Wild Yam

url: https://medlineplus.gov/druginfo/natural/970.html  
  
  
Wild Yam  
What is it?  
Wild yam is a plant that has been promoted as natural DHEA because it contains diosgenin, which can be used in the lab to create estrogen and DHEA.  
  
There are over 600 species of wild yams. About 12 species are edible. Some people use wild yam as a source of steroids, but the body can't make steroids such as estrogen and DHEA from eating wild yam. This conversion has to be done in a lab. There might be other chemicals in wild yam that act like estrogen in the body.  
  
People most commonly use wild yam as a "natural alterative" to estrogen therapy for symptoms of menopause, infertility, menstrual problems, and many other conditions, but there is no good scientific evidence to support any of these uses.  
  
  
  
How effective is it?  
Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database rates effectiveness based on scientific evidence according to the following scale: Effective, Likely Effective, Possibly Effective, Possibly Ineffective, Likely Ineffective, Ineffective, and Insufficient Evidence to Rate.The effectiveness ratings for WILD YAM are as follows:Possibly ineffective for...Symptoms of menopause. Applying wild yam cream to the skin doesn't seem to help symptoms such as hot flashes and night sweats. It also doesn't seem to affect levels of hormones that play a role in menopause.  
  
There is interest in using wild yam for a number of other purposes, but there isn't enough reliable information to say whether it might be helpful.  
  
  
Is it safe?  
When taken by mouth: Wild yam is possibly safe when used for up to 12 weeks. It's usually well tolerated, but taking large amounts might cause vomiting, upset stomach, and headache.  
When applied to the skin: Wild yam is possibly safe when applied to the skin.  
  
Special precautions & warnings:  
Pregnancy and breast-feeding: There isn't enough reliable information to know if wild yam is safe to use when pregnant or breast-feeding. Stay on the safe side and avoid use.  
  
  
Hormone-sensitive condition such as breast cancer, uterine cancer, ovarian cancer, endometriosis, or uterine fibroids: Wild yam might act like estrogen. If you have any condition that might be made worse by estrogen, don't use wild yam.  
  
  
  
Are there interactions with medications?  
ModerateBe cautious with this combination.EstrogensWild yam might have some of the same effects as estrogen. Taking wild yam along with estrogen pills might decrease the effects of estrogen pills.  
  
  
Are there interactions with herbs and supplements?  
There are no known interactions with herbs and supplements.  
  
  
Are there interactions with foods?  
There are no known interactions with foods.  
  
  
How is it typically used?  
There isn't enough reliable information to know what an appropriate dose of wild yam might be. Keep in mind that natural products are not always necessarily safe and dosages can be important. Be sure to follow relevant directions on product labels and consult a healthcare professional before using.  
  
  
Other names  
American Yam, Atlantic Yam, Barbasco, China Root, Chinese Yam, Colic Root, Devil's Bones, DHEA Naturelle, Dioscorea, Dioscoreae, Dioscorea alata, Dioscorea batatas, Dioscorea composita, Dioscorea floribunda, Dioscorea hirticaulis, Dioscorea japonica, Dioscorea macrostachya, Dioscorea mexicana, Dioscorea opposita, Dioscorea tepinapensis, Dioscorea villosa, Dioscor e, Igname Sauvage, Igname Velue, Mexican Yam, Mexican Wild Yam, ame Silvestre, Natural DHEA, Phytoestrogen, Phyto- strog ne, Rheumatism Root, Rhizoma Dioscorae, Rhizoma Dioscoreae, Shan Yao, Wild Mexican Yam, Yam, Yuma.  
  
  
Methodology  
  
 To learn more about how this article was written, please see the Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database methodology.   
   
  
  
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