Elecampane

Inula helenium

Principal Proposed Uses

• Chronic Respiratory Diseases; Asthma; Poor Digestion

The Latin name of elecampane comes from Helen of Troy, who was supposed to have carried elecampane with her while being abducted from Sparta. Revered by the ancient Greeks and Romans, this herb was recommended for treating such diverse problems as indigestion, melancholy, sciatica, bronchitis, and asthma.

What Is Elecampane Used for Today?

Some modern herbalists regard elecampane as a long-term treatment for respiratory diseases such as asthma and bronchitis, especially when excessive mucus is a notable feature. However, there is no real evidence that it is effective for this purpose.

Elecampane is also sometimes recommended as a daily supplement to improve general digestion.

One of elecampane’s constituents, alantolactone, has been used in concentrated form as a treatment for intestinal parasites, but it isn't clear whether the whole herb is particularly effective for this purpose.

Dosage

A typical dosage of elecampane root is 1.5 to 4 g 3 times daily, either in capsule form or boiled in water as tea.

Safety Issues

The only reported adverse effects of elecampane are occasional allergic reactions. However, safety in young children, pregnant or nursing women, or those with severe liver or kidney disease has not been established.

References [+]
