Rhodiola

This fact sheet provides basic information about rhodiola—common names, usefulness and safety, and resources for more information.

Common Names—golden root, rosroot, queen’s crown

Latin Name—Rhodiola rosea L.

Background

- Rhodiola grows in cold regions of Europe and Asia, as well as in Alaska.
- Historically, people in northern regions have used rhodiola for anxiety, fatigue, anemia, impotence, infections, headache, and depression related to stress. People also have used it to increase physical endurance, work performance, longevity, and improve resistance to high-altitude sickness.
- Today, people use rhodiola as a dietary supplement to increase energy, stamina, and strength, to improve attention and memory, and to enhance the ability to cope with stress.
- The root of rhodiola is sometimes brewed and drunk as a tea. Rhodiola root extracts are also available in capsule or tablet form.

How Much Do We Know?

There have been some studies of rhodiola in people; however, the quality of research is limited so firm conclusions about its effectiveness can’t be made.

What Have We Learned?

- Two review articles—published in 2011 and 2012—looked at 15 studies that tested rhodiola on physical and mental performance in 575 people. Both reviews found evidence that rhodiola may enhance physical performance and ease mental fatigue, but emphasized that the limited quantity and quality of available evidence did not allow firm conclusions to be made.
What Do We Know About Safety?

- When taken orally (by mouth), rhodiola may cause dizziness, dry mouth, and headaches.
- People can have allergic reactions to rhodiola.

Keep in Mind

Tell all your health care providers about any complementary health approaches you use. Give them a full picture of what you do to manage your health. This will help ensure coordinated and safe care. For tips about talking with your health care providers about complementary health approaches, see NCCIH’s Time to Talk campaign at nccih.nih.gov/timetotalk.

For More Information


NCCIH Clearinghouse

Toll-free in the U.S.: 1-888-644-6226
TTY (for deaf and hard-of-hearing callers): 1-866-464-3615
E-mail: info@nccih.nih.gov

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NIH Office of Dietary Supplements

Web site: ods.od.nih.gov

Key References


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