

## **Astragalus**

### **Astragalus membranaceus**

Traditionally used in the treatment of cold and flu, containing constituents including polysaccharides and flavonoids which contribute to the herb's immune enhancing effects. A double-blind, placebo-controlled clinical trial has demonstrated that astragalus has a strong effect on the activation and proliferation of immune cells, particularly CD8 and CD4 T-cells[2-3].

Astragalus root is an herb that is used much in the same way as the immunomodulant mushrooms. Astragalus root also contains complex polysaccharides that have been shown to improve immune activity, specifically by increasing the activity of white blood cells, stimulating adrenal-cortical activity, and encouraging red blood cell formation in the bone marrow. However, note that there is a traditional practice of not using astragalus during acute illness[4].

It appears to stimulate white blood cells to engulf and destroy invading organisms and cellular debris as well as enhance the production of interferon (a key natural compound produced by the body to fight viruses). It is used to treat viruses[5]

### **Ayurveda:**

Astragalus propinquus (syn. Astragalus membranaceus)[6]

Indian Name : Katira (Milk vetch)

Reference: Dravya - Substance, Rasa - Taste, Guna - Qualities, Veerya - Potency, Vipaka - Post-digestion effect, Karma - Pharmacological activity, Prabhava - Therapeutics.

### **REFERENCES:**

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[2] Roxas M, Jurenka J. Colds and influenza: a review of diagnosis and conventional, botanical, and nutritional considerations Altern Med Rev. 2007;12(1):25-48

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[6] [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astragalus\\_propinquus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astragalus_propinquus)