

From our friends at "Back to Herbs"



Boneset

Among the most treasured herbs of the historical American pharmacopoeia is the highly esteemed boneset, or *Eupatorium perfoliatum*. Also called agueweed, thoroughwort, Indian sage, and feverwort, this native plant medicine has had widespread tribal and domestic folk use, as well as more official pharmacological status and a wide range of early Americans has utilized it. It was included in the US Pharmacopoeia from 1820 to 1916 and the National Formulary IV through VI.



Names of plants often reveal much information about them. They can also be misleading. Boneset attained popularity about 1800 when a particularly virulent flu (dengue fever) swept the East Coast and was characterized by intense bone pain. An early 19th century physician (C.J.Hemple) who noted that the herb "so signally relieved the disease...that it was familiarly called bone-set" made a specific reference to this.

While boneset has been used to treat many various ailments, the chief indication from a wide range of historical sources for use of this herb, however, is for treatment of respiratory problems, fevers, colds, and flu.

Boneset was used by many tribes of North America for a wide variety of ailments, including sore throat, chills, menstrual irregularity, epilepsy, gonorrhea, kidney trouble, rheumatism, and to induce vomiting. The Mesquakies used the root to cure snakebites. One of their doctors, named McIntosh, used a leaf and flower tea to expel worms. The Iroquois, Mohegan, Menominee, Delaware, and Cherokee have all used boneset to treat colds and fever. The Alabama relieved stomachache with boneset tea. Several tribes, including the Cherokee, also used boneset as a laxative.

Indeed the Native Americans were masters at the craft of herbology. In fact, one Native American in Colonial times became famous for curing typhoid with boneset. For decades thereafter boneset was named after him, Joe Pye weed.

According to Mark Pedersen, a research chemist who specializes in herbal chemistry, no one chemical is responsible for the action of boneset. He points out that he has found boneset to be one of the most versatile medicinal plants. His research has revealed that in virtually every instance where there is inflammation or infection boneset has shown itself efficacious. Pedersen's research has also shown that boneset even has some anti-tumor properties.

Chemical studies have identified some of the constituents and key therapeutic

components of boneset, which include various flavonoid pigments, sterols, and triterpenes, polysaccharides, diterpenes, volatile oils, sesquiterpene lactones including eupafolin, and vitamins and minerals including magnesium, calcium, niacin, and phosphorus.

Key Actions:

- antiviral
- antibacterial
- antiparasitic
- promotes sweating
- febrifuge
- decongestant
- mild laxative effect
- mucous membrane tonic
- immunostimulant
- smooth muscle relaxant
- anti-inflammatory
- cytotoxic
- mild emetic
- peripheral circulatory stimulant
- gastric bitter

Adaptation Energy:

Hans Hugo Bruno Selye (Hungarian) was a pioneering endocrinologist. Selye did much important scientific work on the hypothetical non-specific response of an organism to stressors. While he did not recognize all of the many aspects of glucocorticoids, Selye was aware of their role in the stress response. From Selye's perspective, boneset as a drug was used to augment the GAS (general adaptation syndrome - theory of stress), which suggests it increases adaptation energy. Evidence to this effect includes the following. The drug was used to raise resistance to acute infection (influenza) and chronic infection (malaria, syphilis, etc.). It was used to increase resistance to autoimmune disease (rheumatoid arthritis). It was used when resistance failed and state of exhaustion set in. Lastly, it was used when acute or chronic disease depleted vital energy and physiological functions were thereby diminished or perverted. Digestive, respiratory, circulatory, nervous, and urinary function were all said to be augmented with its administration.

Israel I. Brekhman, M.D., a renowned Russian research pharmacologist and physiologist, Brekhman's adaptogen criterion: an adaptogen should be innocuous and cause minimal disorders in the physiological functions of an organism. The action of an adaptogen should be non-specific i.e. it should increase resistance to adverse influences of a wide range of factors of physical, chemical, and biological nature. Boneset is considered innocuous in both Eclectic and contemporary literature.

Clinically, it was used to increase resistance to acute and chronic infectious disease, autoimmune disease, and alcohol abuse. Experimentally, compounds found in boneset have been shown to increase resistance to bacterial, viral (influenza), fungal, protozoan (malaria), parasite, and plasmodium infection indirectly through immune stimulation and directly through antibiotic activity. They have been shown to increase resistance to cancer, tumors, and free radical damage.

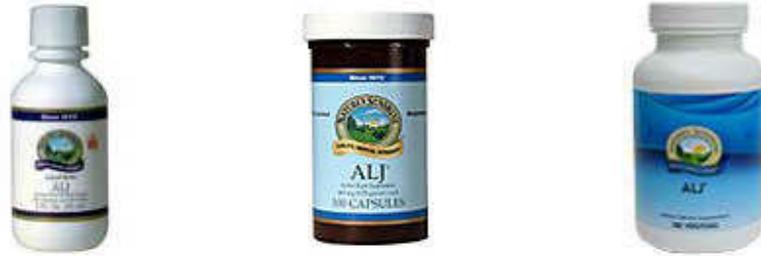
Also clinically, boneset was used to normalize mucous membrane and membrane permeability function throughout the body. It was used to normalize both hypo immune function (inclination to infection) and autoimmune function (rheumatoid arthritis). It was used to normalize the entire range of physiological abnormalities associated with state of

exhaustion.

Experimentally, compounds found in boneset have been shown to normalize aberrant physiological functions including immune suppression, platelet stickiness, capillary fragility, abnormal inflammation, autoimmune disease, hyperlipidemia, poor urine flow, and a tendency to ulceration.

CAUTIONS:

A small number of people experience nausea and/or vomiting when using boneset. The fresh plant, however, is more likely to cause this than the dried herb.



Be sure to try NSP's ALJ® (100 caps), ALJ® Liquid (2 fl. oz.) or ALJ® (180 Vegitabs).

References:

- <http://klemow.wilkes.edu/Eupatorium.html>
- <http://www.innvista.com/health/herbs/boneset.htm>
- http://www.herbs2000.com/herbs/herbs_boneset.htm
- <http://carterfayanna.health.officelive.com/Documents/Boneset%20Paper.pdf>
- http://www.naturalnews.com/032076_Boneset_fever_remedies.html
- <http://doctorschar.com/archives/boneset-eupatorium-perfolatum/>

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Yours in Good Health!

Sincerely,

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