



Slippery Elm Bark

Slippery Elm Bark is soothing! As its name implies, this lubricating and nutritious herb coats irritated areas, allowing the body to heal itself. Its high level of mucilage helps to soothe a sore throat, ease indigestion and lubricate the bowel, which has made Slippery Elm Bark useful for easing Crohn's disease, colitis and irritable bowel disease (IBS).

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 (or call 1-866-378-8253) before starting or changing your program.

Botanical: *Ulmus fulva* (also known as *Ulmus rubra*)

Family: *Ulmaceae* (elm)

Other common names: Indian Elm, Red Elm, Winged Elm, Rock Elm, Moose Elm, Sweet Elm, American Elm

History: Slippery Elm is a large, deciduous tree that is native to North America and grows in the moist, well-drained (but not waterlogged) woods of the eastern half of Canada and the United States. The tree may reach a height of sixty feet and may now also be found planted along streets, as well as in the forests throughout North America. Native American Indians were the first to discover the healing powers of the Slippery Elm and found that when the tree's inner bark comes in contact with water, the gummy substance (or mucilage) swells and produces a soothing, softening ointment. Native Americans applied it to heal wounds, and when it dried, it became a natural bandage, and they also wrapped Slippery Elm Bark around meat to prevent spoilage. The English settlers soon noticed its widespread use by Native Americans and included it into their medicinal applications for wounds, cold sores and boils. The colonists also used the bark to treat coughs, sore throats and urinary tract infections. Slippery Elm Bark was used during the American Revolution to treat gunshot wounds and in Valley Forge as a survival food. Mixed with water, Slippery

Elm Bark makes a highly nutritious and soothing gruel for children and for sick people of any age, and the herb was once listed in the *United States Pharmacopeia*. Slippery Elm bark has a soothing and healing effect on any part of the body with which it comes into contact. The bark's exceptionally rich mucilage content is composed of easily digested, nontoxic, complex carbohydrates, and Slippery Elm Bark also contains alpha- and beta-sitosterol, campesterol, tannin, protein, phytosterol, polysaccharide, salicylic acid, selenium, silicon, calcium, iron, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, potassium, selenium, zinc, chromium, D-galactose, fat, fiber, fructose, glucose, beta-carotene and vitamins B-1, B-2, B-3 and C.

Beneficial Uses: The principal use of Slippery Elm Bark is to soothe sore throats. The high level of mucilage makes it extremely soothing for the inflamed mucous membranes of the throat and esophagus. Herbalists use it in cough medicines for scratchy, raw, sore throats and mouth irritations, and it is also an effective ingredient in throat lozenges.

Slippery Elm Bark reduces inflammation of the intestinal tract. It soothes the inflamed mucous membranes of the bowel and neutralizes excess acids in the intestines, which make it beneficial for Crohn's disease, ulcerative colitis, diverticulosis, diverticulitis and irritable bowel syndrome. It has also been used to ease both constipation and chronic diarrhea.

One of Slippery Elm Bark's oldest uses has been as a digestive tonic. Again, its high mucilage content soothes the inflamed mucous membranes of the stomach and neutralizes excess stomach acids, making it an excellent remedy for the entire digestive system. It is said to soothe stomach irritation and the sore feeling that often follows vomiting. Old time herbalists use it as a remedy for ulcers and gastritis.

Slippery Elm Bark generally reduces inflammation and is useful for soothing the mucous membranes of the urinary tract and easing the inflammation of aching joints.

Midwives used Slippery Elm Bark to lubricate and ease childbirth.

Slippery Elm Bark is a highly nutritious food product. It is good for babies as a nutritive and also benefits those babies who are unable to digest milk products. Because it is so soothing and easily digested, it is one of the few foods that will stay in a cancerous or ulcerated stomach when nothing else will and is also beneficial for invalids and those recovering from illness or who have wasting diseases.

In times of famine or food shortage, a gruel made from Slippery Elm bark was highly valued for its nutritive qualities.

Slippery Elm Bark works with the body to draw out impurities and toxins and has been a longtime treatment for cuts, bruises, wounds, burns and also to relieve inflamed or itchy skin.

Contraindications: People with known allergies to elm bark should avoid Slippery Elm Bark. Other medications should be taken at a different time, because the herb's high mucilage content may interfere with their absorption