**Astragalus**

**Name:** Astragalus. *Astragalus propinquus/membranaceus,* syn. *A. membranaseus.* Milk vetch root, huang qi (Chinese), ogi (Japanese), and hwanggi (Korean).

**Parts Used:** Root/rhizome.

**Native To:** Asia. Northern and eastern parts of China. Can be grown in New England.

**Uses:** Medicinal

* Used in Chinese medicine. Strengthens “chi” (vital force)
* Immune tonic. An immune system modulator.
* Used mainly to strengthen the immune and digestive systems.
* Prevents infection
* Recent research showing that it might be helpful for various autoimmune diseases and cancers
* Use post chemotherapy and radiation to help rebuild immune system (blood strengthening properties), even for children
* “Energetically warming and nourishing and best for cold, stagnant states.”
* “Aids the functioning of many body systems and supports the cardiovascular system, liver, and kidneys.”
* “More stem cells are produced in the bone marrow and lymph which develop into active immune cells throughout the body.”
* “Affinity to the lungs and the respiratory system”
* “Discharge[s] pus and promotes the healing of ulcers.
* Considered adaptogenic

**Actions:** Adaptogen, anti-inflammatory and antibacterial.

**Constituents:** Glycosides, choline, betaine, rumatakenin, sugar, polysacharides (which improve the function of NK and T-cells and also increase production of interferon1), plant acid, beta-sitosterol, vitamin A.

“Contains triterpenoid saponins, which behave in the same manner as animal steroid hormones.”1

**Tincture and Capsules (Dosage):**

* Use as infusion or tincture
* Can be made into tea or even added to soups and broths (remove root before serving)

Tincture: When 30 percent ethanol, the recommended dose is 20 to 60 drops three times a day.

Tea: boil three to six grams of dried root per 12 ounces of water three times a day.

Standardized extract: is 250 – 500 mg, three to four times a day standardized to 0.4% 4-hydroxy-3-methoxy isoflavone 7-sug. 2

**Harvest:**   
“Astragalus grown from seed requires at least two years of growth to produce rootstock of adequate size for medicine making.” 3

“Harvest astragalus after at least four or five years of growth, preferably after the first frost.” 4

**Taste:** Mildly sweet and pleasant taste.

**Flower Essence:**

* “Experience more deeply our eternal spiritual identity. This opens the way for us to focus more clearly on spiritual tasks.”
* “Helps us cut to the chase about why we are here and what our lives are meant to be about.”
* “Loosens the hold temporal pleasures and pursuits have on as they are revealed as less important even illusory in their nature.”

**Combines:**

Often combined with ginseng, where astragalus is thought to strengthen “the outer energy while ginseng tonifies the inner energy.”

“Astragalus is commonly used in combination with Dang Gui to nourish the blood for the treatment of postpartum anemia, severe blood loss and hemorrhage,” or “whenever there is poor circulation and lassitude.”

Other adaptogens and mushrooms.

**Contra-indications:**

* Better to take astragalus earlier in the day. “It can be too zippy for some, aggravating insomnia, anxiety, and heart issues.”
* “Traditional Chinese medicine holds that children with a fever should not take astragalus because it may increase the fever and result in it lasting longer.”5

1 https://earthkindherbal.com/2011/02/20/astragalus-membranaceus/

2 http://www.drweil.com/vitamins-supplements-herbs/herbs/astragalus/

3 http://www.heirloom-organics.com/guide/va/guidetogrowingastragalus.html

4 http://herbsontheside.com/potm\_jan\_2009.php

5 http://www.drweil.com/vitamins-supplements-herbs/herbs/astragalus/