

QUICK REFERENCE SHEET

BLACK COHOSH

Cimicifuga racemosa



Part Utilized:
Root



PROPERTIES:

Tonic (to many systems), Adaptogenic, Alterative, Expectorant, Analgesic, Antispasmodic, Astringent, Hormone Balancing

SYSTEMS AFFECTED:

Circulatory, Reproductive, Nervous, Muscular (particularly the uterine muscle), Endocrine/Glandular (emphasis on the hypothalamus)

POSSIBLE USES:

preparation for labor, labor regulator, headaches, muscle spasms of any kind, nerve and muscle pain, asthma, coughs, menstrual cramps, menopause, high blood pressure associated with peripheral blood vessel tension, arthritis, menopausal symptoms

INGREDIENT IN:

AP, ASP, BBL, CB, CR, MW, NS, NV, PHB

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Matthew Wood is an herbalist who leans very much to the traditional American Indian use of herbal remedies, and to the spiritual qualities of plants and their effects on our own spiritual growth. He also teaches about the qualities of plants from the standpoint of what they survive in their own environment and how the strengths that they possess as a result of their own struggles can strengthen us. He presents an amazing description of Black Cohosh from these standpoints in his book *Seven Herbs, Plants as Healers*. I would recommend this entire book, and everything else that he has written, to any student of herbal medicine. Wood points out that Black Cohosh is particularly applicable to women whose health issues are tied to an abusive relationship, and will be most effective when they have managed to leave that relationship behind or have worked out the problems with counseling or therapy. Matthew Wood refers to Black Cohosh as the "Herbal Chiropractor" and recommends a cup of warm tea if the neck or spine is out of alignment. I am going to have to try this!

Black Cohosh eases muscle tension and produces more effective but less painful contractions during labor. The anodyne and nervine properties of this marvelous herb, which are specific to nerve and muscle pain, make it excellent for labor and for relieving pain in joints and muscles at other times. Black Cohosh is often used as part of a formula to prepare the uterus for the birthing process in the last few weeks of pregnancy.

Black Cohosh is used outside of pregnancy to relieve headache, muscle spasms, bronchial spasms, asthma, and for menstrual cramps. Black Cohosh is sometimes used to dilate the peripheral blood vessels to lower blood pressure. Black Cohosh is considered a vermifuge although I have never noticed this to occur when using this herb. Black Cohosh is an adaptogenic and alterative which means that it gradually improves health through its effects on the blood, the immune system, and the connective tissues.