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Schizandra berry

Magnoliaceae family

Part: berry (fruit)

Energy: warming

Taste: sour, touches on all 5 flavors (sweet, sour, bitter, pungent, salty)

Latin name: *Schisandra chinensis*

Western and Chinese herbalism: (*not an exhaustive list) constituents include; “protocatechuic acid(1), quinic acid(2), 2-methyl citrate(3), 5-hydroxymethyl-2-furancarboxaldehyde(4), zingerone glucoside(5), thymoquinol 2-glucoside(6), thymoquinol 5-glucoside(7), and daucosterol(8)” (Dai, Haofu, et al. 2001)

“compounds including schizandrins, schisandrols, gomisins, fargesin, eudesmin and liriorelinol B dimethyl ether” (Lim, Hyun, et al. 2009)

Actions: astringent, tonifying, adaptogen, antioxidant, anticarcinogenic, antiallergic

“These results indicate that the lignans could potentially be a potent class of AChE inhibitors.” (Dai, Haofu, et al. 2001) - acetylcholinesterase inhibitor (AChE) is the enzyme inhibitor that inhibits acetylcholinesterase from breaking down acetylcholine (neurotransmitter), acetylcholine imbalance is potentially identified as effecting the development of diseases like Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s

“SCE” being Schisandra Chinensis Extract- “Cells pretreated with SCE (100–400 µg/mL) showed an increased resistance to oxidative stress in a dose-dependent manner. SCE can be useful for management of antioxidant and hepatoprotective effects.” (Sung, Misun, et al. 2014)

“These compounds have the potential to be developed as novel antiallergic agents and may contribute to the antiallergic pharmacological use of these plant materials in Chinese medicine.” (Lim, Hyun, et al. 2009)

“Schisandra chinensis can be a safe and effective complementary medicine for menopausal symptoms, especially for hot flushes, sweating, and heart palpitations.” (Yan Liu, Jiang Hu, Yan Lv, Xiao-Yun Huang, Guo-Xu Zhang. 2018)

“mechanism of action of an active compound schizanthrin C in A549 human lung cancer cells was related to the inhibition of cell cycle progression” (Min, Hye-Young, et al. 2008)

Chinese name: Wu Wei Zi

Traditional Chinese Medicine use: said to tonify the Organs; Heart, Kidney and Lungs, as well as, “astringes the essence” (Tierra, 1998). Also considered for lung deficiency (ex: reduce coughing), kidney deficiency (ex: urinary incontinence) and essence leakage. Used in formulas to balance, as it touches on all 5 flavors of TCM. Used to calm the Shen (Spirit of the Heart)

Cautions: As this herb is warming, it should not be used by those with internal heat conditions (examples of symptoms of too much internal heat; rashes, headaches, irritability, nosebleeds, restlessness, burning sensations, red face, red tongue, etc.), use caution with colds/flu or infections.

Preparation and dosage: 3-9 grams (Tierra, 1998)

-Standardized extract capsule: “Schisandra extract is 100 mg twice daily” (2020 Elsevier B.V. or its licensors or contributors. ScienceDirect, <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/medicine-and-dentistry/schisandra>)

-Traditionally use added to food, used in small amounts to enhance all 5 TCM flavors

-tea (infusion)

*Always consult a qualified health professional before using herbal medicine, especially in conjunction with pharmaceuticals

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Shannon Hobson
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References:

Images: Dried berry (https://www.alibaba.com/product-detail/Wild-Dried-Schisandra-Chinensis-Wu-Wei_1282484143.html), Ripe berry image (<https://www.amazon.in/Generic-Organic-Schisandra-Chinensis-wuweizi/dp/B07L4SZDBM>)

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- 2) Lim, Hyun, et al. "5-Lipoxygenase-inhibitory constituents from Schizandra fructus and Magnolia flos." Phytotherapy Research: An International Journal Devoted to Pharmacological and Toxicological Evaluation of Natural Product Derivatives 23.10 (2009): 1489-1492.

- 3) Sung, Misun, et al. "Antioxidant activity and hepatoprotective effect of Schizandra chinensis Baill. Extracts containing active components in alcohol-induced HepG2 cells." *Food Science and Biotechnology* 23.5 (2014): 1615-1621.
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- 5) Min, Hye-Young, et al. "Antiproliferative effects of dibenzocyclooctadiene lignans isolated from Schisandra chinensis in human cancer cells." *Bioorganic & medicinal chemistry letters* 18.2 (2008): 523-526.
- 6) "The Way of Chinese Herbs", Tierra Michael, 1998, Pocket Books, New York.