

Selected Herb-Drug Interactions*

Herb	Common Use	May interact with	Potential effect
Alfalfa (<i>Medicago sativa</i>)	Multiple, including treatment of arthritis, asthma, dyspepsia, hyperlipidemia, and diabetes	Anticoagulants 1,2	Alfalfa contains coumarin constituents and vitamin K; excessive use can interfere with drug therapy
<i>Aloe vera</i> latex	Strong cathartic	Cardiac glycosides, Thiazide diuretics 3	Can cause electrolyte imbalance and hypokalemia; May potentiate drug toxicity
Angelica (<i>Angelica archangelica</i>)	Loss of appetite, peptic discomfort	Anticoagulants 2	Contains coumarin constituents; may potentiate drug effect
Bearberry Uva-Ursi (<i>Arctostaphylos uva-ursi</i>)	Urinary tract antibacterial, astringent, diuretic	Urinary acidifiers, Cranberry juice 2	Inactivated by urinary acidifiers; active compound released only in alkaline urine.
		Diuretics 4	Decreased drug effect
		NSAIDs 4	Increased gastrointestinal irritation
Black cohosh Baneberry, bugwort, Squawroot, Rattleroot (<i>Cimicifuga racemosa</i>)	Hot flashes, premenstrual discomfort and dysmenorrhea	Estrogens, Oral contraceptives 1,3	Herb affects hypothalamic-pituitary system, decreases luteinizing hormone secretion and binds estrogen receptors May decrease response to estrogen
		Antihyperlipidemics 1	Possible additive effect
Borage (<i>Borago officinalis</i>)	Anti-inflammatory, sedative	Anticoagulants, Antiplatelet agents 2	May prolong bleeding time
		Anxiolytics 2	Additive sedation
Bromelain (<i>Ananas comosus</i>)	Acute post-operative and post-traumatic swelling	Antiplatelet agents 2,5	Increased risk of bleeding
Capsicum (<i>Capsicum frutescens</i> , <i>C. annuum</i>)	Shingles, trigeminal and diabetic neuralgia	Monoamine oxidase inhibitors 6	Herb increases secretion of catecholamines, increases risk of hypertensive crisis
		Antiplatelet agents 7	Increased fibrinolytic activity, may prolong bleeding time

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Cascara Bitter bark (<i>Rhamnus purshiana</i> , <i>Cascara sagrada</i>)	Stimulant laxative	Cardiac glycosides, Thiazide diuretics ³	Can cause electrolyte imbalance and hypokalemia; May potentiate drug toxicity
Chamomile (<i>Matricaria recutita</i>)	Mild sedative, antispasmodic and antiseptic agent	Iron ⁴	Tannin content in herb may inhibit iron absorption
		Anticoagulants ^{1,4}	Herb contains coumarin constituents; may interfere with drug effects
Chaste tree berry (<i>Vitex agnus-castus</i>)	Menstrual disorders	Dopamine receptor antagonists (i.e., phenothiazines) ³	Herb has dopaminergic effect, may antagonize effects of drugs at left
Dong Quai (<i>Angelica polymorpha</i> , <i>A.dahurica</i> , <i>A.atropurpurea</i>)	Menstrual disorders	Anticoagulants, Antiplatelet agents ²	Herb contains coumarin constituents; possible additive drug effect
		Estrogens ¹	Herb contains phytoestrogens; may result in estrogen excess
Echinacea (<i>Echinacea augustifolia</i> , <i>E.pallida</i>)	Cold, flu	Immunosuppressants ^{3,7}	Short-term use: phagocyte production stimulated, counteracts drug effect; Chronic use (>6-8 wk): immunosuppressive, enhances drug effect.
		Amiodarone, Anabolic steroids, Ketoconazole, Methotrexate ⁴	Increased risk of hepatotoxicity
Evening primrose (<i>Oenothera biennis</i>)	Lower serum cholesterol, atopic eczema	Phenothiazines, anticonvulsants, ^{4,6}	Increased risk of seizures in patients taking drug known to lower seizure threshold (i.e., phenothiazines, many antiparkinson drugs)
		NSAIDs, Corticosteroids, -blockers, Anticoagulants ^{4,6}	

