

DR. CHRISTOPHER'S
Herbal Legacy Newsletter

The Benefits of the use of Licorice in Herbal Preparations –

Part II

April 8, 2009

By Mishelle Knuteson, M.H.

The 100 Herb List at the School of Natural Healing lists adrenals as the common use for Licorice. The steroidal (cortisone-like substance) content of Licorice aids in the healing and restoring of the adrenal glands. About every five hours, the adrenals need some sort of nourishment in order to continue supplying strength to the body. If the nourishment is not given, the glands go through what is called adrenal exhaustion, or in medical terms hypoglycemia. This exhaustion is also caused by the stresses that life places on us in this fast paced world in which we live. Sugar is often consumed to overcome stress and to get a stimulating lift. This causes more problems and can lead to insulin shock. When a person's adrenal glands become so exhausted that they do not function anymore, they find themselves in a condition called Addison's disease.



Licorice, with its cortisone-type substance, will help the body restore itself to the point where it will produce its own cortisone. It will give the body strength and a stimulating lift without bringing on insulin shock. This will also help the pancreas to function well because of better control of insulin released. The medical profession will prescribe corticosteroid hormones as a replacement drug when the body is fatigued; thus causing a dependency to them. If a person tries to get off these drugs they will go through severe withdrawal symptoms. Licorice begins strengthening and healing the body with as little as two capsules of Licorice each day. As noted by Dr. Christopher, "When people who have been under severe stress, overworking the adrenals and becoming extremely nervous and irritable, begin to take Licorice, they think they have suddenly spiritually arrived. It is my opinion that many who suffer in mental institutions could be helped with this wonderful herb."

The Steroidal content found in Licorice not only helps the adrenal glands but female problems as well. It can trigger higher levels of estrogen in the body, which will aid in the treatment of female infertility, for delayed and irregular menstruation, and in premenstrual syndrome (PMS). It can be used to stabilize the menstrual cycle when coming off of "the Pill." It will help relieve the pain of chronic menstrual cramps as well as premenstrual symptoms such as depression, cravings for sweets, weight gain due to water retention, breast tenderness, etc. Licorice has an alterative action on estrogen metabolism, which means when estrogen levels are too high it will bring them down, and if the levels are too low it will bring them up. This estrogenic action is due to the isoflavone content found in Licorice. Premenstrual syndrome has been attributed to a disruption in the estrogen to progesterone ratio. Licorice helps to bring back the right balance in this ratio, therefore relieving the symptoms that this imbalance causes. If licorice is used, two cups of tea a day, two weeks prior to the onset of menstruation will reduce the symptoms of PMS. After a couple of months the cycle should be improved and there will be no more need to drink the tea. Even though our bodies require a balance of male and female hormones, men who take Licorice don't need to be alarmed about "getting too much" hormone-estrogen properties. Our bodies are a fabulous computer and it selects only what it needs from natural sources such as herbs.