

Ginkgo Biloba



- *Ginkgo biloba* is one of the top selling herbs in the U.S.
- It has been used in traditional Chinese medicine for thousands of years.
- More recently, *Ginkgo biloba* has been used to treat asthma, bronchitis, fatigue, and tinnitus (ringing in the ears).
- *Ginkgo biloba* is usually consumed as tablets, capsules or teas.

Recent Findings

The current evidence suggests that ginkgo may have benefits in the following conditions:

- Claudication— a pain in the legs caused by peripheral artery disease, or narrowing of the arteries in the legs. Studies show that *Ginkgo biloba* can improve claudication symptoms.
- Dementia— *Ginkgo biloba* may benefit people with early stage Alzheimer's disease and multi-infarct dementia, and may be as helpful as a prescription drug therapy.

Side Effects and Cautions

- *Ginkgo biloba* may increase bleeding risk. This is particularly important for individuals on anticoagulant drugs, with bleeding disorders, or those planning to schedule a surgery or a dental procedure.
- Side effects of *Ginkgo biloba* may include headache, nausea, gastrointestinal upset, diarrhea, dizziness, or allergic skin reactions.
- You should *always* inform your health care provider of any herbal or dietary supplement that you are using.



More to Come

Large clinical trials are currently underway on *Ginkgo biloba* by the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM). Research questions are assessing the impact of *Ginkgo biloba* on the onset of dementia (particularly Alzheimer's disease), slowing the cognitive decline and functional disability, reducing the incidence of cardiovascular disease, and decreasing the rate of premature death. The NCCAM will also examine the role of *Ginkgo biloba* in asthma, multiple sclerosis, vascular function, and insulin resistance.

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