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Feverfew (<i>Tanacetum parthenium</i>)	Migraine, fever, menstrual problems	Anticoagulants Antiplatelet agents 2,4	Additive anticoagulant, antiplatelet effects; Increased bleeding risk
		NSAIDs 4	Decreased herbal effect
		Iron 4	Tannin in herb may inhibit iron absorption
Garlic (<i>Allium sativum</i>)	Hyperlipidemia	Anticoagulants Antiplatelet agents 2,4	Inhibits platelet aggregation; Additive anticoagulant, antiplatelet effects
		Hypoglycemic drugs 3,8	May potentiate drug effect
Ginger (<i>Zingiber officinale</i>)	Motion sickness, nausea, arthritis	Anticoagulants Antiplatelet agents 2,4	Inhibits thromboxane synthetase; may have additive anticoagulant, antiplatelet effects
Ginkgo (<i>Ginkgo biloba</i>)	Varicose veins, intermittent claudication, dementia, vertigo, tinnitus, SSRI-induced sexual dysfunction, cerebral vascular insufficiency	Anticoagulants Antiplatelet agents 3,4	Inhibits platelet aggregation, may have additive anticoagulant, antiplatelet effects
		Anticonvulsants 4	May increase risk of seizures, decrease drug effect
		Tricyclic antidepressants, other drugs that decrease seizure threshold 4	Increased risk of seizures
Ginseng, Asian ginseng(<i>Panax ginseng</i> , <i>P.quinquefolium</i>)	Normalize the body, and provide resistance to stress	Hypoglycemic drugs ^{7,9}	Herb has hypoglycemic effect
		Furosemide 3	Decreased diuretic effect
		Digoxin 8	May increase serum digoxin concentrations
		Monoamine oxidase inhibitors ^{4,9}	Headache, visual hallucination, tremor, manic episodes
		Anticoagulants, antiplatelet agents ^{2,4}	Decreased effectiveness of warfarin
		Estrogens, corticosteroids 4,9	Additive drug effects
		Drugs that cause gynecomastia 3,10 (e.g., calcium channel blockers, cardiac glycosides, methyl dopa, phenothiazines, spironolactone)	Herb contains estrone, estradiol, estriol; Has additive estrogenic effects

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Goldenseal (<i>Hydrastis canadensis</i>)	Mucosal inflammation, gastritis	Anticoagulants 2,8	Contains berberine; inhibits anticoagulant effects
Gossypol	Male contraceptive	Diuretics 4	Potentiate hypokalemia
		NSAIDs 4	Increased gastrointestinal irritation
Guarana (<i>Paullinia cupana</i>)	CNS stimulant, potentiate analgesics	Anticoagulants 3	Inhibits platelet aggregation, increases risk of bleeding
Hawthorn(<i>Crataegus laevigata</i> , <i>C.monogyna</i> , <i>C.pinnatifida</i>)	Heart disease, sleep disorders, angina	Antihypertensives 3	Inhibits platelet aggregation, increases risk of bleeding
		Digoxin 4	Potentiates drug effect
Hops (<i>Humulus Lupulus L</i>)	Insomnia	Anxiolytics, alcohol 3,6	Potential additive sedation
Horse chestnut (<i>Aesculus hippocastanum</i>)	Varicose veins, other venous insufficiencies	Anticoagulants 2,3	Herb contains coumarin-like constituent; may increase risk of bleeding
Karela Bitter melon	Diabetes mellitus	Hypoglycemic drugs ⁴	Potentiates drug effect
Kava-Kava (<i>Piper methylsticum</i>)	Sleep disorders, anxiety	Alcohol, Benzodiazepines, CNS depressants 3,4,6	Additive sedative effects
Kelp (<i>Laminaria hyperborea</i>)	Thyroid dysfunction	Thyroid hormones 4,7	Herb contains iodine, may interfere with thyroid replacement
Kolanut Cola, Kola (<i>Cola nitida</i>)	Use in beverages for caffeine content	Theophylline, guarana, caffeine 3,10	Herb contains caffeine, potential additive CNS stimulation
Lemon balm (<i>Melissa officinalis L</i>)	Insomnia, anxiety	CNS depressants 6	Potentiates CNS depression
		Thyroid hormones 6	May bind thyrotropin and interferes with therapy

