

Black Walnut

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Black walnut is a North American relative of the more commonly known English or Persian walnut, which has been used as a food source and herbal agent for centuries. The tree grows widely across the western U.S. and Canada and is native to the hardwood forests of the Central Mississippi Valley and the Appalachian region of North America. It is a large tree and can sometimes reach a height of 100 feet and 4-5 feet in diameter. The earliest known reference to the walnut tells that Alexander the Great introduced it to Greece from the Middle East. In fact, in almost every part of the world, the walnut is part of local herbal nutrition.



Ancient Greeks and Romans called black walnut fruit the "imperial nut" and reportedly used the hull to treat intestinal ailments. Black walnut has also played a part in Russian folk medicine since the seventeenth century. Throughout history, every part of the tree has been used in folk medicine to treat dozens of conditions, including the bite of a mad dog. According to traditional Chinese medicine, eating black walnuts builds physical strength. In Texas folk medicine, black walnut extract is considered an effective treatment for scorpion bites.

Black walnut hulls contain juglone, a chemical that is antibacterial, antiviral, antiparasitic, and a fungicide. Early evidence from laboratory research suggests that juglone; this compound in black walnut, has anti-tumor properties and may possibly reduce cancer risk. However, studies in humans have not been completed. Black walnut hull provides many health benefits due to its unique composition of juglone, tannins, and natural iodine.

Juglone (5-hydroxy-alphanaphthaquinone) is a powerful defensive adaptation of black walnut and is known as a phytotoxic allelochemical. This material can be detected in virtually every part of the tree, including the bark, leaves, wood, the hull of the nuts, and especially the roots. Often, when a substance found in nature exhibits strength as a toxin, its properties can be applied in healing as well. In this regard, juglone demonstrates potential as an effective bactericide, fungicide, and even piscicide. For this reason, many healthcare practitioners regard juglone as an important component of black walnut.



Tannins are polyphenols produced by many plant species to help ward off attacks from insects and bacteria and to reduce its inflammability. Tannins are also found in organic beverages such as tea and in many fruits, such as berries, pomegranates, and wine grapes. Tannins are believed to aid the body in warding off bacteria and in resisting many conditions and diseases such as diarrhea, various blood disorders, stress, tumors, ulcers, and even cancer.

Iodine, another important chemical in black walnut hull, is required by almost every living organism to some degree. Although elemental iodine is toxic in large amounts, it has been widely used for its antiseptic properties. For this reason, kelp and other ocean-faring plants are often consumed as rich organic sources of iodine due to its high concentration in seawater. Iodine is required to produce the thyroid hormone and a deficiency can result in the onset of goiters, chronic fatigue, depression, and possibly mental impairment. Once in the body, iodine affixes itself to harmful bacteria and reduces the bacteria's life span.

The most common use of black walnut is to purge and balance the digestive system. Over 500 different organisms have been identified from the human gut. Many of these bacteria, fungi, yeast and other organisms are beneficial; that is they produce digestive enzymes, lactic acid, and other protective compounds that keeps the bowels, and the body functioning well. Many pathogenic organisms also reside there, but will not overgrow and become a problem unless the bowel environment and the immune system become unbalanced. This condition is called dysbiosis. Overgrowth of *Candida albicans*, *Giardia*, other amoebas, bacteria, and other disease-causing organisms can produce digestive symptoms like pain, cramping, diarrhea, and interfere with proper nutritional absorption. Black walnut is useful when traveling to areas where food or water may contain bacteria or parasites, which can cause nausea, abdominal pains, and diarrhea.

A few of the more common forms of dysbiosis are:

Candidiasis, or a yeast infection, is associated with the fungus *Candida albicans*. Symptoms of candidiasis include a thick white discharge and a burning or itching sensation. This organism is always present in our intestinal tracts and may play a role in our body ecology. Stress, diet, and other lifestyle patterns can trigger an overgrowth of candida, leading to a yeast infection.

Diarrhea can be caused by many factors, such as intestinal infections, parasites, or irritable bowel syndromes. Prolonged diarrhea can lead to loss of mineral electrolytes and dehydration.

Giardia is a pear-shaped protozoon inhabiting the small intestines of humans that can cause such symptoms as nausea, diarrhea, and intestinal cramping. Like *Candida albicans* and other potentially pathogenic species, they can be present in the gut, but not cause symptoms. They can also interfere with the absorption of nutrients under some circumstances.

Thrush is an overgrowth of the yeast-like fungus *Candida albicans* in the mouth. White patches appear on the tongue and throat, which can lead to redness, heat, and pain. *Candida* overgrowth often occurs in people who are taking broad-spectrum antibiotics or in people with compromised immune systems. It is best to avoid sugar in all forms, especially during acute infections.

- Promotes healthy digestion and assimilation of fats
- Encourages bowel regularity as a natural laxative
- Oxygenates the blood for healthier organs
- Antiseptic healing properties (both internally and externally)

- Aids in balancing blood sugar and reducing cholesterol
- Helps flush out toxins and harmful pathogens
- It kills microorganisms (bacterium, fungi, yeast, etc) and larger parasites including worms and flukes
- Strengthens cells
- Promotes healing tissues
- May help restore tooth enamel
- Strengthens and stimulates the immune system
- Promotes lymph movement and bowel peristalsis
- Strengthens the bones (high in calcium)

Traditional usage of black walnut in various forms, topically and internally:

- Anthelmintic
- Anticandidiasis
- Antifungal
- Antiinflammatory
- Antiviral
- Astringent
- Eczema
- Glandular Disorders
- Hemorrhoids
- Herpes simplex
- Hypothyroidism
- Immune System
- Gallbladder Problems
- Liver Health Maintenance
- Poultice
- Scabies
- Skin Disorders
- Ulcers (external)



Precautions

Black walnut hulls are safe for occasional use of up to 2 weeks at a time, but black walnut heartwood is not. Avoid herbal remedies that contain heartwood. Internal use of black walnut preparations is not recommended for extended periods or in high dosage

Those allergic to walnuts should not use black walnut. Symptoms of an allergic reaction:

- Breathing problems or tightness in your throat or chest
- Chest pain
- Skin hives, rash, or itchy or swollen skin



Be sure to try NSP's [Black Walnut \(100 caps\)](#), [Black Walnut ATC Conc. \(50 caps\)](#) or the [Black Walnut Extract \(2 fl. oz.\)](#) from Nature's Sunshine. You can see other products that contain Black Walnut by [clicking here](#).

References

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Yours in Good Health!

Sincerely,

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