



# Herbal Medicine for Women's Health



# CHASTE TREE



## Vitex agnus-castus

Been in use since ancient times for various women's health issues. In Ancient Rome, 'vestal virgins' wore the leaves as a symbol of chastity. Monks wore it on their belt to promote chastity.

### Herbal Actions

Helps to regulate menstrual cycles, most likely because it works on the HPO axis balancing prolactin levels, enhances corpus luteum development and by that end boosts progesterone.

May aid fertility when luteal phase issues or progesterone issues

Useful for PMS, especially when there is breast tenderness, acne, migraines and mood swings

Galactagogue – May help to promote breast milk when used in low doses

Supports pituitary health and hormone regulation – can regulate prolactin levels

May help to smooth the passage of perimenopause





# CHASTE TREE

*Vitex agnus-castus*

Energetics

Slightly warming and drying



Cautions

Best not used when our bodies are establishing hormone balance e.g. in teen years; not always indicated in PCOS;

I advise waiting 3 months after cessation of OCP

The first month or two may cause some unusual periods while sorting things out

Some people may experience some mood shifts initially – combine with nervous system herbs if so.

Dose example

20 drop liquid extract each morning. Stop during menstruation.





# DONG QUAI



## *Angelica sinensis*

Has been referred to as 'women's ginseng'. It's strengthening, cleansing, relaxing, protective. A blood tonic, it brings energy back to the system but it's main focus is on the reproductive system.

### Herbal Actions

Uterine tonic

Blood tonic

Brain tonic

Liver support

Immune and Inflammation balancer

Circulatory stimulant

Analgesic and anti-spasmodic





# DONG QUAI

*Angelica sinensis*



Energetics

Warming, moistening, nourishing

Cautions

Don't used with warfarin, or if you have a history of spontaneous miscarriage as it has anticoagulant effects. This is not always a bad thing, and part of why it's so good for clotty periods. Best when taken on days not menstruation – for those with a heavy bleed avoid taking it during your period.

Generally not recommended in pregnancy due to lack of data, however when combined with certain herbs it may be helpful – always seek practitioners advice if pregnant. Strong historical TCM use in miscarriage prevention.

Avoid in overly hot constitutions without balancing herbs

Dose example

1-3mL three times daily of fluid extract





# MOTHERWORT



## Leonurus cardiaca

A nurturing herb that helps to establish the rhythm of the heart and of the menstrual cycle.

Often used for palpitations related to anxiety or hyperthyroidism.

### Herbal Actions

Bitter

Relaxing nervine

Antispasmodic

Emmenagogue

Cardiotonic

antiarythmic





# MOTHERWORT

*Leonurus cardiaca*



Energetics

Cooling, relaxing, drying

Cautions

Potential caution in those with hypothyroidism

Do not use in early stages of pregnancy or if trying to conceive

Monitor blood pressure in those who are taking BP medications due to possible additive effect

Dose example

600mg twice daily or 1.2 mL two times daily of fluid extract





# WITHANIA



## Withania somnifera

Often referred to by its alternate name, Ashwaganda.  
A calming adaptogen, thought to provide strength and energy  
Supports many body systems including the immune system,  
hormonal balance of the thyroid, adrenals and blood sugars.  
Suited to those who are wired and tired.

### Herbal Actions

- Adaptogenic
- Anxiolytic
- Antioxidant
- Immunomodulant
- Anticancer
- Chemoprotective
- Hypotensive
- Anti-inflammatory
- Anti-arrhythmic





# WITHANIA

## Withania somnifera

Energetics

Hot, dry

Cautions

Conflicting information about pregnancy safety

May cause GIT irritation

Caution alongside immunosuppressant medications

Contraindicated in hyperthyroidism

Dose example

1 tsp powder mixed with warm milk or ghee

250–600mg powdered extract daily

40–90ml of 1:2 extract per week





# LADY'S MANTLE



## *Alchemilla vulgaris*

Often referred to by its alternate name, Ashwaganda.  
A calming adaptogen, thought to provide strength and energy  
Supports many body systems including the immune system,  
hormonal balance of the thyroid, adrenals and blood sugars.  
Suited to those who are wired and tired.

### Herbal Actions

Anti-inflammatory  
Antidiarrhoea  
Antihaemorrhagic (uterine)  
Antilithic  
Antipyretic  
Styptic  
Vulnerary

Uterine tonic  
Astringent  
Demulcent  
Emmenagogue  
Menstrual cycle regulator  
Nervine tonic  
Vasodilator





# LADY'S MANTLE

*Alchemilla vulgaris*



Energetics

Cooling, drying, tonifying

Safe in pregnancy and breastfeeding

Potential interaction with Pitocin

Dose example

For heavy bleeding, mix with yarrow, shepherds purse and cinnamon, take 1/2 cup of infusion every 15 minutes until heavy bleeding eases

3ml fluid extract three times daily during luteal phase





# REFERENCES

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