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Licorice(<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i>)	Expectorant, peptic ulcers	Spirolactone 4,7	Antagonism of diuretic effect
		Cardiac glycosides, Thiazide diuretics 3,4	Can cause hypokalemia; May potentiate digoxin toxicity
		Corticosteroids, Cyclosporine 4	Herb has immunostimulating effect; May decrease response to the drugs
		Monoamine oxidase inhibitors 1	Herb contains sympathomimetic amines, increased risk of hypertensive crisis
Ma Huang Ephedra, squaw tea, mormon tea, popotillo, sea grape (<i>Ephedra</i> species)	Asthma, weight loss	Oxytocin, Methyldopa, -blockers, Caffeine, Monoamine oxidase inhibitors, Theophylline, Sympathomimetics, St.John's wort, Guanethidine, Cardiac glycosides 3,10	Increased sympathomimetic action; may induce hypertension, CNS stimulation
Passionflower (<i>Passiflora incarnata</i>)	Anxiety, restlessness	Anticoagulants 2	Excessive dose may increase risk of bleeding
Pau D'Arco Taheebo, Trumpet bush (<i>Lapacho colorado</i>)	Antineoplastic	Anticoagulants 2,3	May potentiate drug effects
Psyllium	Bulk-forming laxative,	Lithium, digoxin 3,10	Decreased intestinal drug absorption
Plantago, plantain (<i>Plantago</i> species)	Irritable bowel syndrome, chloesterol-lowering	Antihyperlipidemics ¹	Possible additive effects
		Anticoagulants 2	Herb contains vitamin K; May interfere with anticoagulant therapy
Red clover (<i>Trifolium pratense</i>)		Anticoagulants 1,2	Herb contains coumarin; large amount may increase risk of bleeding
Sarsaparilla	Diuretic	Digitalis, bismuth 3	Increased absorption of digitalis and bismuth
Honduras (<i>Smilax</i> species)		Drugs metabolized by CYP450 enzymes 3,10	Induces CYP450 enzymes; increases drug elimination

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Saw palmetto Sabal, Cabbage palm(<i>Serenoa repens</i>)	Benign prostatic hyperplasia	Iron ⁷	Tannin content of herb may limit iron absorption ⁷
		Estrogens ⁴	Potential additive effects
Senna (<i>Cassia acutifolia</i> , <i>C.augustifolia</i> , <i>Senna alexadrina</i>)	Constipation	Digitalis, Diuretics ^{3,10}	Chronic use may cause hypokalemia and potentiate drug toxicity
Shankapulshpi (Ayurvedic preparation)		Phenytoin ^{1,4}	Reduced drug concentrations and half-life; Decreased drug effect
Siberian ginseng (<i>Eleutherococcus, senticosus</i>)	Improve endurance	Digitalis ⁴	May interfere with drug level assay
St.John's wort (<i>Hypericum perforatum</i>)	Depression	Antidepressants, sympathomimetic amines, Ma Huang, pseudoephedrine, yohimbine ^{3,4}	Herb may have monoamine oxidase inhibitor or selective serotonin reuptake inhibitor effects; Possible hypertensive crisis, serotonin syndromes
		Iron ⁴	Tannin content of herb may limit iron absorption
		Piroxicam, Other photosensitizers ^{3,4}	Increased risk of photosensitivity, avoid use with UV light therapy
Turmeric ; Tumeric, indian saffron (<i>Curcuma longa</i>)	Dyspepsia	Antiplatelet agents ²	Herb contains curcumin; may potentiate antiplatelet activity
Uzara root (<i>Uzarae radix</i>)	Diarrhea	Digoxin ^{4,7}	Additive digoxin-like cardiac effects
Valeriann (<i>Valeriana officinalis</i>)	Anxiolytics	Opiates, Alcohol, Barbiturates, CNS depressants ^{3,4}	Additive sedation
Wormwood	Loss of appetite, dyspepsia	Anticonvulsants ⁴	May lower seizure threshold
Yohimbe Yohimbine (<i>Pausinystalia yohimbe</i>)	Impotence	Antihypertensives, Caffeine, Ephedrine, Ma Huang ^{3,10}	Herb has α_2 -antagonist activity; May induce hypotension or hypertension, tachycardia
		Antidepressants, St.John's Wort ³	May have monoamine oxidase inhibitor activity

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