



# Cat's Claw

It is an exotic gift from the Peruvian rainforests that is becoming widely recognized as a superior immune stimulant with *antioxidant, antiviral and anti-inflammatory qualities*. It is said to be a "life-giving" tonic that *cleanses the intestinal tract, and supports healthy blood pressure levels*.

**Information:** Herbals/Nutritionals/Medicinals can be very strong. Consequently, if they are not tailored to your specific needs, they can do more harm than good. This information is meant to be used by your VHC Medical Team and personal Physician as they build your Total Health Plan. Never attempt to adjust your prescribed medications and/or Natural Treatments without your physician's and Medical Team's knowledge and guidance. Since herbals/nutritionals and medications can interact with each other, it is always advisable to consult with your health care provider and The Vibrant Health Community at [www.VibrantHealthCommunity.com](http://www.VibrantHealthCommunity.com) (or call 1-866-378-8253) before starting or changing your program.

**Botanical:** *Uncaria tomentosa*

**Family:** *Rubiaceae* (madder)

**Other common names:** Una de Gato, Hawk's Claw, Samento, Rangayo, Garabato Amarillo, Jipotatsa, Chacruk

**History:** Cat's Claw, frequently called by its Spanish name, *Una de Gato*, is a tropical, creeping, woody vine that climbs upright, and when it connects to canopy trees, may reach a length of one hundred feet or more. It is a native of the rainforests of the Peruvian Amazon, and its English name refers to the small, sharp spines on the plant's stem, which are curved back like a cat's claw. It belongs to the same plant family as coffee, and the inner bark is used in herbal medicine. The native peoples of South America have used Cat's Claw for centuries to treat intestinal problems, heal wounds, remedy gonorrhea and also as a contraceptive. Current research is being carried out to reveal exciting applications for this herb, and it holds promise in treating a variety of illnesses that will, hopefully, bring positive results. Some of the constituents in Cat's Claw include alkaloids, quinovic acid, glycosides, triterpenes, oleanolic acid, ursolic acid and alloisopteropodine.

**Beneficial Uses:** Cat's Claw is considered an anti-inflammatory agent that is thought to be good for all forms of arthritis, rheumatism and other inflammatory diseases. It is a rich source of sterols, the chemical compounds closely related to steroids,

and the herb has been known to reduce swelling by approximately fifty percent in tests.

Long prized as a general tonic for its "life-giving" properties, Cat's Claw is considered to be one of the finest immune stimulants, ranking among the upper tiers of other immune-boosting herbs. It is believed to effectively cleanse and detoxify the intestinal tract and replenish friendly bacteria. Most bowel diseases are the result of the disruption of the growth of beneficial flora, and without the proper balance, the immune system may be adversely affected. Consequently, Cat's Claw not only enhances the natural defense system, but it also is said to relieve the discomforts of intestinal disorders, such as diverticulitis, leaky bowel, colitis and dysentery.

Cat's Claw may be beneficial in supporting the cardiovascular system by promoting healthy blood pressure levels and slowing the heart rate. The alkaloid content is believed to relax and dilate peripheral blood vessels, lower blood cholesterol levels, restrict platelet aggregation (clotting), and may thus help prevent heart problems and arteriosclerosis. Some USDA research has claimed

that Cat's Claw seeds contain an enzyme that may be instrumental in converting saturated fats into unsaturated fats, and further studies may substantiate more positive results.

Cat's Claw is said to possess antiviral and antibacterial properties and has demonstrated the ability to combat and speed up the ridding of cold viruses and mononucleosis; and its immune-stimulant effects allow it to fight the invasion of Lyme disease, combat sinusitis and skin diseases and to act against *Helicobacter pylori*, the bacterium associated with gastritis and peptic ulcers.

Cat's Claw is a potent immuno-stimulant and antioxidant that fights free radical damage and has been used to support the body during chemotherapy and radiation treatments, helping to remove toxic metabolites. Some preliminary studies in Italy say it stops the mutation of cells in long-term smokers and regulates the activity of white blood cells. The herb is thought to decrease macrophages if they are overabundant and increase their number if they are deficient, a process that is believed to keep the body's natural antioxidants focused on unhealthy

tissues, while not stimulating the body to produce more white cells that may damage healthy tissues. By stimulating the immune system, Austrian researchers have confirmed Cat's Claw's support for a body weakened by chemotherapy and allows some people to take the full course of chemotherapy needed, as well as possibly improving the outcomes of such treatments.

**Contraindications:** Pregnant and nursing women should not take Cat's Claw, nor should people with autoimmune diseases, such as multiple sclerosis, etc. Those suffering from tuberculosis should avoid Cat's Claw. It should always be taken with at least six ounces of water to maintain its efficacy. Do not take Cat's Claw without talking to your doctor first if you are taking: Blood thinning medicine (examples: warfarin, aspirin, enoxaparin). Cat's Claw should not be used by organ transplant patients or anyone with an autoimmune disease, children under three years of age or by skin graft patients. There have been reports that Cat's Claw may lower hormone levels, such as estrogen and progesterone.

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