



APS II with Willow Bark

Nature's alternative to aspirin and other OTC painkillers

Before the advent of synthetic aspirin, a tea made from white willow bark was the treatment of choice among Native Americans, Europeans and others for reducing fevers, relieving headache and arthritis pain, and controlling swelling. Formulated by herbalist Stan Malstrom, APS II combines white willow with three other herbs, valerian, wild lettuce and capsicum, to create a natural alternative to aspirin and other pain relievers.

Compared to some of the high-powered medications developed for pain in the pharmaceutical industry, APS II is a mild pain-reliever, but it is also safer. It is a general anti-inflammatory agent, so it reduces swelling and eases general aches and pains. It also increases circulation to bring healing blood to injured areas. It is used for headaches, colds, flu, tension, arthritis, PMS and fever. Here's some specific information on each of the herbs in this blend.

White Willow bark

The famous ancestor of today's aspirin, white willow contains salicin and other salicylates—compounds which are similar in structure to aspirin (acetyl salicylic acid). Aspirin is made from coal tar and petroleum derivatives, according to a standard recipe given in many elementary chemistry books. Willow bark is much less acid than this synthetic aspirin compound, so it is easier on the stomach.

White willow bark is an analgesic, antipyretic, antiseptic and astringent. Noted by Hippocrates 2,000 years ago for its pain-relieving effects, willow bark has been used ever since to treat a wide range of symptoms including arthritis, bursitis, tennis elbow, colds, flus and fever. The salicylates in white willow bark inhibit prostaglandins that are involved in inflammation, which at least partially explains its ability to reduce inflammation, fever and pain. The astringent property of white willow means it contracts and tones tissues, so it also helps reduce swelling, which is part of the inflammatory process.

White willow also possesses a mild antiseptic quality and can be used as a poultice or fomentation for infected wounds, ulcerations, eczema, dandruff and other skin inflammations. A decoction of white willow bark is reported to make an excellent gargle for sore throats. And finally, the glucoside salicin in white willow is excreted in the urine as salicylic acid, which, in the case of kidney and bladder infections, acts as an analgesic on the tissues of the urinary tract.

Valerian root

Valerian acts as a sedative, antispasmodic and diuretic. Although its smell has been reviled since antiquity (Dioscorides,

the most famous of Greek herbalists, described it as being like "bad cheese or mildewed clothing") it has been widely used for its ability to calm and to induce sleep without side effects. Because of its antispasmodic, or muscle-relaxing, properties, valerian traditionally has been used to treat tension, headaches, fever, digestive problems, urinary tract disorders, insomnia, depression, heart palpitations, vertigo, sleep disorders, PMS, hyperactivity and hypochondria. Many of these treatments date back to the second century A.D. Valerian was used frequently in the U.S. until modern sleeping pills became widespread, and it is still commonly used in Europe and South America.

Wild Lettuce leaves

Wild lettuce contains small amounts of the same alkaloids that are found in the opium poppy. It was used during the American Civil War as a narcotic when opiates were not available. It has no addictive characteristics and is very mild. Lettuce has been used to treat intestinal disorders, headaches, stiffness in the joints and lower back, infertility and mild pain. This herb can also be used to calm the nervous system.

Capsicum fruit

A hot fruit, native to the western hemisphere, capsicum is best known in spice form as cayenne pepper. Studies have shown that people in cultures that consume large quantities of cayenne pepper in their food tend to suffer less chronic obstructive lung disease, fatal blood clotting diseases, and circulatory system diseases. Capsicum stimulates the digestive system and circulatory system and is good for cleaning out the bowels and intestines. Its properties are stimulant, tonic, carminative, diaphoretic and rubefacient. A potent immune system booster, capsicum may be used to treat colds, pneumonia, diarrhea, fevers, coughs and asthma. APS II takes advantage of its potent analgesic properties, which seem to work by blocking pain receptors both locally when applied topically and throughout the body when taken internally. It is also known as a powerful catalyst, which helps deliver and potentiate the other ingredients in this formula.

Dosage:

Take 1-2 capsules every hour as needed for minor pain. Not recommended for serious pain.

Selected References

A Hand Book of Native American Herbs by Alma R. Hutchings
Herbal Extracts by Dr. A.B. Howard
Nutritional Herbology by Mark Pederson
Materia Medica and Pharmacology by David M.R. Culbreth
Weiner's Herbal by Michael A. Weiner

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