

Please Take One!



SUPPLEMENT OF THE MONTH: Black Cohosh

What is black cohosh?

Black cohosh is an herb that comes from the roots of a plant grown in North America. In some people, it seems to work similarly to estrogen and may increase or decrease estrogen in different parts of the body. Black cohosh root also contains chemicals that work similarly to serotonin and may reduce inflammation and affect the immune system.

Where is it found?

It is a supplement. It does not come from any food sources.

What are the benefits?

Black cohosh has effectively been used to treat some of the symptoms of menopause, such as hot flashes, night sweats, vaginal dryness, mood changes, headaches, sleep problems, and heart palpitations. It also may be used to relieve arthritis pain, to regulate periods, and to decrease PMS symptoms. Lastly, black cohosh can also be used topically for acne and the removal of warts.

Are there side effects?

Some common side effects of black cohosh are headaches and stomach discomfort. There have also been a few cases of liver damage, so people with pre-existing liver problems or those taking medications that may affect the liver should avoid black cohosh. Also, pregnant women, women with endometriosis, and those with a history of breast or uterine cancer and endometriosis should avoid black cohosh as well.

Are there interactions with medications?

Black cohosh should not be taken with medications that may harm the liver or any medication that may be changed by the liver. Also, if you are taking birth control pills, hormone replacement therapy, sedatives, or blood pressure medication, do not take black cohosh without the consent of your doctor.