

Supplement Sampler

Andrographis (*Andrographis paniculata*) also known as "Indian Echinacea"



Best Indication

Treatment of the Common Cold

Andrographis significantly improves symptoms of the common cold when started within 72 hours of symptom onset. Some symptoms seem to improve after 2 days of treatment, but it typically takes 4-5 days before maximal symptom relief.

Mechanism of Action

This product is considered an immuno-modulator. This class of natural medicines is considered to "boost" or "support" the immune system. The thinking is that stimulating immune system activity helps the body ward off viruses. There is evidence that andrographis increases antibody activity and phagocytosis by macrophages. Source: Immunostimulant agents from *Andrographis paniculata*. *J Nat Prod* 1993.

Best Study

Andrographis paniculata in the treatment of upper respiratory tract infections: a systematic review of safety and efficacy. *Planta Med.* 2004.

“Collectively, the data suggest that *Andrographis paniculata* is superior to placebo in alleviating the subjective symptoms of uncomplicated upper respiratory tract infection. Adverse events reported following administration of *A. paniculata* were generally mild and infrequent. *A. paniculata* may be a safe and efficacious treatment for the relief of symptoms of uncomplicated upper respiratory tract infection.”

Dosage

Oral: For treating the common cold:
1200 mg daily in divided doses of either 600 mg BID or 400 mg TID.

Side Effects

- Orally, andrographis is generally well tolerated and safe when used short-term.
- Pregnancy: LIKELY UNSAFE due to abortifacient effects.

Cost

About \$10 for a 15 day supply (Community Pharmacy price quote).

Disclaimer

The benefits of *preventing* common colds with frequent hand washing beat *treating* with supplements or pharmaceuticals and would make Dr. Ignaz Semmelweis proud.

Brought to you by your colleagues in the UW Department of Family Medicine Integrative Medicine Program.