



# *White Willow Bark*

Headache? Back Pain? Toothache? Joint aches and pains? Try **White Willow Bark** for *effective pain relief!* Ingredients in White Willow Bark contain compounds from which aspirin was derived, and this *natural painkiller* contains the beneficial effects of aspirin *without the side effects* typically associated with synthetic aspirin products.

**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:** *Salix alba*

**Family:** *Salicaceae* (willow/osier)

**Other common names:** European Willow, Willow Bark, Common Willow

*..... I will tell you what the sparrow says,  
and the sparrow heard it from an old Willow Tree  
which grew near a field of buckwheat - and is there still.  
It is a large venerable tree, though a little crippled by age.*

**Hans Christian Andersen (1842)**

**History:** The Willow encompasses more than three hundred species. The White Willow is a low-growing deciduous tree that is native to Europe and northern Asia, and naturalized in North America. It grows in damp, low places, especially along riverbanks, and thrives in moist-to-wet, heavy soil in sun, rising to a height of eighty feet. White Willow branches were once regarded as a symbol of desolation and grief and were displayed by those who experienced "lost love," but it has more often been called one of nature's greatest gifts to man because of its natural painkilling effects. In the first century A.D., the Greek physician, Dioscorides, appears to have been the first to note the use of Willow Bark to ease pain and reduce fevers, and he even specifically prescribed a mixture with the bark to

treat lower back pain. During the Middle Ages, White Willow Bark continued to be used in Europe to reduce fevers and relieve pain. The plant contains salicylic acid, which was first synthesized in 1838, and provides the basis of aspirin; and in 1899, the Bayer Company of Germany introduced a drug composed of a synthetic chemical compound, similar to the active compound in Willow Bark, the "aspirin." Native Americans knew of the benefits of White Willow Bark when they used it as a painkiller, a cure for fever and to induce sweating. Some tribes used Black Willow Bark to quell sexual desire and also made good use of the stems for basket-weaving. The stems are still used to create baskets and in the manufacture of wicker furniture and artists' charcoal pencils. Over the centuries, White Willow Bark's growing list of medicinal applications has risen to

include remedies for insomnia, colds, rheumatism and dysentery. Some of the constituents included in White Willow Bark are apigenin, beta-carotene, catechin, lignin, rutin, salicin, salicylic acid, tannin, calcium, iron, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, potassium, selenium, zinc, B-vitamins and vitamin C.

**Beneficial Uses:** White Willow Bark has been employed for thousands of years as a reliable painkiller. It is used to relieve the pain of headaches, migraines, backache, nerve pain, menstrual cramps, toothache and the pain of minor injuries. The analgesic actions of White Willow Bark may be slower-acting than synthetic aspirin, but the results last longer, as the painkilling compounds remain at stable levels in the bloodstream longer (usually for several hours) than synthetic aspirin products. Unlike aspirin products, White Willow Bark has no effect on blood platelets and does not increase bleeding, nor will it irritate the lining of the stomach, common side effects of aspirin.

White Willow Bark is a bitter, astringent, cooling herb that reduces fever, increases perspiration and cools the body. It is good for minor feverish illnesses, chills, colds, etc.

As an anti-inflammatory, White Willow Bark has been used to relieve the painful inflammation and joint pain of rheumatism, arthritis, gout, neuralgia, osteoarthritis, osteoporitic and lower back pain and the inflammatory stages of autoimmune diseases. It may also be an effective alternative for people who

cannot tolerate non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory drugs.

White Willow Bark is an antiseptic. The salicin in the herb is converted into salicylic acid and other related compounds by the liver and is excreted as such in the urine, which makes it helpful for treating kidney, urethra, bladder and other urinary tract irritations. It has also been used as a remedy for diarrhea, dysentery and minor infections.

Used externally, White Willow Bark's antiseptic properties extend to its help in treating cuts, burns, wounds, sores, sweaty feet, dandruff and as a mouthwash to ease tonsillitis, sore mouth and sore gums.

White Willow Bark is high in tannin content, and it is believed to help with gastrointestinal disorders, such as sour stomach and heartburn.

**Contraindications:** Those who are allergic to aspirin should not use White Willow Bark, and the herb should not be taken in combination with aspirin. It is not recommended for pregnant and nursing women without first consulting a health care provider. Children under the age of sixteen years of age with symptoms of flu, chicken pox or other types of viral infection should not use White Willow Bark, because, like aspirin, there may be a risk of developing Reye's syndrome. Chronic use may result in diminished sexual interest.

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