing it as advised on the label, and keeping it out of the reach of children and pets. Consult your healthcare provider with any questions.



TINCTURE: 1–2 ml, 3 times daily [1:5 (w/v), in 45% alcohol (v/v)].

CONTRAINDICATIONS

No known contraindications for hawthorn leaf, flower, or fruit.

PREGNANCY AND LACTATION: No known restrictions. Scientific studies are lacking, however, so consult with a healthcare provider before using hawthorn during pregnancy or while breast-feeding.

ADVERSE EFFECTS

No known adverse effects for hawthorn leaf, flower, or fruit.

DRUG INTERACTIONS

HAWTHORN LEAF WITH FLOWER: Hawthorn may increase the effects of the heart drug digoxin and mildly increase the coronary artery dilating effects of substances like caffeine, theophylline in tea, and papaverine in opium-containing products (such as cough medicines). Consult with a healthcare provider before combining hawthorn with any heart medications.

HAWTHORN FRUIT: No known interactions.



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