



# *Sarsaparilla Root*

**Benefits and uses:** Anti-inflammatory, eczema, psoriasis, arthritis, female hormones, aphrodisiac, excellent for acne in boys and girls, build lean muscle mass, antibacterial, psoriasis.

**Information:** Herbals/Nutritionals/Medicinals can be very strong, consequently, if each one is not tailored to your specific needs, then you can risk 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.

## **Details**

Sarsaparilla has long been used as a blood purifier and tonic that boosts stamina and energy. Although there is no definitive evidence, many body-builders strongly maintain that Sarsaparilla (or Smilax) helps to build muscle mass, while avoiding the harmful side effects of anabolic steroids. Sarsaparilla is considered a fine tonic herb, an antibacterial and anti-inflammatory, and the herb may even act as an aphrodisiac. Perhaps this is the reason that the "Good Guys" of the Old West, who disdained whiskey in favor of Sarsaparilla, always seemed to have that extra edge.

Constituents included in Sarsaparilla are beta-sitosterol, starch, fatty acids, calcium, cetyl-alcohol, chromium, cobalt, glucose, iron, magnesium, manganese, phosphorus, potassium, resin, saponin, silicon, sitosterol-d glucoside, tin, zinc, B-vitamins and vitamins A, C and D.

Sarsaparilla is considered to be a fine tonic and blood purifier that is said to attack and neutralize toxins (including environmental poisons) in the blood. In addition, the herb also promotes urination and sweating; and that action is believed to further rid the body of toxins through bodily secretions. It also helps to cool the body and break intermittent fevers.

As an antibacterial, Sarsaparilla has been used internally and externally to counteract infections of all kinds. Internally, the herb is said to attack microbial substances in the blood and also counteract urinary tract infections. It

was used for centuries as a treatment for syphilis, gonorrhea, and other sexually transmitted diseases, being officially listed in both the *United States Pharmacopoeia* and the *United States Dispensatory* for those ailments. Externally, it is said to treat psoriasis, leprosy, boils, abscesses, skin diseases, wounds and eczema. Conventional medicine recognized Sarsaparilla's value in treating skin conditions in the 1940s, when *The New England Journal of Medicine* officially praised it for treating psoriasis.

Sarsaparilla is an anti-inflammatory that is believed to ease rheumatism, arthritis and other inflammatory conditions. Because of its diuretic properties, the stimulation of urine production increases the excretion of uric acid, which also helps to relieve gout; and although it does not relieve acute cases of gout, its use may prevent attacks when taken over a period of weeks or months.

There is much mystique and controversy surrounding Sarsaparilla's hormonal properties in both men and women. In men, the herb is said to stimulate production of natural hormones (testosterone), which may help to restore both sexual interest and erectile function. This action is different from many other male aphrodisiacs that act by increasing blood to the penis, which also carries the risk of creating high blood pressure. In women, hormonal production is also said to be encouraged, which may not

only boost diminished sex drive, but may also help to alleviate the symptoms of menopause.

Bodybuilders claim that the natural steroidal glycosides in Sarsaparilla help to build muscle mass, while avoiding the harmful side effects of anabolic steroids, although there are no clinical results to prove this. Additionally, they maintain that use of the herb boosts energy and stamina, and eases the inflammatory conditions brought about by strenuous exercise.

Sarsaparilla is said to be a fine tonic and "alterative," an agent that may favorably alter an unhealthy condition of the body with the tendency to restore normal bodily function. The herb is also thought to help keep the glandular system in balance. Sarsaparilla is also commonly used in herbal preparations as a synergist. The saponins have been reported to facilitate the body's absorption of other drugs and phytochemicals, which accounts for its history of use in herbal formulas as an

agent for bioavailability and to enhance the power and effect of other herbs.

**Contraindications:**

Pregnant and nursing women should avoid Sarsaparilla. Large amounts of Sarsaparilla (many times the recommended dosage) may cause gastrointestinal irritation, and if that occurs, dosage should be reduced or stopped. People who take blood thinning medications (Coumadin, etc.) should not use Sarsaparilla, and other prescription medication should not be taken at the same time as Sarsaparilla, because the medicine may be absorbed or excreted more rapidly. According to the German Commission E monograph, Sarsaparilla may cause stomach irritation and temporary kidney irritation. In general, it is recommended that people who take prescription drugs regularly should avoid its use. Men with prostate disorders should not use it, since it may increase testosterone production. Inhaling Sarsaparilla can make asthma worse in asthmatics.

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