

Herbal Cautions:

Listed below are some cautions about side effects or drug interactions found from NCCAM's Herbs at a Glance booklet. The booklet gives information on the effectiveness of the herbs and for what it is traditionally used. You can access this booklet on-line at the NCCAM's website. You can also call or write the NCCAM Clearinghouse, whose information is provided below.

If allergic to Ragweed, daisies, chrysanthemums, and/or marigolds:

- May have allergic reactions to Chamomile, Echinacea (caution to people with asthma as well), Milk Thistle, and Feverfew

If you have Diabetes:

- May lower blood glucose, Aloe Vera(taken by mouth), Asian ginseng, Astragalus, Milk Thistle,

If you take blood thinners:

- Avoid – Cranberries (as a supplement), Garlic, Ginkgo Leaf, Green Tea, St. John's Wort

If you have blood pressure concerns:

- Avoid – Astragalus, Bitter Orange, Cat's Claw, Licorice Root, Yohimbe

Herbs that can interfere with other medicines

- Check to see of possible interference with medicines and these herbs: Yohimbe, St. John's Wort (interferes with many drugs and medicines), Licorice Root, Hawthorn, Goldenseal, Flaxseed, Elder Flower, Chasteberry, Astragalus

Liver problems or damage –

- Avoid Black cohosh, green tea extract, Kava, and Noni

Can be toxic – the following can be toxic in some forms, mainly raw or unprocessed.

- Elderberries, European Mistletoe, Horse Chestnuts, Lavender Oil (taken by mouth), -Astragalus, Thunder God Vine

Low potassium diets

- Avoid – Noni and Licorice root

Severe side effects:

- Bitter Orange & St. John's Wort (Sensitivity to sunlight)
- Dandelion (avoid if inflamed or infected gallbladder)
- Ginkgo seeds – (adverse reactions)
- Goldenseal, Yohimbe, & Licorice Root: (not safe for children, women who are pregnant, and women who are breastfeeding)
- Noni – (several manufactures have been issued warnings about false claims.)
- Kava – (associated with muscle spasms)
- Red Clover – (long term use might increase risk of uterine cancer)
- Thunder God Vine – (Decrease bone mineral density in women, might decrease male fertility)
- Yohimbe – (caution if have kidney problems or psychiatric conditions)

Ephedra has been banned due to related high risk of strokes and heart attacks but might still be found in herbal mixes like teas.

Reference: Herbs at a Glance. (2010, June) National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicines. Retrieved from: <http://nccam.nih.gov/health/herbsataglance.htm>

Please note: NCCAM does not provide medical advice or referrals to practitioners. Decisions about medical care and treatment should be made in consultation with a health care provider, based on the condition and needs of each person.

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